CHAPTER 31

Arts, leisure and entertainment public relations

Introduction

Arts, entertainment, leisure and popular culture enhance all our lives. They provide a source of fun, creativity and amusement. They can challenge, stimulate, shock and excite. The huge creative output of artists, producers and entertainers needs to be managed sensitively if they are to present their artistic forms to a receptive public. It is the task of the communications professional working in these diverse areas to understand the creative product, the aspirations of the creative producers and to have a keen sense of the customers' desires and expectations from an arts or leisure experience.

Overall growth within the arts, leisure and entertainment sectors is a worldwide trend and there is an increasing need for public relations and marketing communications experts to understand the dynamics of this increasingly fragmented and competitive environment. The arts play a powerful role in society and many governments are involved in their encouragement and regulation, as vehicles for social inclusion, economic regeneration and prosperity. Further, the rapid growth of the interactive entertainment industry is increasingly recognised as a major area of leisure activity, especially for the young, which again for governments has implications for broader social and educational policy. Increasingly in the UK and indeed in other western industrialised countries, governments lead public policy, legislation and funding through organisations such as the Arts Council of Great Britain or The Sports Council of England and Wales.

The fundamental planning processes utilised by individual artists or performers or indeed arts, sports and leisure management in these sectors must be employed with a demonstrable understanding of contemporary societal trends. These include globalisation,

the perceived threat of terrorism, fragmentation and proliferation of the media, the growth of consumerism in new markets, new technology-driven marketing and public relations techniques and the dominance of celebrity culture.

Those public relations and marketing practitioners working in the arts, leisure and entertainment sectors have to be increasingly aware of these trends and developments to maximise the creative opportunities for communications planning. Employment in the creative industries is growing steadily and there is increasing government awareness in the UK and Europe of the financial as well as social benefits to the economy of these sectors.

This chapter aims to introduce students to the specialist areas of public relations in the arts, leisure and entertainment sectors from a practitioner perspective. An industry overview of each area is provided, together with a discussion of key concepts of culture. The role of public relations and the strategies and tactics required by arts and leisure organisations are then explored, with the help of a variety of contemporary case studies. Trends and issues affecting public relations in this sector are then explored, such as the growth of celebrity, new technologies and globalisation.

Overview of the creative industries

In the UK, the government's Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) defines the creative industries as: 'Those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property'. While there is no official government definition of 'culture', the following activities provide an illustrative guide that is useful in understanding the diversity of these areas. They include:

- performing arts and visual arts, craft and fashion
- media, film, television, video
- museums, artefacts, archives and design
- libraries, literature, writing and publishing
- built heritage, architecture, landscape and archaeology
- sports events, facilities and sports development
- parks, open spaces, wildlife habitats and countryside recreation
- children's playgrounds and play activities

- tourism, festivals and attractions
- informal leisure pursuits (www.culture.gov.uk). See Box 31.1.

The UK government, like many others, raises money for the arts from taxes and from a national lottery, which was introduced in 1994. Box 31.2 shows how much revenue has been raised for arts, leisure and entertainment from the Lottery. Box 31.3 shows how different areas of the arts have benefited from Lottery funding.

The next section examines particular aspects of the culture industries to identify the issues, particularly communication issues, that affect each sector.

The arts

The arts are usually described in terms of visual, music, heritage and performing areas. However, arts policy in the UK in 2005 adopted a more modern approach to the arts, one that is open to current trends emerging (and often challenging) in arts practice, in technology and in breaking down the boundaries between art forms and between arts and other disciplines.

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box 31.1 **The creative industries in the UK**

- The creative industries in the UK accounted for 8.2% of gross value added (GVA) in 2001.
- The creative industries grew by an average of 8% per annum between 1997 and 2001.
- Exports by the creative industries contributed £11.4 billion to the balance of trade in 2001.
- There were 1.9 million people in creative employment in 2002.
- In 2002, there were around 122,000 companies in the creative industry sectors on the Inter-Departmental Business Register.

Source: www.culture.gov.uk

It is important to remember that this is a huge field of activity: for example, a music event could be a classical opera at La Scala, Milan, or a gig in the backroom of a bar. Drama might mean a Broadway show in New York or a mime act in the street. Tickets might cost hundreds of pounds or the event might be free. The variety of performing arts encompasses the privately and publicly funded, the celebrity driven to the artistically obscure. Consumption and demand for live performance is flourishing at both an amateur and professional level.

According to Anderson (1991), Barrere and Santagata (1999) and Parsons (1987), calling the arts an industry has resulted in considerable academic debate, with some believing that it is no more than an industrial product, while others view it from a semiotic perspective where the art work possesses an aesthetic sign which is culturally defined. (See later section on concepts of culture for more on this debate.)

Clearly, definitions are problematic for the art world and for the PR practitioner working within it. However, the growth of the art market itself in the

twenty-first century cannot be questioned, as can be seen by the figures given in Box 31.4 (overleaf). Fillis (2004) argues that arts PR and marketing puts the artist and the product at the forefront of planning, unlike conventional marketing activities centred on the consumer, and this poses a unique challenge to the communications professional. Consequently, marketing gurus such as Kotler are now calling for and fostering more creative ways of interpreting marketing and PR in the arts and deriving more meaningful theory.

Leisure

The concept of leisure reflects time and money spent on activities and pursuits away from the workplace. According to Torkildsen (2000) the world of leisure has changed and expanded substantially in the last 10 years as a result of economic and social changes and new technologies. Changes in government policies, the growth of tourism and service sector economies and the booming success of commercial leisure industries have all had an unprecedented effect on the growing expectations of people for healthier or alternative lifestyles, leisure fashion, services and choice.

The term leisure now typically encompasses:

- gambling
- eating out/restaurants (food and beverage market)
- travel (theme parks/attractions)
- sport (professional and amateur)
- shopping
- interactive electronic entertainment (games such as SonyPlayStation/X Box/Gameboy/GameCube)
- traditional pastimes (professional and amateur).

Sports activity in most countries is diverse and multifaceted. Sports participation can therefore include an individual's involvement in a community game of football in a local park to the attendance and viewing of mega stadium events such as the Olympic Games involving 1000s of sports stars, professional athletes and the focus of the world's media. The range of sports activity and choice is rapidly growing for individuals and groups. To promote London's bid for the 2012 Olympics favourably with the International Olympics Committee, the UK government is investing £2 billion of public and Lottery money in sport by 2006. Of this sum, £459 million is to be targeted at schools sport at grassroots level, thus aiming to fulfil its pledge to provide better sporting opportunities at every level, 'from playground to podium'. (For more on sports PR and sponsorship, see Chapter 27.)

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box 31.4   **Global top 20 art shows (by daily attendance), 2004**

Treasures of a Sacred Mountain, Tokyo National Museum (7638)
El Greco, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (6898)
MoMA, Museum of Modern Art, Neue Nationalgalarie, Berlin (5832)
Gauguin-Tahiti, Galaries Nationales du Grand Palais, Paris (5507)
Pre-Raphaelites in Florence, Gallaria degli Uffizi, Florence (5507)
Henri Matisse, National Museum of Western Art, Toyko (5389)
Treasures of Chinese Art, Tokyo National Museum (4742)
Joan Miro 1917–34, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris (4742)
Art in the Age of Dante, Gallerie dell'Accademia, Florence (4343)
Edward Hopper, Tate Modern, London (4215)
Richter, Weiner, Whiteread, Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao (4212)
Edouard Manet, Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (3960)
Rimpa, National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (3873)
Museum of Modern Art Masterpieces, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (3846)
Mark Rothko: Walls of Light, Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao (3783)
Fashion and Furniture in 18th Century, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (3738)
Masterpieces from the Musee d'Orsay, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne (3728)
Edouard Vuillard, Galleries Nationales du Grand Palais, Paris (3700)
James Rosenquist, Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao (3596)

Source: 'Big name shows boost gallery figures'. *The Guardian*, 25 February 2005

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Entertainment

Entertainment covers film, broadcast TV, and print and publishing, and includes satellite, cable and digital, and terrestrial television, books and magazines, film, video and electronic games.

TV and radio

Major changes have taken place in television broadcasting over the last 10 years, including the diversification of digital media, the introduction of 24-hour news channels, the expansion of access to global players by the viewing public, especially via the internet. The ability to download radio programmes is a major innovation, likely to be applied to TV programmes in coming years. Consumption patterns have also been affected by DVD use and satellite and cable subscriptions. Many users now have access to hundreds of channels, showing movies, repeats, new material and news, from CNN to Al Jazeera.

Film

Film encompasses both commercial and art house movies. Film production is international with strong manufacturing activity in Europe, India and South America, for example. However, film distribution and commercial movie success is largely dominated by the USA, particularly in terms of its financial box office success. This is understandable as it defines itself firmly as a commercial as well as artistic industry. The main stages of activity in the US film industry are vertically integrated (that is, the main companies own all the stages of film production, from the studios where the films are made to the cinema chains that show the finished product) including development, production, post-production, distribution and exhibition (Kerrigan 2002). This integration does appear to create a commercially successful model and while European films do enjoy some success, the USA still dominates the European box office. The European Audiovisual Observatory (EAO) states that cinema attendance has largely remained stagnant in Europe, while in the USA it has continued to grow (EAO 2003).

In Europe and the USA, both film and TV companies are more effectively using market research at every stage of the movie or TV programme lifecycle. Producers recognise the importance of defining the target audiences they seek to reach at the very earliest stages of creative development. Most US-dominated publicity remains aimed at the 18–24-year-old segment, where the largest audience lies (75% of the film audience in the USA is under the age of 39) (Wilcox et al. 1998). Durie et al. (2000) define film marketing as 'any activity that assists a film in reaching its target audience at any time throughout its life and by extension, its earning potential' (2005: 5). While one of

the key aims of PR and marketing activity is to generate interest in the film to ensure audiences attend the movie in the first week of its release, there is a growing recognition that after release, word of mouth is the most powerful endorsement tool.

Books

In the UK for example, 'reading books' is frequently the most quoted favourite hobby or pastime in the population. Its importance to cultural life in the UK is reflected in the plethora of book prizes such as the high-profile Whitbread and Booker prizes, and the WH Smith 'People's Choice' Book of the Year for children's literature. The popularity and success of high street book stores such as Waterstone's and Dillons and the general explosion of book sales across nearly all genres in the UK over the last 10 years is testimony to this national obsession. Frequently government education strategies and campaigns have promoted literacy by linking reading as a 'leisure activity' with lifelong education benefits. Moreover, BBC Television has supported this popular trend with initiatives such as *The Big Read*, a week-long schedule of special literature programmes that encourage interactive online critical debate.

Music

A major aspect of entertainment is, of course, music, covering performance and recordings. Popular culture is powerfully influenced by the activities of successful music stars, even though the sale of records has fallen in the past decade. This is partly due to piracy, whereby the internet facilitates the (now illegal) transfer of music files from one PC to another. This and the impact of MP3 players is covered under the section on new technologies. While television no longer provides a 'shared experience', because everyone is watching different channels, live concerts and, particularly, music festivals are still very popular. (See Think about 31.1.)

Increasingly in western countries, the lines between entertainment, leisure and the arts are deliberately blurred or linked to social or political imperatives such as urban regeneration, social inclusion, social access and cultural diversity. This brings us to the question of how the arts are used and viewed in society.

Concepts of culture

The *American Heritage Dictionary* (2004) defines culture as:

1. a. *The totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought.*
    b. *These patterns, traits, and products considered as the expression of a particular period, class, community, or population:* Edwardian culture; Japanese culture; the culture of poverty.
    c. *These patterns, traits, and products considered with respect to a particular category, such as a field, subject, or mode of expression*: religious culture in the Middle Ages; musical culture; oral culture.
    d. *The predominating attitudes and behavior that characterize the functioning of a group or organization.*
2. *Intellectual and artistic activity and the works produced by it.*
3. a. *Development of the intellect through training or education.*
    b. *Enlightenment resulting from such training or education.*
4. *A high degree of taste and refinement formed by aesthetic and intellectual training.*
5. *Special training and development:* voice culture for singers and actors.
6. *The cultivation of soil; tillage.*
7. *The breeding of animals or growing of plants, especially to produce improved stock.*
8. Biology.
    a. *The growing of microorganisms, tissue cells, or other living matter in a specially prepared nutrient medium.*
    b. *Such a growth or colony, as of bacteria.*

While it is safe to ignore the culture of soil, animals and bacteria for this discussion, all the other elements are relevant to the arts and demonstrate what a huge concept culture is. It is also worth adding that definition 1(d) also covers corporate culture, which is discussed more fully elsewhere in this book (see Chapter 17).

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think about 31.1   How to describe the sector(s)

- Is reading a book about Quentin Tarantino's films art, leisure or entertainment? Is a news documentary about AIDS in Africa supposed to be entertaining?
- How easy is it to separate these issues?

Feedback Look at the government information websites for different countries. How do they organise their arts and leisure? Is it run by the state or by private companies – or both?

McQuail (2005) suggests that culture has the following characteristics. It is:

- collectively formed and held
- open to symbolic expression
- ordered and differently valued
- systematically patterned
- dynamic and changing
- spatially located
- communicable over time and space. (2005: 113)

This makes clear that culture is about a shared experience, which uses symbols to express different values and which can be communicated across distances or at different times.

O'Sullivan et al. (1994) say that culture is the 'social production and reproduction of sense, meaning and consciousness. The sphere of meaning, which unifies the spheres of production (economics) and social relations (politics)' (1994: 68). They also make it clear that there are many interpretations of culture, depending on the viewpoint of the different theorists. In the past people used to talk of 'high' culture, meaning opera and classical theatre, and 'low' culture, meaning popular entertainment, like soap operas on TV. Today there are many different interpretations of culture, including the following concepts.

Cultural studies

This school of thought concentrates on how culture reflects power divisions in society (O'Sullivan et al. 1994). For example, it might examine the representation of black people, women or people with disabilities in soap operas or Hollywood movies. It will ask: whether villains are often Arabic in US films; whether women get powerful roles or are just cast to make the male lead look good; and how people with physical or mental challenges are portrayed. This approach was developed in the 1960s, building on the work of Hoggart and Williams, who challenged the class assumptions behind the terms 'high' and 'low' culture. Much of the work has taken place in the Birmingham School, under Stuart Hall. Its scholars draw on other academic disciplines and schools of thought, such as Marxism, feminism, psychoanalysis, linguistics and others. It has provided hugely influential tools for studying the media, in particular, but can be applied to all artistic and creative outputs: the key question is not the intent of the creator but the social and political values, especially power relations, embodied in the work.

Semiotics

This approach studies the meanings that can be decoded from signs – words and images – used in communication, and was first developed by the linguist de Saussure at the turn of the twentieth century, then extended in the 1960s by Barthes (O'Sullivan et al. 1994). Like cultural studies, it is also less interested in the intentions of communicators than in the meaning embedded in their 'texts', which can be anything from movies, books or sculptures to advertisements or T-shirts. The focus is on the way that the reader or viewer 'decodes' the message, regardless of what was intended. It has been particularly applied to the meanings that can be read into advertisements and other aspects of popular culture. Because it is not interested in the background of the sender of the message it has embraced all production of meanings, including soap operas, game shows and tabloid newspapers. (See also Chapter 14 for a brief discussion of signs and meanings.)

Postmodernism

This term has come to mean a great many things across a wide range of cultural activities, including film, literature and fashion. It tends to reject historical analysis and theories that seek to unify experience (O'Sullivan et al. 1994). Instead it emphasises the fragmentation of modern life, the brevity of experience, and even the triviality of art. Here the creator is a major part of the performance, for example when a narrator in a book or an actor in a play addresses the reader/camera directly. But at the same time the reader/viewer is encouraged to construct their own meanings from an assembly of ingredients, in a spirit of play rather than reverence. It does away with a sense of historical 'progress' (which was central to modernism), instead suggesting that there is a timeless free-for-all and styles from different eras can be put together to make a building, a play or a movie. There is a sense that reality can be and is constructed by viewers/readers/consumers of culture, not the producers (Strinati 1995). It has been very influential in film, visual arts – including architecture – and fashion in particular (think Tarantino, Damien Hirst and Vivien Westwood, for example).

This brief outline illustrates some of the ways in which culture can be studied. There is always a debate about what art means to society, whether it is intended to uplift or entertain, whether it should be good for us and how much it reflects back the society we live in. (See Think about 31.2.)

Role of public relations in the creative industries

It is the task of the communicator to understand, translate and capture audiences for the creative professionals

Do you think there is a difference between Mozart's opera *The Magic Flute* and the TV show *Big Brother*? Is one better than another? How can you tell?

What do *Big Brother* and other reality shows tell us about entertainment in the early twenty-first century? Given versions of these shows are popular across Europe and the USA, what do they say about those societies?

Do you think it matters if the 'good guys' in US blockbusters are usually white men and the 'bad guys' foreign, often Arabic in origin? Do the roles women play in movies or their portrayal in men's magazines affect the way you see women?

working in these areas. The communications strategies employed for this task use the full range of PR and marketing communications tools with the additional requirement that the practitioner needs to be very familiar with niche promotional channels available to each area.

Typically, artistic activities are reported through the conventional media (broadcast, print, internet) by specialist journalists and media. The visual arts or museums are subject to scrutiny by the national regional and local media but also have specialist publications and channels.

The creative demand on the PR profession is increasing. In highly 'artistically' focused industries such as these, communications techniques and tools must be competitively innovative and dynamic. It is essential to embrace the latest technologies and overcome long-standing barriers between different sectoral and cultural traditions to create unique creative platforms for PR campaigns. For example, sport stars support artistic ventures, artists endorse travel organisations, celebrities add glamour to more traditional ventures. The PR professional needs to be abreast (and ahead of) fashionable trends in these demanding and quixotic sectors.

Increasingly in PR practice, professionals are finding the cross-over between leisure, arts and entertainment PR is blurred. When is a PR agency dealing with an entertainment client or an arts client? Is Tracey Emin or Damien Hirst an artist or a celebrity or are they indeed both? The challenge for PR is the profession's creative ability to absorb these fast-moving fashionable industry trends and identify and exploit cross-fertilisation opportunities. The broad public appetite for this type of synthesis across industries, art forms, leisure activities and entertainment appears voracious. (See Mini case study 31.1 and Think about 31.3, overleaf.)

Public relations objectives, strategies and tactics for arts organisations

Most of the public relations work conducted by practitioners in the arts and leisure field is identical to that practised in other fields. Chapter 10 on public relations planning and Chapter 16 on media relations cover most of the relevant ideas related to general PR practice. However, there are particular factors that affect PR and the arts and these are now outlined.

Publics for arts organisations

In the arts and entertainment sectors, Kotler and Scheff (1997) identify *input publics* (playwrights, composers), who supply resources that are converted by *internal publics* (performers, staff, board of directors, volunteers), into useful services or offers (performances, educational programmes), that are carried out by *intermediate publics* (PR agencies, advertising agencies, critics), to consuming publics (audiences, activists, media) (see Figure 31.1 on p. 607, see also Activity 31.1).

PR and marketing for arts events

One of the primary goals of many arts, leisure or entertainment organisations is the requirement to sell

activity 31.1

A record company

Select a record company and look at its website. See if you can draw a map of its key publics on the lines of Figure 31.1. Which publics do you think are most influential? Do you think this may have changed in recent years?

Feedback

Consumer patterns of behaviour are changing rapidly as a result of new technologies and increased accessibility to the arts, leisure and entertainment sectors. Internet booking, flexible subscription ticket schemes, direct marketing, a 'virtual' presence for events and activities online and integrated PR and marketing campaigns have brought a change in consumer patterns of access to these sectors' offers. New audiences are developing as a result of these patterns of consumption.

mini case study 31.1

The English Tea Experience

An example of how PR has been used to promote 'fashionable' leisure activities (*PR Week* 2004) and is a cross-fertilisation between fashion, travel, destination marketing, eating out, and celebrity(!) was a campaign for Exclusive Eating Out . . . The English Tea Experience at The Berkeley, a five-star hotel in Knightsbridge, London. The hotel bills itself as 'classically cool', with attractions that include the Blue Bar, which fashion designer John Galliano called his 'favourite home from home', and a health spa with rooftop swimming pool in the heart of the capital.

The hotel became popular with celebrities seeking a discreet stay in London. In 2004 it decided to develop a 'tea afternoon' that would make The Berkeley stand out from the crowd. The main objectives of the campaign were to help maintain the hotel's high profile and increase afternoon tea business by making it a 'tea destination'.

To differentiate the hotel from other exclusive establishments in the market, the in-house PR team's strategy was to aim the new 'Prêt-à-Portea' service at high-spending clientele interested in fashion. The range of cakes and pastries are based around the latest season's collections such as Fendi chocolate baguettes and Missonni eclairs.

The pastry chefs' creations were assessed by fashion editors from magazines such as *Tatler* and *Vogue*, thus guaranteeing media interest beyond food publications. London correspondents for the international media in America, France and Japan were also approached.

Vogue ran a half-page exclusive positioning the pastries alongside catwalk pictures of the dress that had inspired them.

This was followed with coverage in *The Observer*'s Food Monthly and an article in *Delicious* magazine. *Elle, Harpers & Queen, Marie-Claire* and *Eve* also covered the story.

Importantly for the celebrity angle to the campaign, *Heat* magazine ran a piece showing celebrities in the dresses that the pastries were based on.

As a result of the campaign with a modest budget of £1000, the hotel reported weekend occupancy rates up by 20%. People were booking in for tea and then staying overnight. More than £1 million had been added to the bottom line for the hotel over that year, much of which was attributed to the 'Prêt-à-Portea' campaign. Afternoon tea business in the Caramel Room of the hotel had grown by 300% and the concept was taken to New York's Fashion Week in 2005. This again reinforced the objective of profile raising to an international audience.

'"Prêt-à-Portea" was an ingenious idea', said *Harpers & Queen* lifestyle editor Rachel Meadows. 'Tea is really fashionable at the moment but people either do really traditional or really trendy – no one else had taken elements from the catwalk like this.'

Source: adapted from *PR Week,* 21 January 2005:31

think about 31.3 — Cross-fertilisation in the creative industries

Think of some examples of cross-fertilisation in the arts, leisure and entertainment sectors in your own country. What are the implications for the PR professional?

tickets to events. Public relations campaigns provide publicity build-up to inform fans, viewers, participants, readers or listeners that an event will occur and stimulate the desire to purchase tickets and attend (Wilcox et al. 1998). While marketing communication activity can concentrate on functions regarding information on prices of tickets, channels of distribution, factual data and so on, public relations largely focuses on media relations activity (see Chapter 16). Providing sequential stories about forthcoming theatrical events, films, festivals or similar commercial and non-commercial performances enables the PR practitioner to concentrate on personalities, celebrity, style, fashion and history to raise public awareness and indeed public debate. Successful PR searches for fresh, targeted news angles to maximise media coverage across integrated marketing communications (see also Chapter 26).

At the core of effective PR and marketing communication in arts, entertainment and leisure sectors is a clear understanding of the target audience and consumer behaviour. PR professionals are required to understand the motives, preferences and behaviours of their organisation's current and potential audiences (Kotler and Scheff 1997: 69). (Consumer behaviour is discussed in Chapter 26.) Key factors influencing consumer behaviour can be summarised as:

■ macroenvironmental trends (social, political, economic and technological)
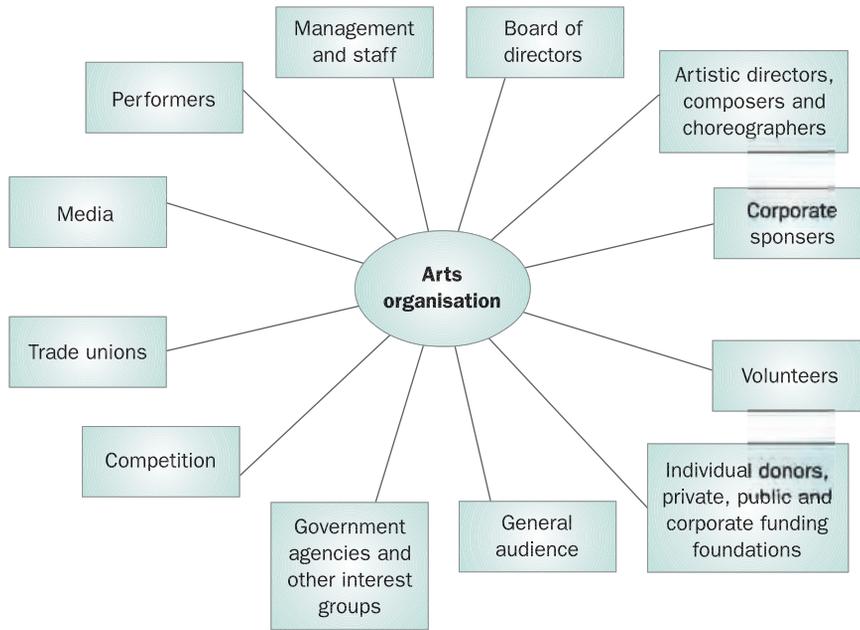
FIGURE 31.1   A model of an arts organisation's publics (*source:* adapted from Kotler and Scheff 1997. Reprinted by permission of Harvard Business School Press. From *Standing Room Only: Strategies for Marketing the Performing Arts* by P. Kotler and J. Scheff. Boston, MA 1997. Copyright © 1997 by the Harvard Business School Publishing Corporation; all rights reserved.)

- cultural factors (nationality, subcultures, social class)
- social factors (reference groups, opinion leaders, innovativeness)
- psychological factors (personality, beliefs and attitudes, motivation)
- personal factors (occupation, economic circumstances, family, lifecycle stage). (adapted from Kotler and Scheff 1997: 69).

Identifying and selecting target audiences and positioning the offer to the 'consumer', whether in the arts, leisure or entertainment sectors, is crucial to successful PR planning and campaigns. An example of the way in which careful targeting and an appreciation of the consumers needs have been identifed clearly is the successful commercial art event Frieze Art (see Mini case study 31.2, overleaf).

Media relations for arts organisations

Film studios, production companies, networks and celebrity publicists all apply the principle of a steady output of information and stories, a 'drip-drip-drip' approach to publicity around a new movie (Wilcox et al. 1998). This PR technique enables the key players in the industry process to maximise media attention both before and after production and public showing of the movie itself. These opportunities for story generation can include the following:

- initial signing up of a film director to a studio or project idea
- script evolution
- assigning a cinematographer or writer
- 'work in progress', including insights into the making of the film, e.g. locations, technical issues, developments by the creative team
- actors and stars signing up to the project
- actors and stars not getting the role!
- quotes and interviews from directors, producers, actors during and after production
- controversial debate generated by social or political issues in a film
- technology – interactivity with audiences during the creative process, e.g. on official and unofficial websites.

See Think about 31.4, Mini case study 31.3 and then Think about 31.5, all overleaf.

Previews, exclusives and award ceremonies are all PR tools and techniques employed during the process to reach the target publics of film critics, industry stakeholders and the audiences. Promotional activity reaches a crescendo with the premiere or launch night of the movie. This presents another opportunity to generate interest in the film, although it is also essential to maintain the profile of the movie for a sustained period after this time.

The longer term PR campaign will target print, broadcast, radio and internet media with these story opportunities over potentially a two- to three-year

mini case study 31.2

Frieze Art Fair 2004

A commercial art event, the Frieze Art Fair, was held in London in October 2004 and was the largest single contemporary arts exhibition ever staged in the UK. Organised by the contemporary art magazine *Frieze*, it hosted 140 of the world's top commercial galleries and more than 1000 artists.

The key objective of the Art Fair's PR campaign was to attract visitors by gaining maximum media exposure. A supporting objective was to increase the turnover of the art works sold at the fair.

The PR agency Idea Generation working for *Frieze* developed a strategy and plan with a broad-based target audience including professional art collectors, members of the public with an interest in the arts and potential collectors with a modest budget. A key message established that the fair was not elitist and contemporary art was highly accessible and indeed affordable.

A nine-month media relations campaign targeted both trade and consumer publications as well as national and international radio and broadcast TV.

Specialist art teams worked with the agency to target publications and broadcast media with story angles suitable for their own audiences. The title sponsor, Deutsche Bank, which holds the largest collection of contemporary artwork in the world, enabled the agency to position the PR strategy to strategically focus on the importance of corporate art sponsorship.

The PR campaign created 40 news stories, 25 features, 150 listings and 18 broadcast interviews. Evaluation of the coverage estimated that the overall tone was very positive. There were 42,000 visitors to the art fair over a five-day period, which was a 50% increase on the previous year's event. The turnover or art sold at the fair was estimated at around £26 million, up £10 million on 2003.

Source: Adapted from *PR Week* 14 January 2005: 18

think about 31.4   Media relations for the arts

Think about the media relations involved in a tour by the band U2, by a local group and for a classical concert. How are they different?

mini case study 31.3

Leeds Grand Theatre

The Grand Theatre in the City of Leeds is a large regional theatre in the UK and its choice of media has to be carefully targeted as budgets and resources for PR for this type of organisation can be limited. With a capacity of over 1550 seats, the theatre promotes a range of performances from opera to stand-up comedy. Performances can include one-night individual events or runs of shows over several weeks.

Typically, in the run-up to the opening night, the in-house PR department provides local and regional print and broadcast media (including specialist journalist critics) with opportunities for interviews with stars of the shows, performers or directors. Media will also be

invited to a 'press night', at which further press information packs can be distributed. Sequential stories are planned over the pre- and post-opening night period. In Leeds, local and regional print media such as the *Yorkshire Evening Post* and *Yorkshire Post* are targeted as well as lifestyle magazines such as *Yorkshire Life*, *What's On* guides, local radio and TV, and regional tourist publications.

The media relations activity is integrated with direct mail, radio advertising, co-promotional endorsement with partners and approved poster sites.

Source: By kind permission of the Leeds Grand Theatre

think about 31.5   Launching a film

If you were asked by a film producer to support the launch of a new film, what would you take into consideration in the planning and implementation phases of your strategy?

BAFTA Awards

In 1997, BAFTA (the British Academy of Film and Television Arts) recognised the impact of the internet and multimedia technologies on the entertainment industry. The result was the creation of the BAFTA Interactive Entertainment Awards. The event has quickly grown into what is considered to be the world's largest and most prestigious interactive entertainment awards, recognising and rewarding creative talent in interactivity. Positioning the event as 'the ultimate accolade for creative talent and achievement' across different platforms and genres such as Microsoft XBox, Sony PlayStation, Nintendo Gameboy, GameCube, mobile, PC, handheld, etc., the awards attracted significant international media interest.

In 2004 BAFTA split the awards into two separate ceremonies targeting communications to different audiences/sections of the industry, including trade, consumer and specialist media. The BAFTA Interactive Awards focused on a broad spectrum of the new media industry, including DVDs, websites and education, whereas the BAFTA Games Awards ceremony focused purely on the games industry. As a public relations tool the new awards created a raft of positive and fresh messages regarding this new development in the entertainment industry and demonstrated its innovation and creativity.

Source: Adapted from *PR Week* January 2005: 19

period (depending on the scale or size of the production). Invariably the film product is transferred to DVD and other formats providing again the re-promotion to new audiences. Action and adventure films translate well into electronic interactive games. For example the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy and Marvel Movies such as *Spiderman* have become Sony PlayStation, XBox, GameCube and Gameboy games across different platforms and genres. Thus consumer spend is increased and sales revenue of games can exceed the film ticket sales. DVD sales over time can exceed film takings at the box office.

The marketing of films requires specialist expertise so that the buying behaviour of target audiences can be triggered successfully. The US film industry has utilised audience research in its marketing strategies for decades and the professional and well-resourced PR and marketing machinery surrounding film production ensures that it continues to succeed not only in the USA but also globally. Market research into demographics and psychographics form the basis of PR strategy for the film industry.

Brand development and brand positioning

From a strategic point of view (see Chapter 10 for a discussion on strategic public relations), PR increasingly operates as part of a branding strategy in the arts, leisure and entertainment sectors. This is demonstrated in Mini case study 31.4 and Case study 31.1, overleaf.

A successful example of the use of PR in brand development and repositioning in the visual arts sector is that of Tate Modern (Case study 31.1) and Tate Britain.

Trends and directions in the creative industries

A number of factors are already influencing the direction of arts promotion, in particular the growth of celebrity, the introduction of new technologies both to media and leisure industries, and the globalisation of media and entertainment output. These issues are now briefly explored.

Growth of celebrity

The growth of interest in celebrities in the last 10 years has been staggering; its impact on fashion and the media is all pervading. In the arts, leisure and entertainment sectors celebrity status is now accorded to most international athletes, artists, musicians and performers of all kinds. Moreover, the nature of celebrity has changed: whereas once it derived from excellence in an arts or leisure activity, now appearing on a reality TV show or sleeping with a footballer qualifies anyone for celebrity status.

Arts, leisure and entertainment celebrities are increasingly utilised for support and enhancement of consumer 'brands'. Successful celebrity product placement and sponsorship tie-ins have flourished in these sectors. Matching a 'brand personality' to a

case study 31.1

The launch of Tate Modern

Tate Modern opened to the public on 12 May 2000. As well as being the first new national museum to open in London in a century, it is also the first national museum for modern art in London. Tate Modern was a Millennium Commission project funded by the National Lottery.

Housed in the former Bankside Power Station, Tate Modern displays the Tate Collection of international modern art from 1900 to the present day. There is a full range of special exhibitions and a broad public programme of events throughout the year. The ex-power station has been transformed into a modern museum by Swiss architects Herzog & de Meuron. The former turbine hall now marks a breathtaking entrance to the gallery. At night a lightweight luminous roof is a unique addition to the London skyline.

The main aim of the PR campaign to launch Tate Modern was to increase public awareness, understanding and application of modern art. In order to reach this goal, it was necessary to make modern art more accessible. Broadening Tate's audience and appeal was seen as the key to fulfilling this target – as opposed to the notion of modern art as 'elitist'. Tate Modern aspired to attract people who intend to come to galleries but who rarely do.

In visitor terms, the Tate's communication team set its sights on doubling the attendance to Tate. Moreover, the organisation was aware that it needed to be seen as providing value for money as a Lottery-funded project to its external stakeholders and publics. Amid scepticism and criticism towards other millennium projects, Tate Modern needed to ensure that it was seen as a worthwhile scheme. The team's strategy was therefore to be flexible and recognise the issues and concerns of other millennium projects.

Another key communications objective was to clarify the different positioning of Tate Britain and Tate Modern in audiences' minds. Hence the original Tate Gallery at Millbank was rebranded as Tate Britain two months ahead of the Tate Modern launch.

From an international perspective, New York and Paris have exemplary well-established modern art museums, and Tate Modern would be the first national modern art museum in London. Tate Modern would provide a unique opportunity for the 'Brit Pack' artists to be promoted in an international arena. Moreover, Tate Modern was keen to ensure that the local community was involved and benefited from the new gallery.

The PR strategy and plan identified that media interest needed to be ensured from an early stage in the building period, both nationally and internationally. Working with consultants Bolton and Quinn, the Tate communications team secured the support of high-profile endorsers and key members of the media. An editorial column was published in the *Financial Times* in 1997, at a time when Tate Modern was still fundraising. The campaign achieved a build-up of interest through strategic editorial at all major stages of the project.

Target audiences included the media, press, broadcast (television and radio – both national and international), government, artists, art critics (national and international), art enthusiasts, art 'beginners' (e.g. cab drivers) and the local community of Southwark.

Key advocacy included:

■ involvement of British arts
■ establishing why Tate is important and necessary
■ communication liaison and involvement and visitor centre
■ lobbying government to ensure Tate Modern entry was free
■ a range of private views and tours for all sectors throughout the project
■ enlisting the support of high-profile endorsers and key members of the media.

The communication team recognised that to attract a wide audience to Tate Modern it was necessary to secure the support of television, the mid-market papers and, crucially, the UK tabloids, despite the hostility to the arts in general and millennium projects in particular shown by *The Sun* newspaper.

Favourable coverage in the tabloids was secured through events such as the preview for drivers of black cabs. In a special preview session, 20,000 taxi cab drivers in London were invited to an event especially for them. Its aim was to enable 'cabbies' to talk to their passengers about the gallery from first-hand experience and to deliver the message by powerful third-party 'word of mouth' techniques.

The usual range of PR tools was used to gain media coverage, including press releases and photographs. Coverage included special supplements in major UK broadsheet newspapers and *Vogue* magazine. *Time Out* filed a particular guide to the Bankside area and the *Sunday Times* Magazine covered all art Lottery projects.

Tate Modern importantly secured a four-part documentary on Channel4 on the architecture and building project as well as four art documentaries on BBC2. The opening by the Queen was an event covered live on BBC1. GMTV hosted its breakfast show from Tate Modern. Extensive international coverage was secured using PR agencies in France and New York.

A new corporate identity, a 'Tate concept', was developed and applied to all items of print, merchandise, uniforms and website. The brand values of the new gallery were reflected in the new visual graphic identity designed by Wolff Olins.

▶

case study 31.1 (continued)

A high-impact marketing campaign with six different adverts appeared across a range of media (including bus sides) and promotional partners were secured, such as special coffee cups for Coffee Republic, Tate beer and a Royal Mail stamp. The creative content of the campaign was enhanced with collaborations with British artists such as Tracey Emin and a specially commissoned fanfare by Sir Harrison Birtwistle for the Queen's formal opening of the museum. Celebrities such as Madonna, Mick Jagger, Kylie Minogue and Claudia Schiffer added glamour to the opening party. The opening show event, broadcast live on BBC1 and BBC2, was watched by millions of viewers. It included a laser show projected onto the façade of the building.

In terms of evaluation, the campaign's objectives were clearly achieved and in some cases exceeded. In a climate where other millennium Lottery-funded projects had failed to capture the public's imagination, the media campaign for the museum was successful in ensuring that the tabloid newspapers in the UK viewed the opening of Tate Modern favourably.

Media coverage was extensive. During the launch period in May, Tate Modern had 317 inches of column space in national print media, making it the fifth biggest story of the week. The approximate total audience reach just through national television during April, May and June 2000 was 126.7 million. Thirteen articles in the tabloids represent a reader figure of approximately 32.5 million. In its first year, 5.25 million people visited Tate Modern, a figure more than double expectations. Over a million people came in the first six weeks. The website registered an average of 24 million hits per month. In May 2000 it had as many as 10 million hits per day. According to *Campaign* magazine, Tate was one of the 10 most talked about brands during 2000.

Source: adapted from *IPR Excellence Awards 2001*, www.cipr.co.uk

celebrity brand, however, can have its problems and pitfalls and for every successful joint venture there are numerous failures. Moreover, the media are increasingly interested in 'news', however trivial, concerning a celebrity, a trend associated with the commercialisation of mass media (McQuail 2005). Again, this can be a mixed blessing: the front page may carry the desired picture of the star making an award to your charity – or falling down drunk outside a nightclub. (See Think about 31.6.)

Pringle (2004) identifies a number of key trends in celebrity that will impact on the arts, leisure and entertainment sectors, in particular: the use of charismatic stars of minority sports; leisure and arts pursuits brought into the mainstream; and the cross-over between cultures and continents. Examples might include the huge media interest shown in round-the-world yachtswoman Ellen McArthur, despite the minority interest in her sport of sailing.

Obviously, many arts, leisure and entertainment activities already involve celebrities, who may help generate media coverage. Indeed, the Hollywood 'star' system reflects not just the popularity of certain actors but their ability to bring in audiences regardless of the quality of the film.

It may seem as though the concept of 'celebrity' plays an increasing role in communications activity in the arts, leisure and entertainment industries. Clearly, celebrity has indeed been a driving force behind high-profile work in the promotion of these sectors for many years. The sheer visibility of celebrity in communications in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century inevitably tends to push us to the conclusion that without its presence in society these sectors would falter.

However, for every film featuring mega-stars such as Brad Pitt, there are thousands of film and television actors working in local, regional and national productions. For every professional Broadway theatre show there are small-scale village hall entertainments by amateur companies. For every international blockbuster book, translated into dozens of languages, there are independent publishers of poetry and verse appealing only to minority audiences. For every 'international celebrity' visual artist such as Tracey Emin there are thousands of creative people active in the production of creative work. (See Think about 31.7, overleaf.)

think about 31.6   Mass media and celebrity

Look at the main news pages of any popular newspaper or magazine. How many stories concern celebrities? Do they carry more weight than other 'dryer' news stories? Are the stories positive or negative? Can you tell which stories have been encouraged by PR activity and which ones were not planned?

think about 31.7 **Use of celebrities**

Consider the advantages and disadvantages of using the stars (lead actors) of a film or TV programme to promote the entertainment product itself. What are the qualities that celebrities and stars bring to a PR campaign? Is the star always the main attraction for audiences? What else attracts audiences to view a film or TV programme and what are the implications for the PR professional?

Feedback While stars and celebrities are expected (and often indeed legally contracted) to play their part in PR and marketing campaigns to support the launch of a new television or film production, their ability to act as spokespeople can be uneven in terms of successful communications with audiences. Interviews with stars are often carefully scripted to include the key messages about the film or TV product that the production companies wish to convey. However, 'unscripted', 'off-message' or plain ill-informed or incorrect remarks to interviewers in the mass media can result in devastatingly negative results. High-profile celebrities with perceived temperamental qualities can be more of a liability to the promotion of the movie or TV programme than a bonus. While a star can add glamour to a PR campaign, the risks and costs of relying on this vehicle of communication can be massive.

New technologies

As a result of new technologies, internationalisation, the blurring of boundaries between sectors and the growth of professional PR and marketing activity, a number of key trends can be identified for the decade ahead. The consequences of new technologies, for example, can be seen in the changing shape of entertainment organisations and how they have adapted the structure of their communications functions.

mini case study 31.5

Endemol UK

Endemol UK annually produces over 8000 hours of output for British TV. It specialises in a broad range of genres including factual entertainment, reality series, live events, music entertainment and comedy. Its credits include *Big Brother*, *Fame Academy*, the BAFTAs, *Ground Force*, *UK Music Hall of Fame.*

The Endemol Group is a worldwide network of leading production companies spanning countries. Endemol is 100% owned by Spanish Telecoms and media giant Telefonica – the largest provider of telecom and internet services in the Spanish- and Portuguese-language world, with companies in 17 countries and more than 62 million customers. The group is dedicated to ideas that work across a range of media including traditional and interactive TV, the web, mobile phones, radio and DVD.

A key priority for Endemol UK has been to build a presence in fast emerging digital media. In 2000 the group expanded into website design, interactive TV and e-commerce software.

The combination of interactive and television production makes Endemol one of the few global players that can deliver a product across all media. The majority of the UK group's output now has interactivity at its core. Adding interactivity and enhancing content is all about getting involved in the experience – be that expressing your views in an email, voting in an SMS, chatting on the web or simply accessing more information by pressing red on your TV's remote control.

The UK group is involved with projects for all media outlets including web, enhanced TV, interactive TV, broadband webcasting and wireless services. While a majority of activity takes place alongside broadcasters, a rapidly growing proportion is being generated via advertisers, corporate partners and even consumers.

Tim Hincks, Chief Creative Officer for Endemol UK, plc explains: 'TV is increasingly fragmented with more channels and more choice, and a consumer has far more resources at their disposal. There are more media options available to the public from MP3 players to computer games. Whatever the publicity or PR machine behind a TV programme, the product itself is at the heart of the process. The success of the programme depends on the public's response to it. Often viewers find shows without the spin or hype, for example the first *Big Brother* TV programmes found word of mouth the most effective endorsement and credited with its early success. *Big Brother*, a reality TV programme, grew as a national event, a "must watch" seductive shared TV experience. As the series has grown in popularity the PR strategy has been to create a huge platform even before it is viewed by the public. The aim of the communications strategy is to create an experience that unites a demographic, unites a nation. The messages therefore throughout the campaign process must be consistent and the values of the programme must be consistent across different platforms.'

Source: Beresford 2005a

Examples of new technology in the arts, leisure and entertainment industries include:

- introduction of iPods and the transfer of music and other data via MP3 on the internet
- success of ringtones, where music for mobile phones can be downloaded from the internet
- scanning for information, purchasing tickets online
- interactive connections with TV sets, allowing background information to be revealed and votes to be registered with broadcasters.

Endemol UK is an example of an entertainment organisation that has adapted its organisational shape and the delivery of its product (TV shows) as a result of the demands of consumers with the use of interactive technology. (See Mini case study 31.5 and Activity 31.2.)

New technologies are changing the way audiences are accessing the arts, leisure and entertainment sectors. Whether it is buying tickets online for major sports, leisure or arts events, surfing the net for information about up-and-coming stars, seeking reviews of events, exhibitions or competitions before making purchasing decisions, researching news items from web pages or discussing activities with fellow fans or participants by mobile phone technology – all have implications for the way these industries are developing and therefore the work of the PR practitioner.

Increasingly, traditional forms of leisure, for example, are transformed by the new technologies. For example, online gambling is a rapidly expanding sector with new demands on the PR and marketing professional.

Steve Donoughue, CEO of the Gambling Consultancy.co.uk, explains: 'The British gambling industry woke up to public relations with the advent of the National Lottery in 1993. Perceiving a threat to their business for the first time, the gambling industry started to employ PR agencies and strategies to put forward their case and their fears. The next stage was the acquisition of some of the UK's leading gambling companies such as William Hill by private equity houses that then either sold off these companies or floated them on the stock exchange. Either way financial PR was brought in to help sell the assets. By the turn of the century and the launch of the Bud Review looking at changing British gambling laws, the majority of the large gambling companies were permanently employing lobbying agencies as well as having inhouse PR departments dealing with their consumer PR. Throughout the legislative process of the Gambling Act 2005 all the main operators and their relevant trade associations utilised PR lobbying in one form or another' (Beresford 2005b). In 2002 only four casino companies had existing relationships with PR lobbying agencies; by 2005 this had grown to 12.

The image of performing arts festivals in the UK and Europe in particular has recently changed due to the ways in which consumers (or audiences) are accessing information about these events and the rapid growth in their popularity with new target audiences. One example of a major event is the Glastonbury Festival of Music (see Mini case study 31.6, overleaf).

Globalisation

The arts, leisure and entertainment sectors are going global. International sports competitions from the Olympics to the World Cup are viewed by millions across the globe, creating a virtual community across continents. For example, in this new global village, new international consumers of the arts travel to experience exhibitions and events that bring together thousands of people.
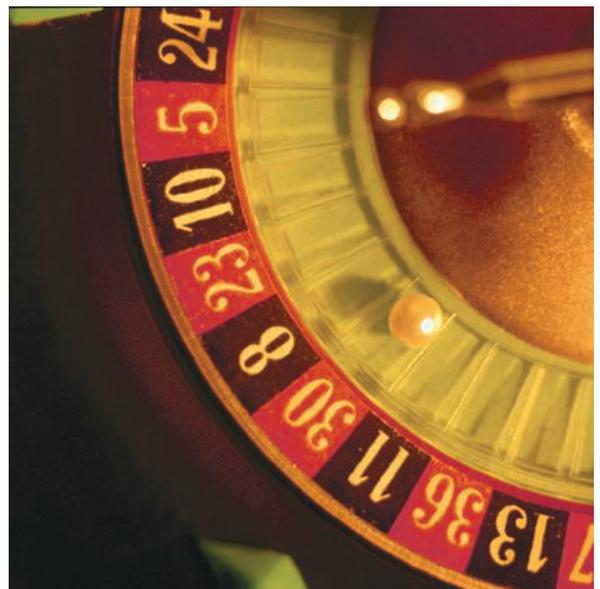
PICTURE 31.1 A thing of the past? Online gambling is a rapidly expanding sector with new demands on the PR and marketing professional.

mini case study 31.6

Glastonbury, UK

In 2004 UK music fans snapped up tickets for the summer rock festivals in record time, yet just a few years previously the outdoor live music scene was predicted to be in terminal decline. UK music festivals such as Reading and Leeds, the V Festivals and T in the Park all reported record-breaking sales after Glastonbury's 112,000 tickets sold out in just 18 hours. International political instability and the fear of terrorism appears to be making people unwilling to travel abroad, and a new generation of music fans shunning club culture in favour of live domestic rock music has been credited with the resurgence. In 2000 tickets for Glastonbury, the UK's premier live outdoor popular music event, were still on sale one day before the event started, and poor sales were being blamed on too many festivals chasing too few ticket purchasing fans. However, in 2004 Glastonbury tickets were changing hands for £400 (four times the official ticket price) on internet auction sites after demand surprised festival organisers. The emergence of online booking clearly has impacted on distribution channels and ticket allocation. While greater online PR has also contributed to public awareness and raised the profile of the event to new audiences.

For an entertainment event that has built its reputation and image on a 'hippy' atmosphere far from modern consumer society, the festival now has little in common with the event's core principles – everyone is welcome and anything goes. Critics observe that the festival has become absorbed into mainstream popular culture, with all the PR/spin/hype that goes with it – so risks losing the magic (the hedonistic/fashionable style) that made it unique and special as a cultural experience/tourism destination.

As the BBC's Ian Youngs observed: 'Whether by accident or design, Glastonbury has become a full blown summer event, like Wimbledon or the FA Cup Final.' It attracts international media attention and is part of the domestic and overseas tourism offer. As most forms of 'alternative culture' have become manufactured and marketed, the media bandwagon has helped sell the 'Glastonbury experience' as one of the last places to turn on, tune in and drop out (this is of course at a market price and if you have ready access to the internet). In reality it appears, the 'hippies' stopped going to Glastonbury some time ago and the event is now solidly mainstream rather than a celebration of a counter-culture.

Source: based on www.bbc.co.uk/entertainment

Art galleries and museums worldwide recorded a sharp rise in visitor numbers in the first years of the twenty-first century, thanks to blockbuster shows featuring artists such as Manet, Matisse and Miro (see Box 31.4, earlier). While some in museum management viewed the increases purely as a populist approach to art due to the need for museums to increase private funding, some directors of major art galleries viewed the survey results positively, believing that it reflects a genuine increase in the number of people interested in the fine arts. This trend is underpinned by the number of people willing to travel to and from the UK to see major exhibitions. The rise in the blockbuster shows was particulary noticeable in Japan, which has three exhibitions in the global top 10 and seven in the top 100.

Globally, the main showcase for the commercial film industry is the annual awards event known as the Oscars. This showcase is the apex of the major US Hollywood studio marketing strategies and provides the ultimate challenge for the entertainment communication professional. The studios, producers and stars all have their own publicity machines competing for global media attention. The organisers of the annual event estimate a global audience reach of 8 million viewers. This is positioned as a 'must-see' globally televised event in the film celebrity calendar.

Celebrity, new technologies and globalisation are factors influencing the creative industries. These factors can be seen as a continuing opportunity for communications to play a central strategic role within arts, leisure and entertainment organisations in a highly visible, highly competitive and highly challenging range of sectors in society.

Three broad strands can be drawn from the chapter's discussion with regard to the strategic role of PR.

Organisational structures

Organisational structures appear to be changing to adapt to media fragmentation and internationalisation. Organisational structures for communications in both commercial and public sector broadcasting are mutating as exemplified in the Endemol UK case study. Traditional PR departments within companies or organisations, structured around media relations, publicity or marketing communication activity are now facing the demands of a digital age, mobile phone technology, interactive real time dialogue

PICTURE 31.2   The 'Oscars' is the apex of the major Hollywood studio marketing strategies and provides the ultimate challenge for the entertainment communication professional (*source:* © L.A. Daily/Corbis Sygma).

with consumers and audiences and powerful activist publics with access to the internet. Those players in the market and in society currently successful in both a commercial and communications sense will be those who adapt positively and quickly to these far-reaching demands.

Product as driver

A core theme running through the case studies with regard to these specialised sectors is that while much marketing theory stresses the importance of customer focus, market orientation (Kotler and Scheff 1997), or an understanding of consumer need, those working as producers, artists, directors, actors, players, stars and athletes view their 'work' as at the centre of their personal and professional success. The product and the producer are viewed as the heart of the debate – the painting, the play, the dance or sports performance, the script or the actors. These product-oriented organisations, while indeed fulfilling effectively consumers' needs are also, from another perspective, operating with a societal role. They are not just determining the wants of target markets, but adapt the organisation to de-

liver satisfactions that 'enhance the consumer's or society's well being' (Kerrigan et al. 2004: 194). The discussion of concepts of culture also highlights the importance to many scholars of valuing the role of consumers in creating the 'meaning' of a work, not just in purchasing the products.

Professionalism in specialised fields of public relations

Increasingly, practitioners in these specialised fields are aware of the need to bring professional values and behaviour to their highly competitive discipline. There is a growing recognition of the benefits of shared understanding, newly developed academic theory and professional standards in PR and marketing communications. In the UK, trade and professional bodies such as the Arts Marketing Association (AMA), the Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR) and the Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM), have all acknowledged the training and development issues arising from the specialist needs of the practitioner in the arts, leisure and entertainment sectors. Certainly in the UK, the management of communications in arts organisations,

for example, is recognised as a distinctive and complex skill (Kerrigan et al. 2004: 193). Evidence for this can be seen in the very creation and development of the AMA from its formation in 1993. The association now has 1500 members and hosts a broad programme of flourishing events. These include high-profile conferences attracting well over 400 arts professionals from across the UK and beyond. At an organisational and practitioner level, these sectors have embraced many mainstream PR and marketing tools and theories. Indeed, in the academic world, conferences and academic papers on the promotion of festivals and other major arts, leisure and entertainment events are proliferating, establishing a new body of knowledge about these specialist areas of PR and marketing that feeds back into the now broad 'communications profession'.

Looking to the future it is important to appreciate the changing role of the PR practitioner in the dynamic landscape of the arts, leisure and entertainment sectors. The following may be identified as key requirements:

- understanding of the fundamental planning and management processes
- appreciation of tools and techniques employed in these specialised sectors
- professional empathy with requirements and nuances of these arts and cultural organisations
- insight into specialist channels of communication employed by this sector
- understanding of niche consumers or audience's needs or desires
- awareness of fashion trends and the ephemeral and transient nature of much work in these sectors
- flexibility, the proactive embracing of new trends, resilience to uncertainty and welcoming of 'the new' and creative

activity 31.3

Questions for further research

Consider the following questions in the context of your own country of origin. Try to draw out comparisons with other countries. What are the potential differences or similarities? How do you account for these? What social, political, economic or technological factors impact on these questions? Can PR and marketing theory be applied to answering some of these questions? Do you think new theoretical models and concepts are required in arts, leisure and entertainment PR and marketing in the future? How could this specialised and adapted communications theory assist these sectors?

- How can an arts, leisure or entertainment organisation attract and develop new audiences or members?
- How can arts or leisure organisations increase the frequency of attendance of its current members/audience?
- How can an arts or entertainment organisation, such as a theatre or a film production company, create offerings, products and messages to which its target audience will enthusiastically respond without, at the same time, compromising its 'artistic' integrity?
- Why should artistic directors, artists, managing directors and board members take communications seriously and make it a central part of the organisation's decision-making process?
- How can arts, leisure or entertainment organisations work in partnership with each other to achieve their goals more effectively and efficiently than they could do on their own?
- In such dynamic environments as the arts, leisure and entertainment sectors, can organisations develop long-range strategic communications plans?

- awareness of the continuing impact of technological change in terms of tools, channels and technological consumption trends.

See Activity 31.3.

Summary

The chapter has outlined key elements of a variety of different activities in the culture industries, providing facts and figures to illustrate the current status of these activities. It has also provided a wide range of case studies to offer more in-depth analysis of how different issues are impacting on given arts and leisure organisations.

As well as looking at the practical aspects of the culture industries, the chapter briefly discussed some relevant theories that explore the concept of culture.

The practice of PR in these sectors was examined, particularly where it differs from PR in other sectors, as well as the demands of arts organisations and their need for strategic and tactical PR skills.

Finally, the chapter looked at how the growth of celebrity, new technology and globalisation are affecting PR in arts and cultural organisations.

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