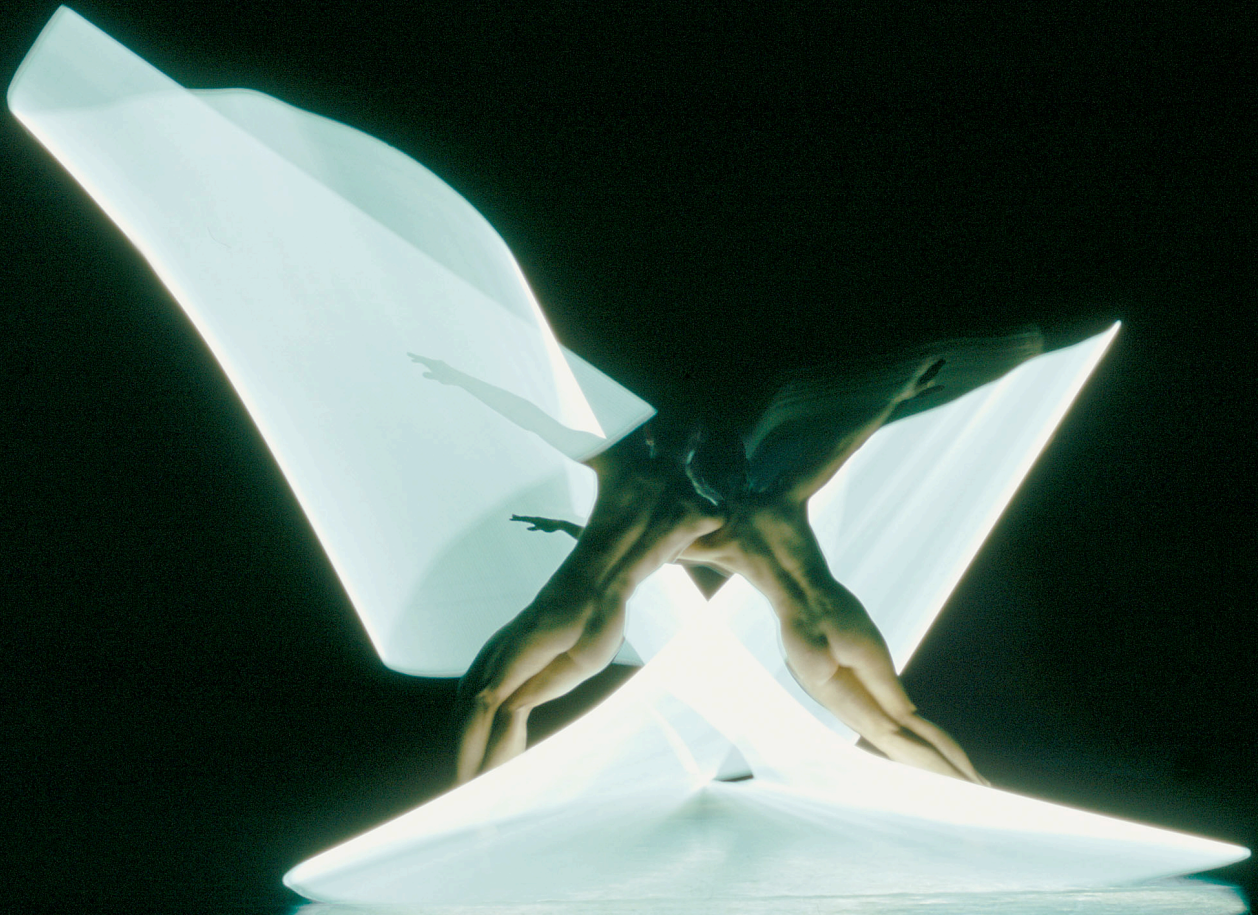


The Caterpillar and the Butterfly

Making Publicity for Dance

“The Caterpillar does all the work but the Butterfly gets all the publicity”
George Carlin (stand-up comedian, 1937)



Publicity in Dance Companies in The Netherlands: A Qualitative Research

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Illustration cover: Jean Marc Spaans | Moods and Moves | Nederlands Dans Theater

The Lobster Quadrille

Will you walk a little faster?" said a whiting to a snail,

"There's a porpoise close behind us, and he's treading on my tail.

See how eagerly the lobsters and the turtles all advance!

They are waiting on the shingle--will you come and join the dance?

Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, will you join the dance?

Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, won't you join the dance?

"You can really have no notion how delightful it will be

When they take us up and throw us, with the lobsters, out to sea!"

But the snail replied, "Too far, too far!" and gave a look askance--

Said he thanked the whiting kindly, but he would not join the dance.

Would not, could not, would not, could not, would not join the dance.

Would not, could not, would not, could not, could not join the dance.

"What matters it how far we go?" his scaly friend replied.

"There is another shore, you know, upon the other side.

The further off from England the nearer is to France--

Then turn not pale, beloved snail, but come and join the dance.

Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, won't you join the dance?

Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, won't you join the dance?"

Lewis Carroll, Alice in Wonderland

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Introduction

Introduction to the subject

I gained interest in dance at an early age. As a little seven year old I trained classical ballet and on my twelfth birthday I visited a performance of the Nederlands Dans Theater with my friends for the first time. From that time on my interest for (especially) modern dance gradually evolved. By seeing dance performances I am enabled to place emotions in another dimension. Dance teaches me to see things on an abstract visual level. My internship with the Nederlands Dans Theater last year, where I worked for three months at the marketing and communication department as an assistant to the publicity officer, was a logical outcome of my interest in dance. During my work period at this department, where I was able to see several rehearsals besides performances, my involvement in the world of dance grew more intense. That is why I decided to concentrate on this sector for my master Cultural Economics and Cultural Entrepreneurship.

Just as the other girls in my ballet class, I did not turn out to be a ballerina. But I still am in love with dance so much, that I am perfectly content when thinking about ways to improve publicity for dance. During my time at the Nederlands Dans Theater I learned that supporting the art by making it known involves hard labor. Therefore the American comedian George Carlin's wisecrack "*The caterpillar does all the work, but the butterfly gets all the publicity*" seemed so apt to the way I felt when I started out this investigation, that I stole the two keywords and his quote for my title.

I like to introduce my subject by way of exposing some definitions of dance. Nowadays dance is often defined as: movement in time and space. Dance is the changing in shape and place of a human body (Utrecht 1988, p.15) This way of describing dance in fact only covers the exterior form. Defining dance this way is a recent development.

I am not particularly happy with this definition. Clouds passing through the sky also display shapes changing in space and time. With this definition, one could call the playing of the clouds dance too. This seems inappropriate. That is why it is often added that dance concerns movements made for the sole purpose of movement. That is to say that the movements of the dance are performed for themselves and not because they are useful in the sense that they serve a purpose outside the art.

Aristotle mentions dance as a prime example of *mimesis*. With the word *mimesis* he meant an expression of a spiritual inner world, the mental realm of thought, feeling and intentions (Utrecht 1988, p.15). In accordance to Aristotle's concept of *mimesis*, dance can be described as the expression of the mental realm or the spiritual inner condition of the dancer. Following this line of thought, what actually happens on stage, the movements in time and space, spring forth from a psychological or spiritual impulse. This spiritual source of the dance is primarily emotional in character. We can say that dance stems most of all from feeling. This does not mean that dance would not be able to express something else than feeling. Dance is the expression of a state of mind. Generally speaking it can express itself through emotional cognitions such as observations, thoughts and fantasies as well as intentions such as desires. Dance has its emotional impact on the viewer.

This being the case, the question is how to communicate this emotional impact to a potential visitor.

Relevance of the subject

I chose to concentrate on publicity because of the manifold uses of publicity in the cultural sector in general. In recent years cultural institutions have been forced to concentrate more on attracting audiences. They have to follow more business-like procedures and put more focus on marketing.

As the cultural sector is known for its poor financial condition, the most obvious way to gain the public's attention is through publicity, for this is a relatively cheap way to make a product or institution known. Because the cultural sector has amassed a lot of experience in this field

by now, it seems interesting to examine how publicity works in the cultural sector. Knowing how publicity benefits the cultural sector may make it possible to develop a model in the future, from which other sectors can benefit too.

Dance according to the UNESCO classification exists out of folklore, classical ballet, modern dance. For this research I focused on modern dance. I wanted to answer my research question:

How do modern dance companies in the Netherlands use publicity?

Structure and setup of the thesis

This master thesis consists of two parts, one theoretical and one investigative.

Part one will sketch a theoretical outline. After a short introduction to the subject the first part argues the relevance of the subject and states the problem to be investigated. The first chapter will elaborate on marketing as it is described in general for the cultural sector. Here I will deal with, among others, the Marketing mix and the function of promotional activities in the performing arts. Because general marketing theories pay very little attention to publicity, and mass communication theory might, chapter two will introduce mass communication theory. Following several mass communication models, this chapter will explain what publicity is according to the communication theory. In chapter three I will firstly apply the previous theories on cultural marketing and mass communication to the expectations of the publicity officers. This will lead to several assumptions on how I expect these officers think that publicity will work for them. Secondly, I will introduce a theory on publicity in cultural organizations by Dr. Th. B.J. Noordman, my thesis supervisor. Because there is no theory about the use of publicity by cultural organizations available and he has developed one, very recently I decided to test this part of his theory.

The third chapter leads to the second part of this thesis, which will consist of an investigation. Starting from the theories described in chapter two and three, some assumptions will be formulated regarding the publicity behavior of Dutch modern dance companies. These will be

checked with the actual practice of five Dutch dance companies. How I am going to do this I will treat in chapter four. The results of this will be described in chapter five.

Chapter one: Marketing in the performing arts

1.1 Introduction

The number of performing art organizations in The Netherlands is very high and the demand is in relation to the supply small. The number of non-profit performing arts organizations increased by over 80 percent between 1982 and 1997. At the same time revenues for the average non-profit performing art organizations have declined. The revenues of non-profit arts organizations fall into three main categories: direct or indirect government subsidy, earned income from ticket sales and other business activities, and a small percent philanthropic contributions. The ones who love the performing arts: music, dance, opera and theatre want to see them flourish (Kotler and Scheff, 1997, p. ix). Most of the performing art organizations in The Netherlands however receive strong financial support from the government.

Since World War II most performing arts organization in Europe have depended on government subsidy. This has allowed these organizations to spend most of their time on the creation of art instead of worrying about finances. But since the nineties of the last century the situation is changing. The government now develops more rules for art organizations when applying for subsidy and is more hesitant toward subsidizing the arts. For this reason performing art organizations have to become more independent from the government. They have to look for alternative financial sources and they have to become more involved in attracting audiences. Attracting audiences in a systematic way is called marketing. Marketing allows performing art organizations to get information about their audiences and their incentives to consume the performance.

The competition and the need to attract a large enough audience by cultural organizations only has grown the last few years. Kotler was the first who pointed out that non profit cultural organizations had to compete for attention of visitors just like profit organizations (Colbert 1994).

According to Kotler marketing will help art organizations to learn and understand how to attract audiences by creating special offers (Kotler and Scheff, 1997). Nowadays performing art organizations will have to compete with each other and with other leisure activities, for example, theme parks and home entertainment. Art organizations are part of the experience economy (Pine and Gilmore, 1999).

Marketing is described by Kotler as the process by which an organization relates creatively, productively and profitably to the market place, with the goal of creating and satisfying customers within the parameters of the organization (Kotler and Scheff 1997, p. 31). Kotler states that the subject of marketing is making people ready to buy (Kotler and Scheff 1997, p. 33). It is about getting to know your customer and creating a product that fits the customer so well that the product will sell itself.

Marketing is an instrument that can help organizations and customers come closer to one another. There are four important marketing tools that can be used to change the market position of an performing art organization. The so called four P's of marketing are: product, price, place and promotion (Floor en Van Raaij, 1989). More over the P's of promotion are the so called sub-P's of promotion: advertising, personal selling, public relations, sales promotion and publicity. Publicity is an important promotional tool for performing art organizations which is not always distinguished well from advertising and public relations. All these marketing tools will be elaborated in this chapter.

Since Kotler and Scheff, arts marketing is written about a lot. Some books are written about arts marketing in general, for example *Marketing Culture and the arts* by Colbert, who adapted the marketing model and the traditional marketing tools, in such a way that cultural organizations could use them. But books are also written about specific art sectors for example *Standing room only; marketing strategies for the performing arts* by Kotler and Scheff, who adapt marketing tools to a specific sector. Is this because art organizations in general and performing art organizations require a special type of marketing?

1.2 Arts marketing

Why do art organizations in general and performing art organizations require a special type of marketing?

“L’art pour l’art” (Gautier, 1811-1872)¹ is a very important principle in the arts. Artists are creative people and they make the art they want to make according to their creativity. Whether the audience may like it or not. The fact that the product is not adapted to the taste of the audience is an important issue in the arts sector. Marketing in general is based on finding out what customers want and then adapting the product to their desires. In economic terms, the arts are primarily concerned with supply and not with demand. That is the reason that the arts require a special type of marketing. L’art pour l’art interferes with the basics of the marketing model. The product, one of the four important marketing tools, is not adapted to the needs of the audience. So art organizations in general and performing art organizations require adapted or different marketing tools and techniques.

1.3 The marketing mix

The marketing mix is the basis of any marketing strategy. It is the combination of the so called four P’s a company is using. The four P’s stand for product, price, place and promotion. Successful marketing depends on a skilful balance of the components of the marketing mix (Colbert 1994, p.19). Although the four P’s form a whole, there is a logical order in defining them. Marketers must first know the product being sold before pricing it or deciding about its distribution (Colbert 1994, p.20) The components of the marketing mix can be used individually, but are more effective when they are brought together.

1.3.1 Product in the arts

The product is the most important instrument when it comes to marketing. When there is no product there is nothing to market. As we have seen before the art product can not be adapted

¹ Theophile Gautier (1811-1872) was a French writer. He began as a romantic writer but later he disliked this movement because of its extravagance. Then Gautier becomes a theoreticus and defends the l’art pour l’art doctrine.

to the desires of the customer. This makes planning ahead and designing long term marketing strategies for the performing arts sector difficult.

The performing arts product itself is intangible, one can not touch it, predict it or fully explain it. For example, when you go to see a ballet performance you will never know how it will be before you have seen it. Maybe you know who the dancers are or who the choreographer is but you do not know what exactly is going to happen. And the personal circumstances under which you are going to see the performance are never the same. Consumers never perceive a product without their consumption context (Boorsma 1998 A p.209). The affective consumption of art deals with the emotions which can occur when art products are consumed. The consumption of art is influenced by the emotions of the consumer. For instance it makes a difference if someone feels happy or sad before seeing the performance. Perhaps one just had a fight with his partner before they went to the theatre. The affective consumption effect can also incorporate esthetic emotions (Boorsma 1998 B p.212).

The real product of a performing art company is very difficult to define. Boorsma created a model in which the total art product is exposed in five layers (Boorsma 1998 A p. 211). Firstly there is the (artistic) core product, together with the facilitating and supporting characteristics there is secondly the basic product. Thirdly she defines the augmented product in which the added characteristics and additional marketing variables are included. Fourthly, the augmented product in the broad sense with the contextual factors. And finally there is the total perceived product with the perceived consequences and procedures.

According to Boorsma's model the performance of a performing arts organization is their actual product. The actors, dancers, music and the choreography or composition are all part of the basic product (Boorsma 1998 A p.211). The place where the play is performed is also a part of the basic product. The so called total product of a theatre can only be reached if there is a performance and the total product of a performance can only be accomplished if there is a

theatre to perform in. The augmented product of a performing arts organization might be an introduction before a dance performance.

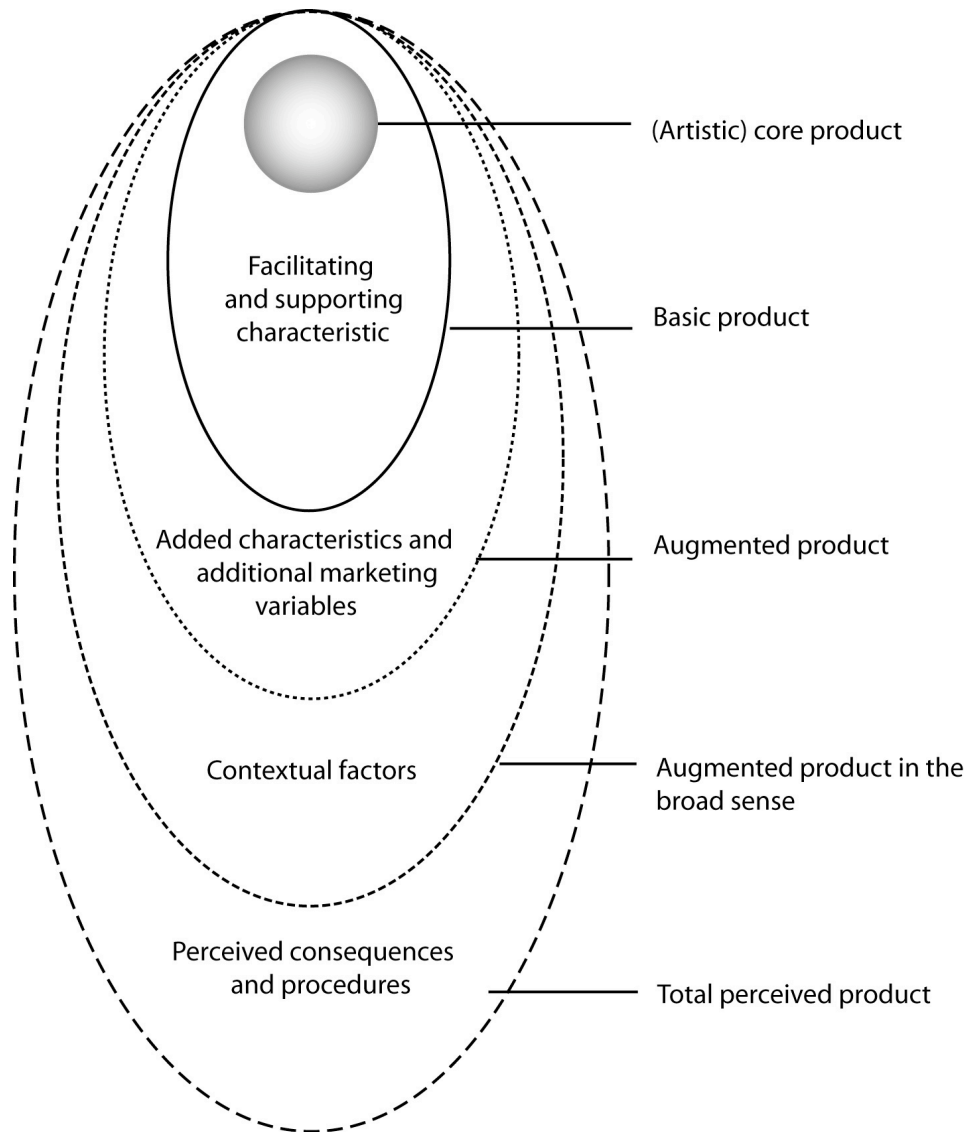


Figure 1. Total arts product in five layers (Boorsma, 1998A, p 211)

The total product includes the effect on the consumer of consuming the performance. Some possible effects of going to a performance are relaxation, enjoyment, learning something or being inspired. It is also a social event, one may go there with friends or their partner and

there are also a lot of other consumers who are watching the performance. The fact that you experience it with others is important for the whole experience.

A lot of performing art companies do not exactly know what their product is and for this reason do not know how to market themselves. The ability to distinguish its product, the performance from those of its competitors is difficult for performing art organizations. One could think that the product is only the performance but for performing art companies the product can to a certain extent also be the company itself, the choreographer or the “star dancer”. Moreover performing art companies have their image to consider which they should use in their marketing strategy. Performing art organizations therefore first have to articulate what their product is. Otherwise they can not make a marketing plan for their performance. How can you design a marketing plan for an intangible product? You have to explain to your customers what they can expect. The experience largely depends on yourself, as a visitor. To create an expectation with people, they need some kind of framework.

1.3.2 Price

The price is the second element in the marketing mix. Every product has a price, which is the monetary value attributed to the product (Colbert 1994, p.20). Price is however also the effort that a consumer must make in the act of buying the product. For example, when a performance is free there are still costs involved for traveling to the theatre. So, there is always a price to pay for a product even when it is free. The amount paid for a product is not necessarily equal to the labor costs involved. Components of a work of art, for example a painting, in general have a much lower value than the finished product. The uniqueness, fame, and symbolic value of an art piece may increase the price consumers are willing to pay (Colbert 1994, p.20).

Price as a marketing tool is the token value the visitor pays for a ticket. The marketer considers how much the consumer is prepared to pay and sets the price accordingly.

1.3.3 Place

The place is the third element in the marketing mix. The location of the venue is an important factor in the success or failure of companies selling directly to the customer (Colbert 1994, p.20). For example when a theatre is very difficult to reach or located in a bad neighborhood, people will easily decide not to go there. Also the distance from the customer to the location of the theatre is important. The place component however comprises not only the location where the product is sold. The physical distribution, and distribution channel are part of it as well (Colbert 1994, p.20). Especially for the producing companies the logistics of distributing the product are considered. And it is important for them to focus on the relationships and the various agents within a channel, by the performing company. The theatre, therefore, must be carefully selected. For a performing art organization there are four possible distribution places: the street, a general- or specialized theatre, a alternative place, a performance in a church is an example of a alternative stage, and a festival.

1.3.4 Promotion

Promotion is the fourth and last element in the marketing mix. The element promotion comes also last in the first sequence of the marketing mix (Colbert 1994, p. 20). There are different types of promotion: advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, and public relations (Colbert 1994, p.20). Promotion is the bridge between the company and the marketplace.

1.4 Promotion in the performing arts

Promotion is first and foremost a communication tool, an instrument transmitting the official corporate message and image of a product or company (Colbert 1994, p.170). Promotion is a tool of change that enables a firm to modify perceptions, attitudes, knowledge, and awareness. As such, promotion can educate the consumer about a product in varying degrees (Colbert 1994, p.170).

There are three key promotional objectives (Colbert 1994, p.170): Information comes first, by its promotion the company lets consumers know that the product exists and provides the es-

sential details, such as the time and the place of the performance and ticket prices. The second objective is persuasion, convincing consumers to buy the product through additional motivations, such as the quality of the performance, appearance of for example famous dancers, uniqueness of the program, social prestige or recognition and personal enrichment. And the last objective is education, to give consumers the tools and codes they need to evaluate the specific features of the product. When consumers are better informed they are better prepared to consume the product. These five sub instruments form together the instrument promotion.

1.4.1 Advertising

Advertising may be defined as the impersonal means which a company uses to communicate with its target market (Colbert 1994, p.171). Advertisements that are developed for a specific medium and may target the general public at the same time, are called mass advertising. And advertisements that are developed for a highly specific public, are known as targeted advertising. The poster is used frequently by performing art organizations. This is however, apart from being a means to attract immediate attention, should it be considered as a support for the other advertising tools used (Colbert 1994, p.171). Customers may not always see a poster and the average amount of time spent reading a poster is very short.

The advertised message, whatever its medium, has a limited life span (Colbert 1994, p.171). Because of the limited life span of messages one of the most important aspects of advertising is that the message is simple (Colbert 1994, p.171).

1.4.2 Personal selling

While advertising uses an impersonal approach, personal selling transmits messages from one person to the other. For this reason it can be used effectively to transmit more complicated messages (Colbert 1994, p.171). Personal selling is not simple. The success depends on the knowledge of the seller. An inexperienced or uninformed seller will never be able to take away objections the customer might have.

There are eight steps that must be followed to ascertain the success of personal selling (Colbert 1994, p.172):

1. Prospecting: find the potential customers.
2. Preparation: prepare a strategy how to contact the customers.
3. How to approach the customer.
4. Diagnosis: to find out the customers needs.
5. Presentation: persuading the potential customers.
6. Dealing with the objections of the customer.
7. Closing the deal.
8. Following up: make sure the customer is satisfied

Personal selling does not necessarily take the form of a conversation, it can also be done through the telephone or for a whole group at the same time.

1.4.3 Public Relations (PR)

Public relation (PR) is the third promotion component. PR is defined as “the management function that evaluates public attitudes, identifies and individual or an organization with the public interest, and plans and executes a program of action to earn public understanding and acceptance” (Colbert 1994, p.172).

1.4.4 Sales Promotion

Sales promotion can be divided into three sections: sales aids, motivational items or programs, and spin-off products (Colbert 1994, p.173). Sales aids are usually small objects that are given away for free. For example pencils with the company logo printed on it. Motivational items or programs are used to encourage customers to buy. Reduction coupons, contests, subscription gifts, and special offers as “buy one, get one free” actions are invented for this purpose (Colbert 1994, p.173). Examples of spin-off products or merchandise are: T-shirts, recordings and posters that can be sold. These are goods that are related to the companies main product and they generate a separate revenue. Sales promotion is usually applied to customers, but it may also be targeted towards retailers and distributors.

1.4.5 Publicity

A very important promotional tool for performing arts organizations is publicity, which is meant to obtain media interest. To get journalists to write about their productions, cultural organizations send press releases and invitations. There are different stages to send out invitations: Before the performance, to the press, for example to invite them to a press meeting. Invitations for attending the premiere to the peers and target group. And afterwards to the sponsors. The main goal of publicity is to get emotional binding with the media and the audience. Through publicity in the media performing art organizations build up credibility through a third party. Meaning someone's spreading, hopefully a good word, about the company that isn't coming from the company's own paid advertising.

Although publicity is a very important promotional instrument in the arts, in the arts marketing literature there is not much written about publicity. Almost everything that is written about marketing is derives from Kotler who based his cultural marketing theory, as it has appeared in Scheff and Kotler, on general marketing theory. In the profit world publicity is not used as much as in the cultural sector. Therefore Kotler had much reason to develop a theory on publicity, so it can be understood. However in the arts marketing theory it is not always clear what the differences are between advertising and publicity. For example sending a press release to a news paper is considered to be publicity rather than advertising (Colbert 1994, p.171). In a lot of cases publicity is mistaken for advertising, but advertising is not the same as publicity. The most important difference between publicity and advertising is that advertising communicates particular messages and always involves some kind of payment. Whereas publicity communicates a broad spectrum of messages and is always free. Free publicity of course cannot replace direct response advertising as a way to generate leads (Hudson, 2006; 53, 5). It can, however, increase the company's name recognition and remind the customers of the existence of a performance.

There exists confusion about public relations (PR) and publicity. According to Colbert press releases and conferences, speeches and presentations, free air time on radio or TV, and general

media coverage are all examples of PR (Colbert 1994, p.172-173). Although, publicity is a function of PR, public relations and publicity are not the same. It is important to distinguish clearly between the public relation function, which deals with a variety of the shareholders of the organizations distinguished publics (employees, board members, volunteers, audience members, the media, governments, and sponsors), and the publicity function, which deals almost exclusively with media relations. It should also be noted that since many cultural organizations focus the bulk of their PR activity on the media, they have a tendency to equate public relations with publicity (Colbert 1994, p.173). Kotler only mentions public relations in which he include, media relations, publicity about products, corporate communication, lobbying and counseling (Kotler 1996, p. 430).

1.5 The function of promotion

Promotion has two main functions: to communicate a message and to bring about a change in the attitude of the customer (Colbert 1994, p.174).

When a performing arts organization wants to communicate a message a number of codes can be used, for example visual, graphic, symbolic or written codes. These codes must be perceived and understood by the customer.

Communication involves the active participation of both the sender and the receiver. The codes pointed out above do not ensure the correct routing of the message. There are several possible disturbances, called interference, that can influence the transmission of the message (Colbert 1994, p.176). For example, the impact of critical reviews in a news paper. Reviews influence the potential customers perception and understanding by intervening directly in the communication process without the sender being able to foresee the impact (Colbert 1994, p.176). Customers looking for a product choose the message they want to see or hear. A customer who wants to see a ballet performance willingly looks at the ads placed by the ballet companies in the news paper. Selective perception implies that the consumer notices only certain messages because of the urgency or importance of personal needs (Colbert 1994, p.177).

This mechanism explains how consumers seeking a book title can find it in the window of a bookstore without even seeing the other books displayed there.

1.5.1 AIDA formula

Besides communicating a message, promotion tries to generate positive attitudes toward the product to create a change in the customer. This happens in four steps: attract attention, create interest, generate desire and provoke action. Also known as the AIDA formula (Colbert, 1994, p. 176). AIDA is an acronym used in marketing that describes a common list of events that are very often undergone when a person is buying a product or service.

- Attention (Awareness): attract the attention of the customer.
- Interest: raise customers interest by demonstrating features, advantages, and benefits.
- D- Desire: convince customers that they want and desire the product or service and that it will satisfy their needs.
- Action: lead customers toward taking action and/or purchasing.

The AIDA model guides organizations by reminding them that any successful promotional technique must eventually lead to an action, or the purchase of the product or service.

The choice of the promotional tools a performing art organization can use depends on the complexity of the message and the target markets knowledge of the product (Colbert 1994, p.178). Simple messages can be delivered easily through advertising, while more complex messages requires a more personal approach. The complexity of the message is often related to the complexity of the product as perceived by the customer.

1.6 Conclusion

The need for performing art organizations to use marketing tools has been growing the last few years. Marketing for performing arts organizations is fundamentally different from marketing in general. The main reason for this is that the product, one of the four important marketing tools, can not be changed according to the desire of the audience. Instead of adapting

the product to the marketing, the marketing will have to adapt to the product. L'art pour l'art is a very important principle in the arts. This makes planning ahead and designing long term marketing strategies for the performing arts sector difficult.

Arts marketing also differs from marketing in general in that the arts product is intangible. It is difficult to convince people to consume a product when they do not know exactly what is going to happen. And even if you do know what is going to happen, the circumstances under which you are going to see the performance are never the same. The consumption of art is moreover influenced by the emotions of the consumer.

Promotion is an important element in the marketing mix. The four main tools commonly used in promotion are advertising, personal selling, public relations, and sales promotion. The foremost used tool in performing arts organizations is publicity. Publicity is a promotional tool by itself. Publicity may be a function of public relations but they are not the same. It is important to distinguish clearly between the public relation function which deals with a variety of stakeholders, and the publicity function, which deals almost exclusively with media relations.

Although publicity is the foremost promotion instrument in the arts, in the arts marketing theory there is not a lot written about publicity. Almost all that is written is stated on Kotler who based his cultural marketing theory on general marketing, where publicity is not used as much as in the cultural sector. Therefore a proper theory should be developed. We have to know more about the characteristics of publicity and in order to do this we have to look outside the marketing theory. In the next chapter is looked at publicity according to the communication theory.

Chapter two: Publicity in general according to the mass communication theory

2.1 Introduction

How publicity works might be explained by the communication theory. In this chapter I will try to find out if this is indeed the case. I will start with a short introduction to the Communication theory and what it says about the process of mass communication, which is what publicity is. With a better understanding of mass communication theory, performing art organizations might be in a better position to predict and control the outcomes of its publicity efforts. The act of communication can be observed from several points of view, but two of the most important are that of the source (the media practitioner), and that of the receiver (the audience) (Severin/Tanker, 1992, p.4). Some areas of mass communication theory are particularly helpful to the publicity officers in trying to accomplish specific communication goals. Other areas of communication theory might be more helpful in understanding the uses of mass communication by the audience.

“Communication is the transmission and exchange of information with a certain content” (Cuilenburg, 2003, p. 13). Communication is one of the most essential characteristics of a society, people can not exist without communication (Cuilenburg, 2003, p. 13). Communication happens between two people or between groups of people, this is called interpersonal communication. But there are also examples of communication that have the intention of reaching a whole community or the whole world, better known as mass communication. Mass communication is the term used to describe the study of various means by which individuals and entities relay information to large segments of the population all at once through mass media (Cuilenburg, 2003, p. 17). The mass media is that section of the media that is designed to reach a very large audience.

Mass communication can be viewed from the point of the media practitioners. For a news reporter, the intended effect may be merely to have a news story read and understood, to achieve exposure and comprehension. For some media practitioners, such as the creator of an sales advertisement, the intended effect may be to get audience members to purchase the product, in other words to achieve behaviour change. (Severin/Tanker, 1992, p.5). The publicity officer in a dance company for example, usually attempts to achieve certain effects on an audience. Such as create interest for their production.

The various communication effects that can be intended of the media practitioner have been described in several lists or typologies. An example of a hierarchical communication model was developed by McGuire, 1973 (Severin/Tanker, 1992, p.5). McGuire’s “matrix of persuasion” was developed in particular to clarify the process of attitude change.

Factors in the communication process	Behavioural steps
The source	Presentation
The message	Attention
The channel	Comprehension
The receiver	Yielding
The destination	Retention

Figure 2.1. “Matrix of Persuasion”, McGuire 1973 (Severin/ Tankerd, 1992, p. 5)

Mass communication can also be viewed from the point of the audience. Then the question rises if it is desirable that the media direct attention towards certain topics?

So here the concerns are somewhat different from the concerns of the media practitioner. The audience member is likely to be more concerned about the uses of mass communication than about its effects (Severin/Tanker, 1992, p.6). Mass communication theory can help to understand the various uses the audience makes of the mass media and can perhaps provide valuable information about desired uses that the media practitioners are not meeting. One of the problems for audience members in the 21st century is the growing issue of information over-

load (Severin/Tanker, 1992, p.14). Some writers have gone so far as to say that the audience for mass communication is no longer a receiver but a “victim”(Severin/Tanker, 1992, p. 6). There is a lot written these days about the “information explosion” and the “communication revolution”. The enormous amount of information that is available today through a variety of media, leaves the audience feeling “bombarded” (Severin/Tanker, 1992, p.14).

2.2 Mass communication models for the practitioner

In this paragraph I will look at models in mass communication research that can be useful for the media practitioner. Mass communication theory can be used to help the media practitioner communicate better with its audience. In the cultural marketing theory the only one who uses mass communication models is Colbert in *Marketing culture and the arts* (1994). He used a couple of communication models but is not very specific about them. This is why I will elaborate them in this paragraph to get a better understanding of how mass communication works.

In paragraph 2.3 I will focus on the effects of mass media on the consumers.

All communication models share a common basis, they all deal with (a.) senders: the ones who start the act of communication, (b.) encoding: the process by which symbols or written elements are combined and coordinated, (c.) messages: organized signs, symbols and other elements transmitted to the receiver, (d.) decoding: the process by which the receiver attempts to understand the meaning of the signs, symbols and other elements, and (e.) the receiver: this may be an individual, an organization, or a group who may or may not be predisposed to receive the message.

2.2.1 Colbert's use of communication models

In *Marketing culture and the arts* (1994) Colbert uses “the communication plan” which he derived from an early communication model of Lasswell (1948). This model can explain many general activities in mass communication by way of a simple structure of analyses.

- Who
- Says what
- In which channel

- To whom
- With what effect

The “who” raises the question of the control of the message, the gatekeeper. A gatekeeper determines what information is passed along the chain and how faithfully it is reproduced. A newspaper is a gatekeeper, deciding what to present to its readers (Severin/Tanker, 1992, p. 43). The mass media are usually characterized by a high output and a low input. This means that relatively few people produce the news, entertainment, advertising and publicity that are seen, heard or read by millions of people. The “what” is the kind of message to send. “In which channel” means that the company must consider the best way to reach the target market (Colbert, 1993, p. 181). “To whom” refers to the target market. A company must know who its audience is. And “with what effect” means that the company must know what the effects are on the actions of the audience by receiving the messages.

In Colbert’s “communication plan” (with regard to Lasswell) he is however also using a part of a model designed by Shannon and Weaver (1949) when explaining how communication works. To get a clearer view of these mechanisms, in the next paragraph we will have a closer look at the model of Shannon and Weaver.

The model by Shannon and Weaver has been developed further by Schramm (1954). Colbert is using the model of Schramm (1954) in his figure where he is trying to say something about the importance of feedback in the communication process. “Feedback is the receivers reaction to the message as perceived by the sender”. *“Feedback is important in that it enables the sender to adjust the communication process according to his or her perception of the receiver’s response”* (Colbert, 1994, p. 174).

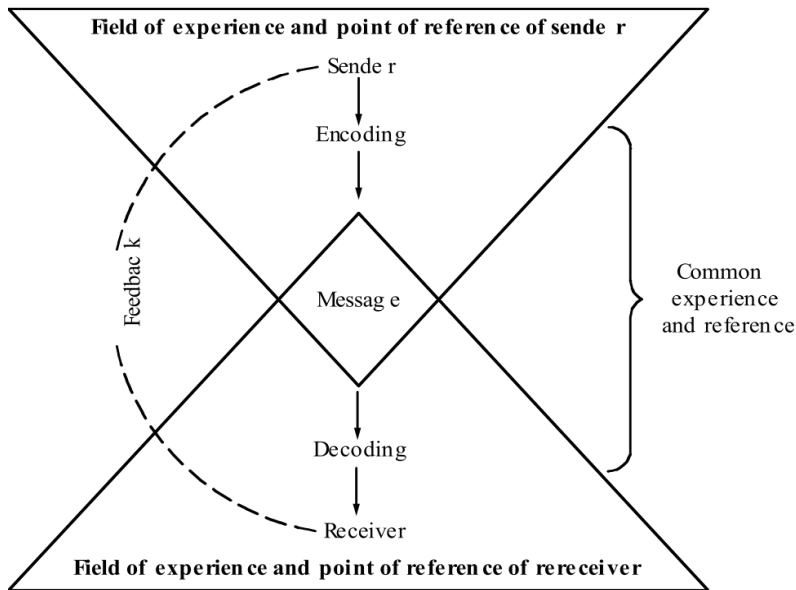


Figure 2.2. Colbert's model inspired on the second Schramm model "How communication works"

In his book *Marketing culture and the arts* (1994) he mentions "psychological defence factors" which play a role in diminishing understanding and even blocking messages transmitted by the mass media. These factors act as filters and enable consumers to select messages (Colbert, 1993, p. 176). Selective perception is an example of a defence factor. Another mechanism is selective retention, which enables the consumer to retain only part of the message received and perceived (Colbert, 1993, p. 177). Interest has a significant influence on retention, but the consumers needs and values also have a effect on which messages are actually retained.

2.2.2 Shannon and Weaver's model: Noise source

In 1949 two engineers, Shannon and Weaver, published the *Mathematical theory of communication* which has been the most important stimulus for the development of models and terminology in the study of communications (Watson, 1996, p. 34). Shannon and Weaver set in progress lines of investigation and theorizing which focus on the production, supply side, of mass communication. Essentially the authors of this model studied the nature of communication by telephone.

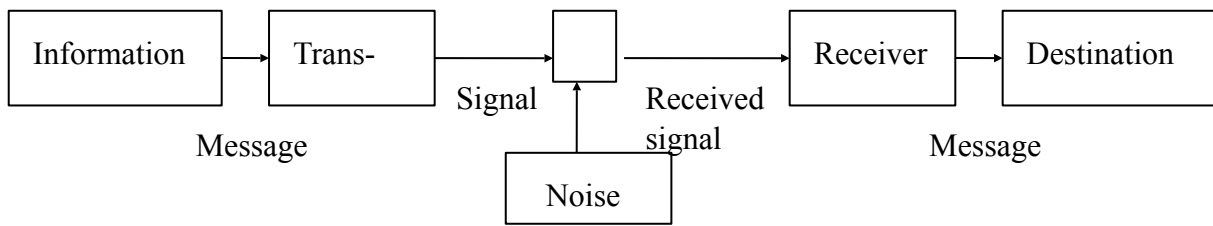


Figure 2.3 Diagram of Shannon and Weaver's General communication system (Watson, 1996, p. 34).

The most useful part of the model, for understanding how the communication process works is the “Noise source”. The noise source has come to describe a whole range of factors which “get in the way” of the clarity of the message in-between the transmitter and the receiver of the message (Watson, 1996, p. 35). They found that despite as much as 50 percent information is lost through interference, the basics of a message could still be understood (Watson, 1996, p. 35). There are different kinds of “noise”, for example “technical noise” distractions such as things of interest happening outside the window when you receive the message. “Semantic noise” for example when we do not understand the language through which the message is expressed. Even when the encoder and decoder share a common language the use of particular expressions or specialist terminology can be a barrier to effective communication. And there is “psychological noise” for example when you are worried, or have just received bad news you distrust the communicator (Watson, 1996, p. 36).

According to Shannon and Weaver it is important to not confuse information with meaning. Each one of us adds our own meaning to the information we receive (Severin/Tanker, 1992, p. 41).

2.2.3 The Schramm Models

Wilbur Schramm (1954) does not make the sharp distinction that Shannon and Weaver make between technical and non-technical communication, but many of his ideas are inspired by their models (Severin/Tanker, 1992, p. 46). Schramm develops two communication models.

In his first model Shannon and Weaver's "Source" and "Destination" are replicated, but "Transmitter" and "Receiver" become "Encoder" and "Decoder". This is what Colbert takes over. The noise is not only located between the "transmitter" and the "receiver" but much noise is caused by the first receiver himself.

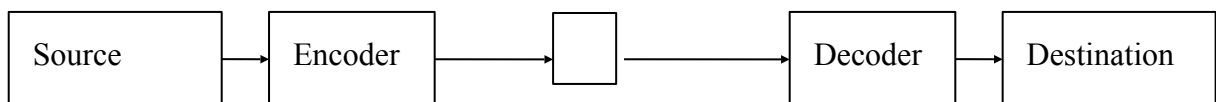


Figure 2.4. The first Schramm model, "How communication Works" (Severin/Tanker, 1992, p. 46).

The distinctive feature of his second model is the recognition of the importance of the "fields of experience" which communicators inhabit. The "signal" occurs where the fields of experience overlap. For example when senders and receivers of a message have things in common like their culture, language, or beliefs, the chances of successful communication are more likely.

In Schramm's second model the encoder is also the decoder. This is selected for publicity because, the publicity officer sends a message to the journalist but the journalist reworks the message for his audience. As we decode, we interpret, thus the message is send, received, interpreted, modified, and extended (Watson, 1996, p. 37). Where fields of experience do not overlap we are likely to locate, as cause or effect, semantic and psychological noise, this may

be deeply embedded in cultural norms and values (Watson, 1996, p. 38). It means that when field of experience do overlap much less noise is heard and caused.

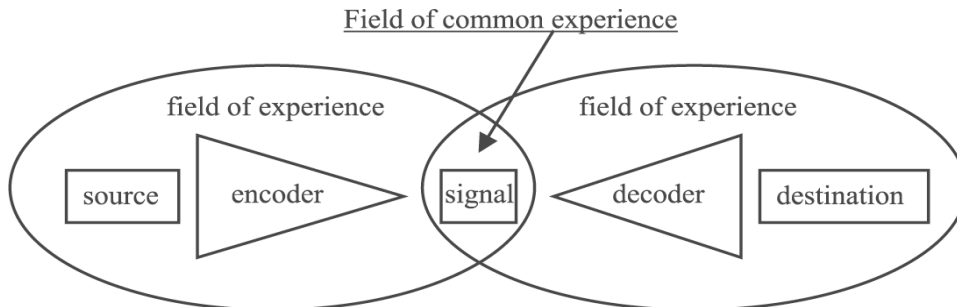


Figure 2.5. The second Schramm model, “How communication work and the fields of experience” (Severin/Tanker, 1992, p. 46)

2.2.4 The Gerbner model

The models described in the last paragraphs explain how communication works but stay very abstract.

A practical communication model that explains how mass communication works best is that of Gerbner (1956). Gerbner elaborated on Lasswell’s model and provided a verbal model that implies ten basic steps in communication (Severin/Tanker, 1988, p. 50). Here I applied this model to publicity in a performing art organization.

- Someone: a reviewer.
- Perceives an event: the reviewer sees a performance.
- And reacts: he likes it or not.
- In a situation: his own physical and social setting plays a role in how he reacts on what he has seen.
- Through some means: he is choosing a form in which he reflects on what he has seen.
- Makes available materials: writes a review for a newspaper.
- In some form: depending on the structure and style.
- And context: depending on the structure and style.

- Conveying content: context analysis and meaning of the review.
- Of some consequence: the changes of what the reactions on the review are.

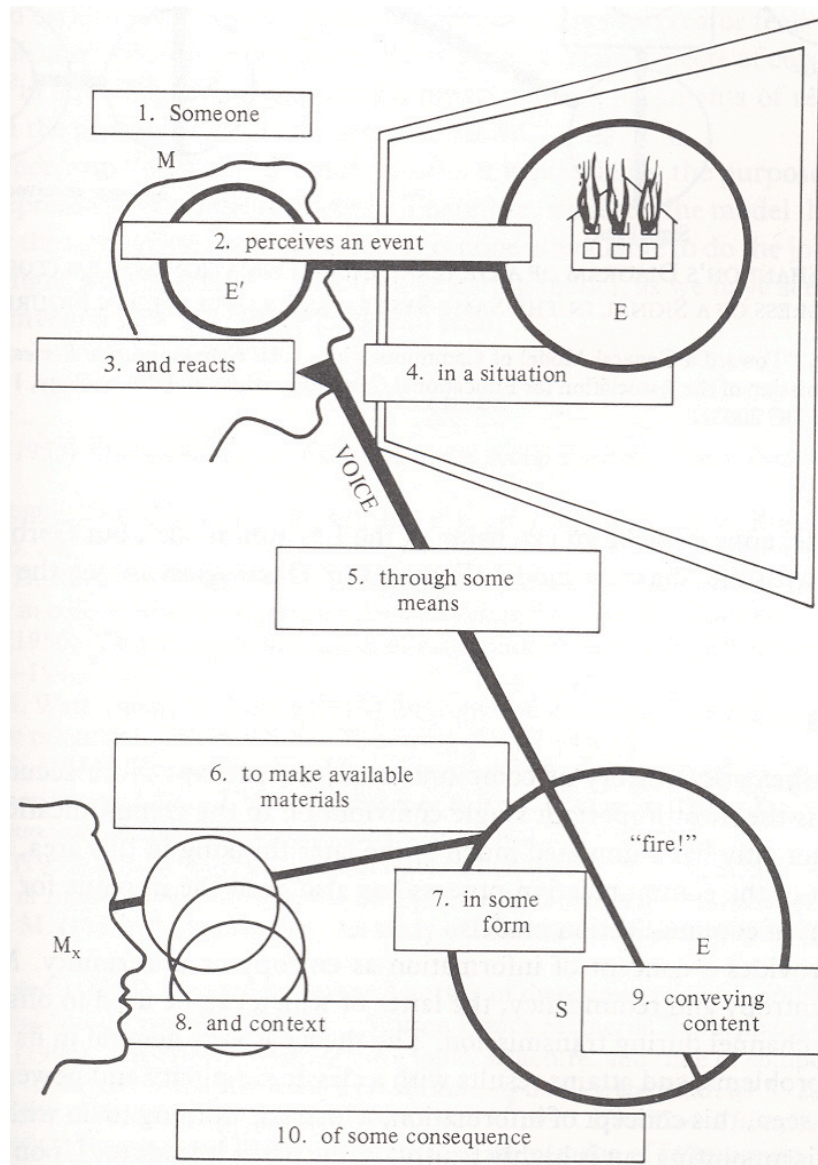


Figure 2.6. The Gerbner model 1956 (Severin/Tanker, 1988, p. 50)

We may conclude that the cultural marketing theory explains communication in general. In Colbert's theory there is no direct connection with publicity. There is no connection made with the "noise" factor, which got a lot of attention in the communication theory.

We could say that communication theory shows us mainly how difficult it is to convey a message to the public, because of the many noises interfering.

2.3 The influence of mass communication

In informing and expressing their own opinions, people often consider the opinions of others, for example the media. An important question is how people form their beliefs about what other people think? The mass media can influence an individual's perception of what other people are thinking (Gunther, 1998, vol. 25, 5 p. 486).

Therefore a major concern of communication theory has been to investigate the actual effects of mass communication. In studying the effects of mass communication we need to explore two linked features of production of the news: agenda setting and news values.

The mass media are a big force in most societies and it is fair to wonder about the effects that it is producing. One of the effects of mass communication seems to be to direct our attention to certain issues or problems (Severin/Tanker, 1992, p. 207). This effect is called the agenda setting function of the mass media, which will be elaborated later in this chapter. The link between media agendas and public perception of what constitutes news is important to explore. The communicator (media practitioner) cannot be sure that the meaning intended in a message will be seen by the members of the audience. The receiver (the audience) of the message has a very active role in assigning meaning to the message. This is called perception. The psychological definition of perception is: “*the complex process by which people select, organize, and interpret sensory stimulation into a meaningful and coherent picture of the world*” (Berelson and Steiner, 1964, p. 88). This definition points out the active role a person plays in perception. Perception is based on past experiences, cultural expectations, and motivations like needs, moods and attitudes.

Do the media have the power to shape, modify or alter the attitudes of the audience towards a performance? If the public looks to the media for news, what the media decides is news is what the public recognize as news (Watson, 1998, p. 112). What is emphasized by the media

is given emphasis in public perception, what is amplified by media is enlarged in public perception.

2.3.1 Agenda Setting

An agenda is a list of items usually categorized in order of importance. For example, meetings have agendas which have to be followed. As far as the media are concerned one should not expect that the agenda is similar to the public agenda. What is most important to the public does not appear on top of the media agenda. Wherever there are competing interests, rival ideologies or conflict priorities, agendas are a struggle. This goes for media too. Reporters may wish to pursue certain agendas, but their activity will be controlled by the agendas of ownership and control (Watson, 1998, p. 112). Agenda setting theory investigates how it comes that some events or issues rather than others have been given priority. It seems that every potential news item passes through a number of media gates and at each gate there is further selection.

This is illustrated by Donald McCombs and Malcolm Shaw's agenda setting model of media effects from 1972 (Watson, 1998, p. 112). Their model explains that audiences not only learn about public issues and other matters through the media, they also learn how much importance is given to an issue or topic from the emphasis the mass media place upon it. In reflecting what people say, the mass media apparently determine the important issues. In this way the mass media are supposed to set the agenda.

McCombs and Shaw argue that the agenda setting capacity of the media makes them highly influential in shaping public perception of the world. *"The ability to affect cognitive change among individuals is one of the most important aspects of the power of mass communication"* (Watson, 1998, p. 113). Their model assumes one agenda, that is supplied by the media, which then becomes the agenda of the public. Of course publics also have their own agendas, shaped by their own personal circumstances. There are a lot of "intervening variables" which influence the perception and judgments of the public other than media coverage, but the me-

dia are one of the most powerful, especially if all the media are promoting the same subject in similar ways. For example, when a single newspaper is saying that performance X is very promising this may not sway public opinion. But when ten newspapers are saying the same thing, and the TV channels report what to say ten newspapers are saying, the performance is driven to the public agenda. Now here seems to be a connection with publicity. If ten reviewers write in a positive way about a performance and the TV is reflecting this, there will develop a run on the tickets of that show. But this particular circumstance seldom happens. In most cases only one or two reviewers publish their opinion.

There are many gates and there are several agendas, so we should get to know more about the question: whose agenda are we talking about, and articulated through which discourse? (Watson, 1998, p. 115). There is much more to the agenda setting process than merely what is important and what is less important. Having been placed in a hierarchy of importance, stories are shaped into a discourse, as a way of defining and presenting information and ideas, of creating preferred meaning out of which will hopefully arise preferred reading (Watson, 1998, p. 115). And eventually the encourage to visit a performance. We could say that news is a discourse, and news production anchored by the ideology of the news producers who employ them, particularly if we are talking about the press. Moreover we would like to know if the ideology of the reviewers determines this discourse. The degree to which the media agenda is also that of the public, its discourse an influential part of public discourse, depends in a large part upon the standing of the media in public perception (Watson, 1998, p. 116). Again we would like to know if the standing of the media influences the possible visitor.

Despite all the research on agenda setting there still is not a very good understanding of the process (Severin/Tanker, 1992, p. 225). This is a pity, agenda setting is important because it suggests a way that the mass media can have an impact on society that is an alternative to attitude change. There is evidence that the media are shaping people's views of problems that face society. The problems emphasized in the media may not always be the ones that are dominant in reality. The same might go up for news on performances. For a journalist the

concept of agenda setting raises important questions of responsibility. The labels that journalists apply to events can have an important influence on whether the public pays attention to the event. For the publicity officer agenda setting suggests the importance of framing an event in the right way in order to catch the public's attention.

2.3.2 News Values

When we look at agenda setting the value of the news plays an important role. Ten values have been defined by Galtung and Ruge (1995) (Watson, 1998, p. 118):

- Frequency: if the event takes a time approximate to the frequency of the medium's output of news, hourly, daily, or weekly.
- Amplitude: the bigger, the better, the more dramatic, the more likely the event is to achieve what is called "threshold value".
- Un-ambiguity: the more uncomplicated the events, the more they will be noticed and reported. Finding an event complicated or ambiguous, the media will generally work towards simplification.
- Familiarity: which is familiar to us, about which we know something, is considered important because events affecting them could also be events affecting us.
- Surprise: news values compete with one another. The value of surprise goes above that of predictability. Which is unexpected may well prove a vital news value.
- Correspondence: once a story is up running it will often continue to be covered even past its sell-by date in terms of headline potential. It is the interest of the media to keep stories simmering because there is always the potential to give an old tale a new twist.
- Composition: this value arises from what Galtung and Ruge call a "desire to present a balanced whole". A lot of bad news cries out for some balance with good news.
- Elite-ness: the importance of the presence of elite people. They have titles, positions and they are easily referenced. The power of the elite has a symbolic value.

- Personification: the potential for personalizing a story, by emphasizing its human interest, is a critically important factor of news, one invariably operated by the popular press. For every issue or event there has to be a person to associate with.
- Negativity: it seems that some media think “the only good news is bad news”. Bad news creates bad impressions. We carry images of people, groups, communities and nations in our heads which have been placed there by the media. Because the media are preoccupied with outcomes, the audience rarely acquires information beyond the bad news. We are told what but rarely how and why.

The more an event satisfies news values, the more it is likely to be selected. Once an item has been selected what makes it newsworthy will be pointed out, and the process will recur at each phase of production as the item passes the audience (Watson, 1998, p. 122). The more elite the source is the more newsworthy the story. The elite not only are the news, as pointed out before, but they make the news. It is not only important what people do but also who is saying what. “*Talk is news only if the right person is talking*” (Watson, 1998, p. 123). For the publicity officer the news value is important because the more an event satisfies news value, the more likely it will be selected high on the media agenda. It is for instance interesting to find out what meaning is attached to elite-ness and personification by the publicity officers.

2.4 Conclusion

In this chapter I looked at mass communication theory in order to get a better understanding of the process of mass communication. Publicity can be considered a form of mass communication. Mass communication theory is the study of various means by which individuals and entities relay information to large segments of the population at ones through mass media.

All communication deals with senders, encoding, messages, decoding and the receiver of the message. There have been several models designed that try to explain how mass communication works. I derived from some models a particular view.

From Lasswell's model we can derive the importance of the "who" question, or the gatekeeper function. A newspaper is a gatekeeper and performing art organizations need to know which newspaper or magazines are read by their target market. For the audience it is important who says what. If it is a well-known reviewer from a well-established newspaper people are probably more likely to believe what they read. What a good reviewer or newspaper is, in other words "in which channel", also depends on the taste of the public. The kind of message to send is also important in understanding mass communication. Performing art organizations always hope the reviewer is positive about the performance and writes a favourable article about their effort. It is finally important to keep your reviewers satisfied and give them enough information before, during and after the performance. For example to give them a portfolio and a program before they visit the performance and be present to answer questions afterwards.

Shannon and Weaver introduced the "Noise source" in the communication process. Different noise sources: technical noise, semantic noise, and psychological noise can influence the transmission of the message. The technical noise and the psychological noise are hard to overcome on beforehand. But the semantic noise can be avoided by paying attention to the use of symbols and terminology that the target market understands. It is also important to know that despite 50 percent of the information is lost through interference, the basics of a message can still be understood. An other important thing we can learn from Shannon and Weaver is that each of us adds our own meaning to the information we receive. Everybody is looking at things from its own perspective and opinion and how one sees it depends on the situation one is in at the moment one is receiving the message.

From the Shramm models we learned that the "fields of experience" play an important role. Most reviewers of cultural events are to be considered experts, they fulfill the gatekeeper function. The "field of experience" in the performing art sector is very small. There are relatively few people who like the performing arts and know the culture and language that is used

in this field. If you do not understand this culture the chances of successful communication are minimal.

The effect of mass communication on the audience is important to examine. The agenda setting theory explains the correlation between the rate at which media cover a story and the extent to which people think that this story is important. The agenda setting function claims that what the media finds important will eventually be mirrored in what people think is important. McComb and Shaw tested the agenda setting theory in 1972. They wanted to show that the media have the ability to influence what issues people think about, even if they do not tell people what to think of these particular issues. According to McComb and Shaw's model the ability to affect cognitive change among individuals is one of the most important aspects of the power of mass communication. The agenda setting theory suggests the importance of framing an event in the right way in order to catch the public's attention.

The more an event satisfies news value, the more likely it will be selected high on the media agenda. There have been a number of news values defined what makes something newsworthy. The gatekeeper function or elite-ness of the media source is important as well. The more elite the source is the more newsworthy the story.

Chapter three: Some assumptions about the practice of publicity

3.1 Introduction

I would like to investigate publicity in modern dance companies from two angles. The first is the viewpoint of the publicity officer: What are his expectations of the effects of all his publicity efforts? The theory shown in the former chapters has given us some clues for steering our research. The second angle is the way how performing art companies in The Netherlands could use publicity. This angle is based on literature on how to use publicity.

3.2 Assumptions about the expectations of the publicity officer

The publicity officers in performing art organizations have certain expectations about the effects of publicity on the consumers. The most obvious expectation is that they expect to create a attitude change in the consumers towards their performance. We have seen that the main goal of publicity is to get emotional binding with the media and the audience.

So we may assume that publicity officers in modern dance companies expect to realize an emotional binding with the audience by its publicity activities.

Other assumptions could be put forward. Through publicity in the media performing art companies for instance build up credibility because the message is sent by a third party. Publicity involves a certain amount of objectivity, that is the journalists are spreading, hopefully a good word, about the company that isn't coming from the company's own paid advertising efforts. And there are several other expectations on the effects of publicity. We will try to find out about them along the way.

The most important goal of publicity is to generate a positive attitude towards the product. So the consumer feels a strong desire for the product and hopefully even acts by buying a ticket.

The main goal of publicity therefore is to produce a change in the customer. I refer to chapter two.

The complexity of the message is often related to the complexity of the product as perceived by the customer. Actually there are six stages in the process that leads a potential buyer from ignorance to action. Research shows that the chances to actually provoke the customers to action are very small. The highest goal to reach with advertisement and publicity is interest and if your lucky desire (Colbert 1994, p.177).

We therefore may assume, that the publicity officer in modern dance companies does not expect to realize action, that is to say an actual ticket sale, when doing publicity. He is supposedly aiming at creating interest for his product.

Estimates have shown that the average consumer is exposed, consciously or unconsciously, to somewhere between 250 and 3000 messages daily (Colbert 1994, p. 176). These messages are received while the consumer reads the morning paper, listens to the radio, watches TV, or glances at a poster or billboard. Out of all those messages, approximately seventy-five will actually be perceived and only twelve will be retained (Colbert 1994, p. 176). The different noise sources: technical noise, semantic noise, and psychological noise can influence the transmission of the message. Any company trying to attract the consumers attention faces an difficult task, especially given the number of messages.

We may therefore assume, that the publicity officer in modern dance companies is aware of the fact that the consumer is receiving publicity messages from their own perspective and opinion. He is aware of the presence of selective perception and acts accordingly.

In Chapter two we have seen The Shramm models that showed how the “fields of experience” play an important role in the communication process. Most reviewers of cultural events are to be considered experts, they fulfill the gatekeeper function. The “field of experience” in the

performing art sector is very small. There are relatively few people who like the performing arts and know the culture and language that is used in this field. If you do not understand this culture the chances of successful communication are minimal.

Therefore we may assume, that the publicity officer in modern dance companies takes it for granted that their public understands this culture.

It is furthermore important to examine the effect of mass communication on the audience. The agenda setting theory explains the correlation between the rate at which media cover a story and the extent to which people think that this story is important. The agenda setting function claims that what the media finds important will eventually be mirrored in what people think is important. McComb and Shaw tested the agenda setting theory in 1972. They wanted to show that the media have the ability to influence what issues people think about, even if they do not tell people what to think of these particular issues. According to McComb and Shaw's model the ability to affect cognitive change among individuals is one of the most important aspects of the power of mass communication. The agenda setting theory suggests the importance of framing an event in the right way in order to catch the public's attention.

We can assume that the publicity officer is trying to get the performance as high as possible on the media agenda. The publicity officer in modern dance companies will expect that what the media finds important will eventually be mirrored in what the consumer thinks is important (agenda setting theory). He expects then that when the media pay attention to a particular dance performance as such, this will be enough to develop an interest with the possible visitors.

The more an event satisfies news value, the more likely it will be selected high on the media agenda. In chapter two there have been a number of values defined that makes something newsworthy. Such as, frequency, amplitude, un-ambiguity, familiarity, predictability, surprise, correspondence, composition, elite-ness, personification and negativity. This would mean that

the publicity strives with every new performance for frequent messages, for amplitude in them, for unambiguous communication, for directing his messages towards the regulars amongst his customers, who can predict when the next message will appear. Moreover he will make sure the reader is surprised, stimulated, inspired and taken seriously by the message. This however is not what interest us particularly at this stage.

We found that the gatekeeper function or elite-ness of the media source is important as well. Therefore we suppose that the publicity officer in modern dance companies expects that the more elite-ness the source is the more newsworthy the story.

One more point we would like to find out. The relationship between publicity and word of mouth. The literature is not very specific on it. Publicity afterwards focuses on the experience after the performance. Every customer can start the word of mouth, this is why this part of publicity is important (Noordman, 2007). The main point is to bring about interest for the production.

From this I assume, that the publicity officer in modern dance companies expects to stimulate the word of mouth with product information.

3.3 How performing art organizations can use publicity

In this paragraph I will try to explain how performing arts organizations can use publicity. In chapter two we have seen that in the cultural marketing theory the differences between advertising, PR and publicity are not always clear. Publicity is mistaken for advertising or PR and publicity is not clearly described. We however would like to find out the application of publicity in itself, for in the performing arts sector the most used promotional tool is publicity.

In the previous chapters I have approached publicity from the point of view of the media (the in-direct way), because this is the way publicity is presented in the theories, which I have explained in those chapters. But according to Noordman there are two different ways to involve

the public with publicity. The direct and the in-direct way. In the direct way the publicity department itself circulate messages to inform the public. In the in-direct way journalists are invited to a performance in the hope they write a positive piece about the production.

Actually Noordman has developed a theory about publicity as such in his upcoming book *Cultuurmarketing* (Noordman, 2007). I was given the opportunity to use the concept chapter *Publiciteit* from his book. This chapter explains his ideas regarding my question about the actual proceedings and products of the publicity officer. The main purpose is to get the production on the media agenda so the public reads about the production and gets curious about it. After all it is known that about one third of the public says that the reason to go to a performance is because they read a review (Noordman, 2007). The company should get the word of mouth started, because also one third of the public claims they go to a production because they heard word of mouth (Noordman, 2007).

It is important to realize that the experience of culture by the public exits of three layers, firstly the decision to go to the performance, secondly the experience of the production itself, and thirdly experience afterwards (Noordman, 2007). During this third stage word of mouth will, hopefully, entice others to attend to the performance. Gatekeepers or critics have the ability to influence the opinion of customers.

According to Noordman there are several reasons that point out why performing art organizations use so much publicity: The first reason is that publicity it relatively cheap, performing arts organizations usually do not have a lot money to spend on promotion.

Therefore I will assume that modern dance companies use mostly publicity instead of other promotional tools because of their limited financial means.

Noordman mentions however more reasons. The second reason for instance is the limited time of a production standing in a theatre, it is very expensive and takes a lot of time to do promotion for every new performance.

The third reason is that publicity is a good way to reach a wide audience. It gets as much people as possible involved with the production.

One more reason, however, could be the intangibility of the arts product. It is difficult to define what the real product of a performing art company is and how they should promote this product to the consumers. The performing arts product itself is intangible, one can not touch it, predict it or fully explain it. For example, when you go to see a ballet performance you will never know how it will be before you have seen it. Maybe you know who the dancers are or who the choreographer is but you do not know what exactly is going to happen. And the personal circumstances under which you are going to see the performance are never the same.

I assume, then, that's modern dance companies are not aware of the difficulties of making publicity for an intangible product.

In practice there are three time stages for publicity (Noordman, 2007): Before the performance by giving for example interviews and sending out invitations to the media. The second stage is during the performance, by giving out programs and explaining the content of the performance. And the last stage is the one after the performance, to stimulate "word of mouth" publicity.

Publicity on forehand should give the public a perception of the production, so that the customer can get an idea about the intangible product (Noordman, 2007). One of the goals of publicity before the performance is to find the right people for the performance.

Publicity during the performance focuses on helping the public enjoy the performance. It intends to suggest an attitude open to a good or inspiring time. Human interest and logistics

need not to be part of this publicity because the customer is already in the theatre. (Noordman, 2007). The information needs to be more profound and to the point. People appreciate it when there is enough information available during the performance. For example programs give useful information about the performance and the artists.

Publicity afterwards focuses on the experience after the performance. Every customer can start the word of mouth, this is why this part of publicity is important (Noordman, 2007). The main point is to bring about interest for the production or product information. Product information exists from press information, leaflets, folders and brochures and trailers to hand out before the performance. Programs during the performance and yearbooks, catalogues, CD's and DVD's or other merchandise can be sold after the performance (Noordman, 2007). The name of the company reflects on the product (Noordman, 2007).

I assume therefore, that modern dance companies use publicity before, during and after the performance.

In the phase before the performance people need as much motives as possible to go to the performance (Noordman, 2007). The best way to accomplish this is to play along with the emotions one might experience during the performance. Art organizations should inform and involve the public who might be interested in the production beforehand. Before the performance performing art organizations should inform and involve the public who might be interested in the production. In the first place people must be told about what is going to happen and how to get it, and moreover feel emotional affection with the performance. Most of the information available before the performance concentrates on human interest, the content of the performance and the logistics (Noordman, 2007).

A lot of activities of the publicity department must be ready before the performance. For example: Synopsis, press information, leaflets, flyers, brochures, messages to "friends of the theatre", invitations for previews and premieres, interviews with the stars and reviews of ear-

lier productions. But also DVD's with acts, and the website must be ready for use before the first production. This takes a lot of work for the publicity officer.

One may assume here that modern dance companies know who their target market is when they do publicity.

There are three forms of publicity: Firstly there are views, to interest the public by generating interviews and reviews. Secondly there are invitations, to invite the press to a performance. And thirdly product information, to give out materials to make the people discuss the performance afterwards. On this aspect which I will elaborate further in this chapter.

Here I would like to find out if the publicity officer indeed is categorizes his activities according to this classification: are the different kinds of publicity used in modern dance companies views, invitations and product information.

The word *view* comes back a lot in publicity (Noordman, 2007). For example the preview before a performance. Around the performance there are always a lot of interviews with for example dancers or choreographers. And after the performance reviews play an important role. View, in other words "to see", refers to making the public eyewitness of the performance (Noordman, 2007). Involvement and commitment are keywords when we want to make someone an eyewitness of something. Someone is emotionally involved with the production, he is considered reliable when it comes to word of mouth because he was there. Potential buyers give the preference to see something for themselves before they buy it. In the performing arts this is difficult because of the intangibility of the arts product. The different views can help to overcome this problem. Those who have not seen the performance have to be convinced by the people who have seen the performance, and whose opinion they trust (Noordman, 2007). To make eyewitnesses is crucial when it comes to marketing of intangible products (Noordman, 2007). Important eyewitnesses in the cultural sector are critics or gatekeepers, they have to convince outsiders that it is worth while to go and see the performance.

In the performing arts sector premieres play an important role. This is why invitations to premieres are a very important category of publicity in performing art organizations. The most important question is: who do you invite? It is important to invite the right people to stimulate word of mouth. The ones who are important enough to be at the premiere get an invitation and a social gathering afterwards (Noordman, 2007). The first performances of a performing art company has a promotional function, the people who are there are suppose to start the word of mouth. Mostly these are people from the press but also ministers, the royal family, high placed citizens out of the target groups and business people.

According to Noordman this second category of publicity can also be divided in activities before, during and after the performance. Before the performance you invite the press and important people out of the target group. During the performance the target group. And afterwards you provide hospitality, to involve sponsors with the performance (Noordman, 2007).

I assume therefore, that modern dance companies invite important people out of their target market for premieres.

The last category of publicity exists out of the distribution of product information. Products are at the centre of marketing and are the most basic marketing tool (Kotler, 1997). Several strategic and tactical marketing decisions, such as the innovativeness of new products, pricing products, and distribution expenditures all depart from the product.

Consumers will buy products that they are aware of and that provide value to them. They would only take action towards products they are interested in (Mooy, 1998). By using marketing communication the producer of a product wants to influence the customers mind, change his attitude, or persuade the consumer to behave (Kotler, 1997). The consumers mind is influenced not only by demonstrating how a particular product can satisfy his needs better than other products, but also by providing consumers with information about the product's existence and about the product attributes.

To allow the product to be the object of communication it should communicate different kinds of information. The central aspect of the product, for both the consumer and the designer is

the product function. Consumers do not only buy a product for the product itself, but also for the expected benefit of the product (Mooy 1998). An important distinction can be made between primary and secondary functions. The primary function refers to functional needs or direct outcomes of the product use, while the secondary function refers to symbolic needs or indirect outcomes of the product use (Mooy 1998). Products give consumers the ability to communicate something about their personality to others by simply using the product. For example a ballet yearbook on the table or a painting of Karel Appel on the wall express to others that you are an art lover.

Another interesting question is the connection between publicity for a particular performance and the image or brand of the company. The main goal of publicity is to get the interest of the public for the product not for the company itself. The purpose is to make the production visible to the public, especially the core product. The danger in this is that the publicity stays limited and goes into another direction with every different production (Noordman, 2007). It is important to create the opportunity to identification with the product. This means that it might be important to emphasize the common characteristics in every single production, for example the genre or style of the company, the signature of the choreographer or artistic director (Noordman, 2007), because they refer to the identity of the company. If that is the case, it means that the publicity officer takes care of constant elements being present in the publicity materials. From hereon, I will call them *the constant factors in publicity*. According to Noordman it is important to pay attention to the constant factors in the publicity, with should be moreover permanent, typical element, which are moreover different from its competitors. If you pay attention to these elements the publicity might make your company a brand (Noordman, 2007).

I assume therefore that the publicity officer in modern dance companies takes care of the constant factor in the publicity materials.

3.4 Conclusion

In this chapter I have made a link between the use of publicity in the performing arts as described in the literature and possible practices and assumptions of publicity officers in modern dance companies.

In the cultural marketing theory the difference between publicity and PR and advertising are not always clearly described. Nevertheless publicity is the most often used promotional tool in the performing arts sector. The main goal of using publicity is to get the public interested for a production. There are three stages in using publicity: before the performance (i.e. reviews), during the performance (i.e. programs, information on content) and after the performance (i.e. word of mouth). It's important for a (dance) company to focus on all three, but especially word of mouth is of great importance, because with this tool many people can be reached, with practically no effort.

The literature on publicity shows us how modern dance companies could use publicity in their effort to reach their audience. By trying to do so, the publicity officers will have assumptions on how to use publicity tools and what effect their actions will have. I have derived several assumptions and expectations on the use of publicity in modern dance companies from the theory on publicity. The most important expectation is that publicity officers want to create a attitude change in the customers toward their performance.

These assumptions will be tested in a research that aims to describe how modern dance companies in The Netherlands use publicity. There are two levels on which I will investigate publicity in modern dance companies. The first is the way how modern dance companies actually use publicity. The second level are the expectations of the publicity officers towards the effects of publicity towards the customers. In the next chapter a description will be given about the research conducted and the methodological choices I have made.

Chapter four: Method

4.1 Introduction

In the past three chapters a theoretical framework for my research has been constructed. In those chapters I firstly have looked at what has been written about publicity in the marketing literature. Secondly I tried to find out what publicity is according to the mass communication theory. And thirdly I formulated several assumptions about how publicity works in dance organizations and the expectations of the publicity officer of dance organizations towards publicity.

In this chapter the layout and methodology of my research will be explained. I will start to explain the aims and objectives of my research, including the research questions that are the basis for my research. Secondly I will discuss the chosen research method and how I have selected my population.

4.2 Aims and Objectives

With this research I aim to find out how dance companies in the Netherlands use publicity. The aim of this research is to investigate a phenomenon that is used a lot but about which is not written much. Because the cultural sector has amassed a lot of experience in the field of publicity by now, it seems interesting to examine how publicity works here. Knowing how publicity benefits the cultural sector may make it possible in the future to develop a model from which other sectors can benefit, too.

It is an explorative research, there are no statistical data available on the matter. I chose to research the use of publicity by professional dance companies in the Netherlands. In order to do so I have formulated a number of propositions which reflect my assumption regarding the possible outcomes of the research.

Every research needs to focus on the question: “What do I want to find out?” In this case the main research question is:

How do dance companies in the Netherlands use publicity?

4.3 Research Method

To answer the research question, a decision on the research approach has to be made. There are two general research approaches; qualitative and quantitative research. Quantitative research deals with possible relationships between variables that are identified before the data collection. These relationships are presented in the form of hypotheses and are tested statistically (Seale, 2004, p.14). Therefore this type of research is used in cases in which statistical data are available or can be generated. Specifically for quantitative research is that it excludes observations of behaviour during the process (Seale, 2004, p14).

On the other hand, qualitative research attempts to avoid stating hypothesis and therefore qualitative research can be unstructured. Nevertheless, on the whole researchers find that people’s words provide a greater access to their subjective meaning than do statistical trends (Seale, 2004, p.14). “*Qualitative research is a process of inquiry with the goal of understanding a social or human problem from multiple perspectives, conducted in a natural setting with the goal of building a complex and holistic picture of the phenomenon of interest*” (Seale, 2004, p.53). Qualitative research involves a profound understanding of human behaviour and the reasons that regulate human behaviour. It investigates the why and how of decision making, as in opposition to what, when and where that are investigated in quantitative research. Hence, the need is for smaller but focused samples rather than large random samples. From which, qualitative research categorizes data into patterns as the primary basis for organizing and reporting results. This type of research is especially useful when design formats are in the early stages of development and no statistical data are available (Seale, 2004, p.53). Publicity is used a lot in the cultural sector but there are no statistical data available on the matter. It is a

explorative research, which means that its outcome can be a design for a new theory. This is why I choose to do qualitative research to answer the research question.

There are different types of qualitative research. For example case studies, here the researcher explores a single entity or phenomenon (the case) bounded by time and activity (e.g. a program, event, process, institutions or social group) and collects detailed information through a variety of data collection procedures over a sustained period of time. Then there are ethnographic studies where the researcher studies an intact cultural group in a natural setting over a specific period of time. This can be a group of individuals who share a common social experience, location or other social characteristic of interest. Or phenomenological studies, where human experiences are examined through the detailed description of the people being studied. The goal is to understand the “lived experience” of the individuals being studied, this involves studying a small group of people intensively over a long period of time. But for this research I choose for the survey, where questionnaires or interviews are used for data collection with the intent of generalizing from a sample population to a larger population of interest. In a survey the same questions are asked to all respondents.

The main reason to choose a qualitative survey is because it provides a deeper understanding of a subject. This is exactly what needs to be explored in this research.

This research will be conducted by doing interviews. The interview where conducted one-on-one, and lasted between 30 and 60 minutes. The interactive nature of interviewing makes it highly flexible but also somewhat unpredictable (Seale, 2004, p. 180) Therefore in using interviewing as a tool of social research, we need to be aware of the many different variables which will affect the outcomes. These will include who is doing the interviewing, who is being interviewed, the location in which the interview takes place and the form of questioning. In this research the interviews were conducted by using an open-ended question list based on the theoretical framework. The interviews were held with the publicity officers on the management level of large dance companies in The Netherlands. I choose to interview this sort of functionaries because they know most about the use of publicity in their company. More then,

for example, the artistic director. The aim was to let the interviewees describe the reality from their point of view. The assumptions in chapter three helped me to formulate my questions. To ensure the accuracy of interpretation in this research several publicity officers of several dance companies were interviewed, If only one was interviewed, the accuracy would be considerable less.

All the interviewees were interviewed in person. The data were recorded onto a Dictaphone. This data were later transcribed into a Word document to analyse them.

4.4 Assumptions

In chapter three fourteen assumptions are formulated on the basis of the theories read. The first half on the theories of Colbert and the general communication theory and the second half are founded on the theory of Noordman. The assumptions were divided into assumptions on how dance companies actually use publicity and on the expectations of the publicity officer towards publicity.

Assumptions about the expectations of the publicity officer towards publicity:

9. Publicity officers in dance companies expect to get emotional binding with the media and the audience by doing publicity.

This assumption has been tested with the following questions:

- What do you want to bring about with your publicity an emotional or a rational binding with the public and media?
- How do you want to accomplish this?

10. The publicity officer in dance companies does not expect the highest goal to reach with publicity is to create interest for their product.

This assumption have been tried to answer with to following question:

- What do you think the highest goal is which you can reach with your publicity, interest for your product or action to buy your product?

11. The publicity officer in dance companies take it for granted that their public understands the “language and culture” they use in their publicity.

This assumption has been tested with the following question:

- Do you suppose that the form language which you use in your publicity can only be understood by your target group or can it be grasped by the general public too?

12. The publicity officer in dance companies is aware of the fact that the consumer is seeing publicity from their own perspective and opinion (selective perception).

13. The publicity officer in dance companies expects that what the media finds important will eventually be mirrored in what the consumer think is important (agenda setting theory)

These assumptions have been tried to answer with to following questions:

- Do you suppose that what is thought important by the media is eventually picked up by the public?
- Or do you think the public has his own perception, regardless of what is written?

14. The publicity officer in dance companies expects that the more elite-ness the source is the more newsworthy the story.

This assumption have been tested with the following questions:

- Do you think that the worth of an review is increased by being published in a high-brow newspaper (e.g. NRC Handelsblad or De Volkskrant)?
- Do you think that when you have a review in a high-brow paper will bring about more visitors?

15. The publicity officer in dance companies expects to stimulate word of mouth publicity with product information.

This assumption have been tested with the following questions:

- Do you use product information?
- What kind of product information do you use?
- What is the outcome of product information you would wish to see?

Assumptions regarding how dance companies can use publicity:

16. Dance companies use publicity instead of other promotional tools because of their limited financial means.

This proposition was tested with the following question:

- Do you use publicity more often than other promotional means? And if so, why? If not, why not?

17. Dance companies are not aware of the difficulties of making publicity for an intangible product.

An answer of this assumption has been tried to find with the following questions:

- Do you think it is hard to gain publicity? And why, or why not?
- Were did you learn to make publicity?

18. Dance companies use publicity before, during and after the performance

This assumption have been tested with the following question:

- Do you use publicity before, during and after the performance?

19. Dance companies know who their target market is when they do publicity.

This proposition was tested with the following questions:

- At which segments of the market do you aim your publicity?
- Is your publicity aimed at several segments of the market or could your publicity be called mass publicity?
- Do you aim your publicity for different productions to different segments of the market?

20. Dance companies invite important people out of their target market for premieres.

These assumptions have been tried to answer with to following questions:

- Do you use publicity before as well as during and after the performance?
- What is in your opinion the relation between sending invitations and publicity?
- What is in your opinion the relation between interviews, previews and publicity?

21. The publicity officer in dance companies takes care of the constant factor of elements in the publicity materials.
22. Dance companies use publicity to promote single productions instead of promoting the company.

These assumptions has been tested with the following questions:

- Which constant elements do you use in your publicity?
- Do you make publicity for the various productions or publicity intended to make you company better known?

4.5 Population

My research population consists of five professional dance companies in the Netherlands. I choose to look at dance companies because dance interest me and their publicity behaviour seems interesting. Dance companies seem to use publicity quite frequently and more structured comparing to, for example museums. The interviews were held with the publicity officers on the management level of large dance companies in The Netherlands.

I have extracted my population from the database of Dansserver. In this database nearly all the addresses of theatres, performing art companies such as dance companies, producers and impresarios in the Netherlands are listed.

I first made a list of existing dance companies in The Netherlands and ordered them according to the amount of employees working there. From this list I extracted five dance companies to be investigated. For this research I focused on dance companies with a total staff larger then 15 members. We can assume that dance companies with a large staff have a more structured publicity plan then the smaller ones. Dance festivals and dance workplaces where excluded from this list, because I wanted to focus on professional dance organizations. From the seven organizations with a staff larger then 15 members I excluded Het Internationaal Danstheater, because they bring folklore dance, and this study focuses on modern and classical ballet or-

ganizations. Dansgroep Krisztina de Châtel was excluded as well because the organizational size and structure is corresponding with Dance Works Rotterdam.

Professional dance companies in the Netherlands according to Dansserver are:

Dance companies with 0-5 staff members:

- DENSITY Amsterdam
- Gerard Mosterd / Stichting Nieuwe Huizen
- The Dutch don't Dance Division
- Nanine Linning
- Juxtapose
- Vloeistof
- Anoukvandijk dc
- Tafel 9
- Leine & Roebana
- Conny Janssen Danst
- Jeugddanstheater Plankenkoorts
- Beppie Blankert Dance Concerts
- Bewegingstheater BEWTH
- Bianca van Dillen
- Danstheater Aya
- DOX
- Elshout / Händeler
- Emio Greco and PC
- Lieber Gorilla
- Pels – Jakop Ahlbom
- Rogie & Company
- Suzy Blok
- Truus Bronkhorst en Marien Jongewaard

- DC 1 II High
- Gato Bizar
- Gift
- Joaquim Sabaté
- Lamelis
- Magpie Music and Dance Company
- Marcelo Evin / Demolition Inc.
- Memento Dance Company
- Merx & Dansers

Dance companies with 5-15 staff members:

- Dragon Productions
- Meekers Uitgesproken Dans
- Galili Dance

Dance companies with more than 15 staff members:

- Nederlands Dans Theater
- Het Nationale Ballet
- Introdans
- Scapino Ballet Rotterdam
- Dance Works Rotterdam
- Het Internationaal Danstheater
- Dansgroep Krisztina de Châtel

4.6 Conclusion

Because I took the largest modern dance companies in The Netherlands the outcome of this research only can be generalized to the whole population of large modern dance companies. It is moreover only relevant in The Netherlands.

Let us look at the outcome.

Chapter five: Research results

"Do dance companies use publicity instead of other promotional tools because of their limited financial means?"

All of the five companies indicate that they use free publicity as well as paid publicity. The Nederlands Dans Theater uses just as much free publicity as paid publicity. The foremost reason for wanting to generate free publicity is financial. *"It is a matter of the budget"* responds Het National Ballet. Money is available for other promotional uses as advertisement and a newsletter, but *"we aim for as much publicity as possible."*

But apart from finances there are other reasons to use mainly free publicity. There is the given fact that it is good to have a third party comment on your product. According to Introdans free publicity works better than advertisement *"because a third party is involved."* With this is meant that it is good if someone else gives objective information about the product instead of praising it yourself. Dance Works also indicates that if more money would be available for advertising, they would not cut on generating free publicity, because *"good reviews make us exist"* and *"a newspaper article is really worth gold."*

It is not always clear what the dance companies consider to be free publicity and what they designate as paid publicity. So nearly all put the question *"what do you mean exactly by free publicity?"* Especially in the publicity of Scapino Ballet Rotterdam lines and borders are diffuse. Scapino tries to use its means in the broadest way possible. For this, the company uses its own magazine, SpitZ, which serves several purposes. It is a program, but it is also given to the press and students.

So we see that meager financial means are not the only reason to use free publicity. The aspect of a third party is just as important in choosing for free publicity.

"Are dance companies aware of the difficulties of making publicity for a intangible product?"

The aspect of the product being intangible did not come out clearly in the answers. The reason for this can be the way of asking. Making publicity is mainly about keeping in touch with the people you need and entertaining contacts. Therefore all five companies questioned indicate that they find it hard to create publicity.

Dance works Rotterdam mentions the constant fight for attention of the press, because everyone fishes in the same pond. *"It is important to package your product in a way that makes it attractive for journalists to write about."* Het Nationale Ballet and the Nederlands Dans Theater mention the same problem. Even if these companies seem to have an easy position being well-known names, it still is bothersome to get free publicity, because there are many companies and too little space in the newspapers. They have experienced that getting their productions mentioned in the papers is harder nowadays than it used to be. One has to offer a lot of extra service to the journalists and personal contacts are seen as very important. But sometimes, for instance when the personality of the choreographer or a ballet legend is seen as important, publicity seems to be the easiest thing to get. *"Then suddenly all journalists want an interviews."* Still, there is no repose: *"you have to keep on thinking up things the journalist may judge interesting for the readers."* Nederlands Dans Theater finds it easier to get into the newspapers than into the glossies. *"These are very hard to direct."* *"When you have had an article in for instance Elle, you may forget it for the next eight years."*

For Introdans, from Arnhem, it is especially hard to get the attention of the nationwide newspapers. *"There is a lot of competition, so you have to work at it constantly."* Of course their being based in the East of the country is important in this. In their own environment they occupy a strong position in the market, but in other places this is harder. *"The Randstad –the Western cities – knows what happens in the Randstad, but it ignores what is outside."*

Another important setback for publicity makers is the short period a production lasts. Especially Scapino Ballet Rotterdam indicates that this makes it hard, because one can hardly make a planning. *"Much has to be done on short notice."*

All publicity officers indicate that they learned most of their trade while doing it, in practice. Social skills, being able to sell your product well, not being afraid to reach for the phone and empathy are mentioned as prerequisites for this profession.

"Do dance companies know who their target market is when they do publicity? "

All of the five companies aim their publicity at different segments of the market. The Nederland Dans Theater has experienced that it is hard to manage targeting in the field of free publicity. Here, they send information to all media: *"it is a continuous stream."*

All other companies questioned indicate that they aim their publicity for different productions towards different segments of the market and different media. It is interesting that, following this statement all the companies indicate that their standard target group consists primarily of middle-aged women. Another important target group appears to be the younger people, but this seems to be a target group which is rather difficult to reach. Dance Works as well as Het Nationale Ballet address themselves to a younger public with modern, slightly experimental choreographies. But both companies indicate that this is hard and that they still have to find out how to do this effectively. Introdans has a special ensemble for youth performances and Scapino also does many school projects and tries to involve students. It might be as it seems sometimes, that the companies make some effort to reach younger people in order to keep the administration (the provider of subsidy) satisfied. Het Nationale Ballet tries to create more awareness with students by introducing a special student rate. They try to encourage word of mouth publicity amongst the younger public because *"people don't always know that Het Nationale Ballet also performs modern choreographies."*

Out of the five companies, Het Nationale Ballet distinguishes the most diverse segments on the market. They aim part of their publicity towards the gay market, although they do not wish to focus on this part of their policy. *"Ballet already has the reputation to be something for sissies and people often think that dancers are all gay, but this is absolutely untrue."* They also concentrate part of their publicity on the singles market. *"Meet each other at the ballet"* as the slogan says.

All companies except for Introdans and Dance Works Rotterdam indicate that they aim their publicity towards a mass audience. They all strive to receive a public as diverse as possible. Introdans however has one ensemble which is meant for the target group, while the youth ensemble performs solely for a youthful audience. Dance Works Rotterdam is the only company which clearly states: "*We are not for the masses, we perform evolved dance for an evolved public.*" For them, it is useless to turn towards the total population, "*which would be a waste of money.*" In this, they seem to have the more realistic concept of the dance sector.

"Do dance companies use publicity before, during and after the performance?"

"Do dance companies invite important people out of their target market for premieres?"

What is meant with publicity during the performance was not always understood by the publicity departments questioned. Probably the program, which Noordman sees as a form of publicity during the performance, is not seen in this way.

Dance Works Rotterdam and Het Nationale Ballet make publicity before and after the performances. They work very hard on getting interviews and previews. Publicity after the performance for Het Nationale Ballet means entertain their society of 'friends.' Nederlands Dans Theater intends to gain publicity mostly before the performance. "*Sometimes it may be necessary to send a set of photographs in between, when a production lasts somewhat longer.*"

Scapino also concentrates on publicity before the performances. The only after-performance kind of publicity consists of sending DVD's to the theatres. They also send DVD's to the press. The relation between publicity and interviews and previews is seen as valuable to gain the attention of the media. "*Publicity generates publicity.*"

Introdans makes publicity until the première and after the première. Again, their location in the East makes it difficult to get journalists to visit their premières. "*The road towards the East appears to be too long for members of the press.*" Sometimes journalists from the Randstad do visit Arnhem, but the problem remains, especially when there are many other premières during the same period. Introdans believes in the gatekeeper function. That is why they invite people important to their target market to a gala performance which is staged yearly.

“Everyone, from the printer of the program to the minister, is invited to this occasion.” The function of this gala is important in word of mouth publicity. When they hear how much fun or how interesting this was, other people want to see Introdans too.

Dance Works Rotterdam invites all the critics to premières. This is especially hard when other companies perform at the same time and a journalist has to make a choice. Once Dance Works offered them a famous Dudok apple pie if they chose to attend a Dance Works première instead of one of their competitors.

Het Nationale Ballet also invites the press for their premières. *“Which is often difficult, because mostly the at the newspaper the same person writes the preliminary article as well as a review.”* They can’t have the same person cover the introductory information, for he would have an opinion on the production before the first night. Politicians and former dancers are also invited.

At Nederlands Dans Theater people are invited purely for functional reasons. *“You have to invite reviewers because they have to write about it.”* The political world has to know what is done with the subsidy. They can not judge just by the annual report, but they need to have their own reasons to decide for the subsidy.

So it is clear that all five companies questioned invite important representatives of their target market to their opening nights.

From my own experience I can say that all dance companies make publicity during the performances in the form of a program or flyer.

“Does the publicity officer in dance companies takes care of the constant factor of elements in the publicity materials?”

“Do dance companies use publicity to promote single productions instead of promoting the company?”

The five companies under investigation indicate that publicity on the level of brand-making is an important goal. They try to realize this goal mainly with the publicity for the performances. This is remarkable, because getting the company better known is probably better served by

advertising. This is what Dance Works Rotterdam does right now by having a streetcar carrying their name in Rotterdam, but this is rather expensive. In general they try to improve the visibility of the company's name through publicity for each separate production. They do not know if it would help to publish posters or other advertisement tools without mentioning a production. Het Nationale Ballet and Scapino both think that their brand name is secure, although research at Het Nationale Ballet has shown that they themselves think their name is better known than it actually is. For that reason they always show the company logo, especially with new productions. *"We try to make sure that the brand name always remains visible."* Scapino always uses the same type on posters and other printed matter. Nederlands Dans Theater also keeps on getting the company known integrated with publicity for the productions, just like other companies do. The same counts for Introdans. *"We do use different advertising tools, but the brand name is attached to all of them."* With some productions the name of the company is highlighted than the performance itself.

All five institutions work at the fame of their brand name. They do this mainly by integrating the brand name in their publicity and other advertising tools published around a production. In the main they keep a constant factor of elements as the use of the company logo-type on posters to achieve reconcilability.

"Does the publicity officer in dance companies expects to stimulate word of mouth publicity with product information?"

The companies questioned did not fully understand this question. This may have to do with their not being conscious of the publicity they generate during performances. All representatives of the companies asked during the interview what was exactly meant with product information. On my question in return how they would define it themselves, all of the five representatives did not come up with anything else but *"selling of merchandise."*

While I may conclude that this question does not fully answer the assumption, the answers still give an insight in how the dance companies see merchandise sale. Although this barely touches my subject, I include the answers because they are interesting.

All five institutions questioned sell merchandise during the break in the performance like postcards, pens, theatre binoculars, posters and T-shirts. What goal they want to reach in doing this is not always clear. Dance Works Rotterdam thinks it is important to offer friendliness to the clients. Also for Het Nationale Ballet the goal of selling merchandise is not very clear. The first goal is to generate own revenue, even if this does not amount to much. But it is also a nice souvenir for the visitors. And then, if someone wears a T-shirt with their name on it, this means advertisement. Nederlands Dans Theater's goal in selling merchandise during the performances is to give information, to build a better profile and to get people interested. Scapino sees merchandise as a nice souvenir. To make profit out of it to them is not a realistic option. Introdans wants to reach three goals with merchandise. The main aim is to realize a high level of service for the visitors. The second aim in selling articles is to generate own revenue. The last aim is to create a bond and to make the name Introdans better known.

"Does the publicity officer in dance companies expect the highest goal to reach with publicity is to create interest for their product?"

This question is interesting because it appears from the literature that the highest possible goal to be reached with publicity is to generate interest for the product. Most dance companies indicate that their main goal in publicity is to entice people to take action and buy tickets for the performance. The institutions do make a clear distinction between the goals they want to reach with their existing audience and with new audience. Dance Works Rotterdam especially tries to induce people to action, so that they will visit a performance. *"This is much more difficult with a new and uninformed public."* They want their publicity to raise interest among people who do not know Dance Works Rotterdam yet and action amongst those who do know the company. For Het Nationale Ballet the first aim is attention and then interest. They hope for some kind of action, if it is only to ask for the program book. They think it is more important that people come to the performances again and again and to keep in touch with the regular visitors. So, among the regular visitors they aim towards action, here: to visit a performance several times during the season. For this they do not only use publicity. They think the

services like catering and wardrobe and talks before each performance are also important. Het Nationale Ballet even gives regular visitors the possibility to determine the program once a year. As for the new public, here Het Nationale Ballet aims at getting attention and interest. At Nederlands Dans Theater publicity is always aimed at a combination of enforcing the image with the regular audience and giving information to a new public. Immediately before the performances, they aim towards action “*to keep the box office under pressure.*” How they do this did not get clear, but this is because I did not ask any further questions during the interview. Scapino hopes to both entice the people who already know the company to action and to get interest from those who do not know the company yet. At Introdans the main goal is to support ticket sales. They realize that this is not only effectuated with publicity: “*more marketing is needed to achieve this,*” but all of their activities are aimed at action. The dance companies are fully aware that it is hard to entice especially new visitors to action, but they all aim for it.

"Do publicity officers in dance companies expect to get a emotional bond or a rational bond with the media and audience by doing publicity?"

All five institutions wish to effectuate some emotional bond with the media as well as with the public. An important means with which they try to reach this is photography. At its best, publicity takes the form of text with one or more photos. Dance Works Rotterdam uses photography to make things visual. At every general rehearsal pictures are taken to be used for the promotion, like: “*if this image speaks to you, come visit the performance.*” Het Nationale Ballet uses photos from which are overtly passionate. “*Sex sells, we often use a photo from the ballet Carmen which has been chosen as the most languorous ballet picture.*” For Nederlands Dans Theater the photograph is also an important means, though they indicate that they cannot manage the use in publicity: “*We cannot have a say in which photograph is used, this is not even decided by the reviewer but by someone else at the redaction.*” Scapino also uses images to enforce an emotional bond with the public. They plan to do more with clips on the website so that they can play music under the images to enhance the emotional experience.

Introdans works with a scene image and a campaign image. *“The scene images are made during the general rehearsal, these have to be used by the journalists in combination with the campaign image.”* Introdans clearly wants to address people’s feelings: *“In our publicity we literally speak about the feeling which the performance invokes.”*

“Does the publicity officer in dance companies take it for granted that their public understands the “language and culture” they use in their publicity?”

The public for dance is a small, often highly educated segment of society. One might expect that the dance companies would aim their publicity primarily towards this group. Still it appears from the answers that most companies try to address their “form and language” to the general public. While analyzing hypothesis 2 we have seen that the companies usually have a definite view of their target group. Still they try to aim their publicity towards their target group as well as towards the general public.

According to Introdans, everyone should be able to understand the “form and language” which they use. They do turn themselves towards their target group but they try to address to largest number of people possible. *“We want to find the right equilibrium between the popular and the serious.”* They try not to use too many adjectives like ‘great.’ *“Let the people make up their own minds.”* Introdans never had the language they use investigated externally but they did not receive comments about their language being incomprehensible. They use a simple language which is as accessible as possible. *“We do use a simple language but we don’t take refuge to some sort of children’s language. We do expect a certain level from our audience.”* Nederlands Dans Theater tries to make the “form and language” they use more accessible. *“We particularly wish to stress the human side of the profession.”* The same counts for Het Nationale Ballet which wants everyone being able to understand their publicity. Still, they take a certain image into consideration. *“One journalist of a ‘girls’ magazine for instance used the words ‘vet’ an ‘cool’ – which are typically expressions of youth language.”* These they had removed because this is not the image they aim at, also not with a younger audience. The only company not to care about being understood by all is Dance Works Rotterdam. *“Of-*

ten we use texts on a rather high level which are not readily understood by everyone.” For instance, for one successful production which was given a sequel the word ‘geprolongeerd’ was used, while the more easily understood word ‘verlengd’ could have been used. According to the artistic leader of the group it is “*a pity*” if people do not understand this, but then they just are not part of the target group. The publicity worker would like to aim at a broader public. “*This tends to be an issue between the marketing department and the artistic leader.*”

“Is the publicity officer in a dance company aware of the fact that the consumer is seeing publicity from their own perspective and opinion (selective perception)?”

The opinions of the companies are divided on this issue. All companies indicate that reviews are immensely important, but not all are convinced that what is written is immediately picked up by the public. Dance Works Rotterdam considers positive reviews to be very important. “*That is what we live for.*” But negative reviews are welcome too, for “*they still wet the appetite.*” According to Het Nationale Ballet people pick up what journalists write about. “*Reviews are also important to the choreographer; he can use some feedback.*” Scapino indicates that this question is hard to answer. “*In Becker’s Art World it is stated that it is important, so perhaps it should be.*” Still, the opinion of the public differs from most of the reviewers. “*The public’s view is totally different from what the press says.*” Scapino has a difficult relation with the press: “*some reviewers are never really positive.*” The publicity worker thinks it is odd that one person writes something which is read by so many, but she would not know if the public would stop visiting the performances when from now on only negative reviews would be published. “*What one person loves is ugly in the eyes of another.*” Nederlands Dans Theater and Introdans are adamant in stating that it does not matter at all if reviews are good or bad. “*People decide for themselves for all different kinds of reasons if they will come to a performance; a review does not influence this decision.*” This, however, is not true, seen that one third of the visitors indicates to attend to a performance because of having read a review.

The dance companies agree that everyone looks at publicity from their own perspective. The opinion of the press is seen as important but not all companies suppose that what is written in the media is as a matter of fact picked up by the public.

"Does the publicity officer in dance companies expects that the more elite-ness the source the more newsworthy the story (news value theory)?"

When we make a diagram of the newspapers which are given the most attention by the dance companies this looks as follows:

	National newspapers	Regional newspapers
High-brow newspaper (e.g. NRC, De Volkskrant)	Dance Works Rotterdam Het Nationale Ballet	
Newspaper for the general public (e.g. AD)	Het Nationale Ballet Introdans	Het Nationale Ballet Scapino Ballet Rotterdam
Does not know	Het Nederlands Dans Theater Scapino Ballet Rotterdam	

Dance Works Rotterdam indicates that it is very important to get reviews in one of the high-brow papers, because these are better read by their target group. *"Publicity in these newspapers has more news-value than in other papers (as the AD or the Spits)"* They have experienced that a review with a photograph in one of the high-brow papers brings in more visitors. Most of the time they succeed in getting attention from the AD (a Rotterdam-based national newspaper) but they think little of it. They would rather see reviews in the NRC or De Volkskrant. Het Nationale Ballet aims at all national newspapers, but also at the regional papers which are distributed for free. They do see more attendance after a big article with a photograph has appeared in a national newspaper. They have been covered by the NOS television news program, but they did not see this having an impact on the number of visitors. Nederlands Dans Theater does not know, *"this might be interesting to investigate."* They have heard

that reviews do not influence box office sales, but they have never computed this themselves. Scapino finds it hard to compute, too. *“People decide on the last moment and all publicity is also made at the last moment.”* They think the region is important. When regional newspapers write on their giving a performance somewhere, there is an effect. But they do not know if an article in a high-brow newspaper is worth more. As they are a genuine Rotterdam based company perhaps the effect of regional newspapers is more important. For Introdans the worth of a newspaper does not depend on by which segment of the market it is read, but on the amount of readers. They do not mind if a review is published in the (high-brow) NRC or the (low-brow) De Telegraaf. *“All publicity is publicity.”* For Introdans there does not seem to be a relation between getting a review and the box office. This is possibly a result of their strong market position in their own region.

Conclusion

All dance companies in The Netherlands indicate that they use free publicity as well as paid publicity. The foremost reason for wanting to generate free publicity is financial. But apart from finances there are other reasons to use mainly free publicity. As the given fact that it is good to have a third party comment on your product. With this is meant that it is good if someone else gives objective information about the product instead of praising it yourself.

All five companies questioned indicate that they find it hard to create publicity. The main reason they find it difficult is because everyone fishes in the same pond. One has to offer a lot of extra service to the journalists and personal contacts are seen as very important. Another important setback for publicity officers is the short period a production lasts. This makes creating publicity hard, because one can hardly make a planning.

Dance companies aim their publicity at different segments of the market. The questioned indicate that they aim their publicity for different productions towards different segments of the market and different media. It is interesting that, following this statement all the companies indicate that their standard target group consists primarily of middle-aged women. Another important target group appears to be the younger people.

Dance companies invite important representatives of their target market to their premiere. The publicity concentrates before and after the performances. The relation between publicity and interviews and previews is seen as valuable to gain the attention of the media. What is meant with publicity during the performance was not always understood by the publicity departments questioned. Probably the program, which Noordman sees as a form of publicity during the performance, is not seen in this way.

Dance companies in The Netherlands indicate that publicity on the level of brand-making is an important goal. They try to realize this goal mainly with the publicity for the performances.

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They do this mainly by integrating the brand name in their publicity and other advertising tools published around a production. In the main they keep a constant factor of elements as the use of the company logo-type on posters to achieve reconcilability.

The question about product information was not fully understood by the dance companies. All representatives did not come up with anything else but “selling of merchandise.” when they thought of product information. So the answers gives an insight in how the dance companies see merchandise sale. All dance companies sell merchandise during the break in the performance. What goal they want to reach in doing this is not always clear. What they wanted to reach vary from generating revenues to bringing high service to the customers.

What dance companies want to accomplish with their publicity is action. They are aware of the difficulties of moving people over to action but this is what they all hope for. Nevertheless, dance companies make a distinction between new public and existing public. For the new public they focus more on interest, to let people get interested in their product. But for the existing public they focus with their publicity on action.

All dance companies in The Netherlands expect to get an emotional bond with the media and the audience by doing publicity. I found out that it seems that ballet photographs play an important role in getting this emotional bond.

Most dance companies aim the language and culture they use in their publicity at the general public. This is interesting because all the companies indicate that their standard target group consists primarily of middle-aged women. Perhaps dance companies should get a clearer view on what the goal is they want to reach with their publicity and to whom they want to address it. The public for dance is a small, often highly educated segment of society. One might expect that the dance companies would aim their publicity primarily towards this group. Still it appears from the answers that most companies try to address their “form and language” to the general public. While analyzing hypothesis 2 we have seen that the companies usually have a

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definite view of their target group. Still they try to aim their publicity towards their target group as well as towards the general public.

The dance companies agree that everyone looks at publicity from their own perspective. The opinion of the press is seen as important but not all companies suppose that what is written in the media is as a matter of fact picked up by the public.

Recommendations for further research

All dance companies named the photograph as the most important tool to accomplish an emotional bond with the media and the audience. It would be interesting to do further research on the impact of the photograph to bring about an emotional bond with the audience. To find out if this is indeed the case.

Almost all investigated dance companies address the “language and culture” they use in their publicity to the general public. It would be interesting to find out if this makes sense.

It would be interesting to do further research on the impact of reviews. To find out if a positive or negative review influences the ticket sale.

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Resources

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- www.dansweb.nl
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- www.het-nationale-ballet.nl
- www.scapinoballet.nl
- www.introdans.nl
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