CultureCase

The persuasiveness of theatre reviews and adverts in old and new media

This research was conducted by **Russell Thomas Warne** and **Malisa M. Drake-Brooks** at **Utah Valley University, USA**

Summary

When reading a review of a play, would you trust a blog post more than a newspaper article? How effective are advertisements and how do they influence how much you are willing to pay for a theatre ticket? This study answered those questions using 318 survey responses in which participants were asked to share their reactions to theatre reviews and advertisements. The study found that newspapers, blogs and social media all had a similar influence on respondents' willingness to purchase a ticket. The most important factor in terms of persuading respondents to buy a ticket to a famous play (here *Les Misèrables),* was price. For unknown plays (*Candle Underground* was used by the researchers), neither adverts nor price affected the likelihood of purchasing a ticket.

Participants saw no difference in professionalism between blog and newspaper based reviews

After reading reviews that were clearly identified as being either from newspapers or blogs, participants were asked to rate them according to their professionalism. The only group of participants to think that newspaper reviews were more professional were members of professional entertainment unions (who made up a small number in the overall sample).

New plays might not need to rely on aggressive discount tactics to attract spectators

Since people tend to perceive theatre bloggers to be as credible as those writing in the traditional media, marketers should use favourable quotes from both types of reviewers when advertising a show.

This summary is by **David Kohan Marzagão, King's Knowledge Exchange Associate**

Keywords

theatre **media** **experiment** **USA** **marketing**

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Author email	**rwarne@uvu.edu**

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