

# Three segments of theatre-goers in northeast England

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This research was conducted by **José M. Grisolia, and Kenneth G. Willis** at **Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain and Newcastle University, UK**

## Summary

This paper presents a market segmentation of theatre-goers at Northern Stage, a theatre in Newcastle-Upon-Tyne in northeast England. By analysing the results of a survey of theatre-goers they were able to identify three types of people. The first (and largest) was an 'affluent' group, who read reviews, preferred mainstream theatre venues but considered all types of show (with a preference for comedy); the second was the 'popular' group who preferred comedies over anything more experimental or sophisticated and didn't consider reviews, they were very concerned about price; the final type was 'intellectual' or 'cultural' group who preferred drama and had more sophisticated tastes which informed their own independent appraisal of whether or not to attend a particular performance, they were frequent theatre-goers.

## The researchers surveyed theatre-goers in Newcastle

After conducting conversations with theatre-goers and staff at Northern Stage the researchers arrived at the following characteristics of a performance to test through their survey: price, venue, genre of play, whether it was new, a classic or an adaptation, critic's reviews, word of mouth and whether or not the author was known. In addition to their preferences for various kinds of theatre, the respondents to the survey were also asked about their wider cultural habits and a conventional range of demographic details such as age, education and income. A total of 332 questionnaires were returned.

# The proportion of each segment amongst the population

The survey asked people to identify the attributes of a theatre experience that they valued most. The affluent group accounted for about 43 per cent of the population, the popular group for about a quarter, and the cultural group about 32 per cent.

## Keywords

**theatre** **UK** **audience** **survey**

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