

# The Marketing of Concerts in London 1672–1749

## Introduction

Throughout history, music has played a part in public ceremonial of many kinds: social rituals, communal celebrations, church services, theatrical performances, state and municipal ceremonies. Paid musicians often relied on the patronage of court, church or the wealthy for their livelihood. The gradual development of public commercial concerts from the 1640s onwards, however, sees music beginning to move away from being either an adjunct to other events or an essentially participatory activity. By charging payment for admission, public concerts made of music a commodity offered to and demanded by a new breed of cultural consumers who were music lovers who either gathered to listen to music for its own sake or who were fulfilling one of the social rituals of their class (Habermas, 1992: 39–40; Sharpe, 1987: 295). By means of regular public commercial concerts and the simultaneous flourishing of the music publishing industry, music thus participated in the general commercialisation of leisure which developed in late seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England (Plumb, 1972; 1982). London fast became a thriving musical centre, a national and international market which acted as a magnet for musicians from other parts of England and increasingly from further afield (Holman, 2000; Wilson, 1959: 349–351, 358–359).

The work of scholars such as Hollander (1986), Nevett (1987) and Rassuli (1988) has shown that while the word ‘marketing’ and the history of marketing research may be relatively recent phenomena, the practice of marketing itself, as defined by recognition of the importance of the consumer in the buying process, is not. How was the new commercialism in music organised? These early commercial concerts in London were mostly organised by individual musicians who may not have realised that they were carrying out marketing as such, but nevertheless instigated various marketing strategies to attract the consumer. They acted as entrepreneurs, advertised their concerts in newspapers and elsewhere, engaged other professional musicians to play or sing, charged admission and hoped to make a profit. Musicians thus instigated a range of marketing strategies which foreground those found in more recent and current arts marketing practice. These strategies are an interesting topic for study at such an early stage in the history of what one might consider a new business — the music business.

## The Development Towards Commercial Concerts

The gradual move towards the rise of commercial concert-giving seems to have started during the Civil War in Oxford, the home base for Charles I between 1642 and 1646. Here the contemporary antiquary and amateur musician Anthony Wood describes how, when not occupied with their formal duties, musicians appointed to the royal court played ‘in the rooms of Gentlemen of the University for the entertainment of each other’ (Gouk, 1996). A new development, not only in Oxford but also in London from the 1640s onwards, documented both by Wood and later by the London-based lawyer, historian of music and amateur musician Roger North (1651–1734), was to set up private or semi-commercial music meetings, usually held in private houses or tavern rooms, where both amateur and professional musicians would play together and an entrance fee might be charged for both performers and auditors (Bellingham, 1982; Bliss, 1813: vol. 1, xxv–xxvii, xxxi–xxxii, xxxiv–xxxvi; Gouk, 1996; Wilson, 1959: 302–305, 351–352). These types of music meetings were still continuing in London in the 1660s and some taverns became known as music houses, having gained a special reputation for music or featuring it as a particular attraction. Events were organised at taverns, as is witnessed by a comment in Samuel Pepys’ diary upon visiting ‘Steadman’s at the Mitre in Fleet-streete’ about ‘the house being in fitting for Banister to come thither from Pagets’ (Pepys’ Diary: entry for 21 January 1660. Latham and Matthews, 1995: Vol I, 25). The Banister mentioned is almost certainly John Banister, a musician at the court of Charles I, who was to play an important role in the development of the commercial concert. A keen amateur musician himself, Pepys was acquainted with Banister and many of the amateur and professional musicians who formed a music club which North describes as being the first of the ‘publick consorts’ and which may be the ‘late Musick-Society and Meeting, in the Old-Jury, London’ to which the music publisher, John Playford dedicated his catch book *The Musical Companion* in 1667 (Spink, 1965–67). Playford enthusiastically encouraged the setting up of such music clubs as an outlet for his publications. North’s description of ‘no payment, but the reckoning’ shows that these were still not commercial concerts properly speaking, but rather meetings where amateurs as well as professionals might perform, and the innkeeper would benefit from the increase in sales of refreshments. North also makes mention of concerts, he calls them ‘entertainments’ put on by music teachers for the purpose of encouraging their pupils which ‘were always crowded’ (Wilson, 1959: 352).

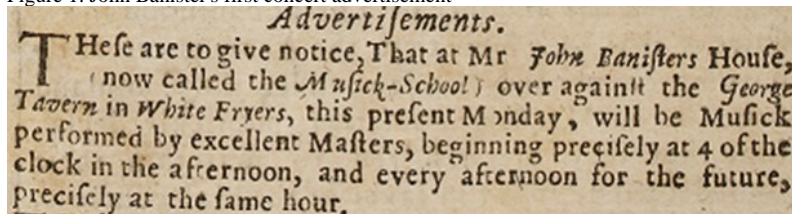
The next concerts mentioned by North are those put on by John Banister who, having fallen somewhat from favour at court, increasingly concentrated on teaching and on promoting public concerts (Ashbee, 1986: 65–72; Holman, 1993). Banister was described by Burney (1776–89: Vol II p.368) as ‘one of the first who established

lucrative concerts in London' and his concerts seem more purely commercial ventures. North, who was resident in London during this period, describes them thus:

...by way of project to get a litle mony, he opened a publik room in a nasty hole in White fryers, where was a raised compartment with curtaines for the musick, and about the room, seats by way of alehouse boxes, but well sett off and painted for the company.' The performers, whose 'musick box' was 'at a corner', were 'the mercenary teachers, cheifly forreiners, who attended for a sportula [a gift or share] at the time. Sometime[s] consort, sometimes solos, of the violin, flajolet (one of Banister's perfections), base violl, lute, and song all' Italliana, and such varietys diverted the company, who payd at coming in, and for what they called for' in the way of 'wine, cakes and ale' (Wilson, 1959: 303, note 49).

North elsewhere mentions a charge of a shilling per person, though it is not clear whether this applied from the beginning (Wilson, 1959: 302 and 352), and for the first time, Banister's concerts were advertised in a newspaper, the bi-weekly *London Gazette* (see Figure 1). Because of their regularly changing repertoire, theatre managers did not find it worthwhile to insert advertisements for plays and opera until the advent of the *Daily Courant* in 1702 and they did not appear regularly until 1704 (Avery, 1968: xc). Thus, Banister's concert advertisement and others which followed in increasing numbers from the 1690s onwards were something of an innovation, and one that allows a detailed analysis of marketing techniques for early commercial concerts in London.

Figure 1: John Banister's first concert advertisement



*Advertisements.*  
These are to give notice, That at Mr *John Banisters* House, (now called the *Musick-School*) over against the *George Tavern* in *White Fryers*, this present Monday, will be *Musick* performed by excellent Masters, beginning precisely at 4 of the clock in the afternoon, and every afternoon for the future, precisely at the same hour.

(*London Gazette* 30 December 1672; © British Library, Burney 72a)

### Methodological Outline

This study takes as its basis some 4356 advertisements for concerts which appeared in newspapers published in London between Banister's first concert advertisement in 1672 and 1750 [1]. To investigate the various marketing techniques applied to commercial concert giving, two analytical techniques were used: a relational database was created to record information culled from the advertisements concerning concert dates, performers, pieces performed, and so on; and content analysis was used to investigate and describe the meanings that lie behind the seemingly bland informational statements that make up the text of the advertisements, while documenting themes within them as a means of investigating the ways in which concert promoters sought to attract an audience. Although not all concerts may have been advertised, within these advertisements one can see how musicians made use of a variety of marketing techniques and took increasing advantage of the medium of newspaper advertising to promote their concerts.

At first glance, the texts of concert advertisements seem very diverse with no discernible standardization of content (see Figures 1 and 2). However, close examination of a larger sample of advertisements allowed identification of those elements which, while not occurring in every advertisement, recurred with sufficient regularity as to be susceptible to analysis. When dealing with implicitly structured data such as these advertisement texts, a gradual decomposition of their content into progressively more detailed levels of information is necessary before this structure can be revealed (Dunk and Rahtz, 1989; Harvey and Press, 1996: 81–2). For instance, advertisements can be divided into those for printed music or books about music, those for the sale or repair of instruments, those for performances containing music, and so forth. Within the latter category are those for concert performances, those for operas, and those for plays with music. The text of each concert advertisement was

analysed further to provide a series of data categories that recurred frequently, such as name and location of venue, names of performers and of pieces being performed, and so on. This is akin to the process of data reduction as described by Miles and Huberman (1994) or categorisation as outlined by Saunders et al. (2007: 479–80).

Figure 2: Advertisement for Benefit Concert

*For the Benefit and increase of a FUND  
established for the Support of DECAY'D MUSICIANS  
or their Families.*

**A** T the KING'S THEATRE in the  
HAY-MARKET, Tuesday March 21, will be perform'd an  
ENTERTAINMENT of VOCAL and INSTRUMENTAL  
M U S I C K.

As follows:

P A R T I.

An Overture, compos'd by Signor Paradies.

*Pardona Amato Bene* ; compos'd by S. Lampugnani, sung by Sig. Saiz.

*Contento in Grembo a Morte* ; compos'd by S. Cocchi, sung by S. Laschi.

*Ritorn' al Caro Bene* ; compos'd by S. Bernasconi, sung by Signora Galli.

Concerto by Signor Pasquilino.

*Pupille Amabili* ; compos'd by Sig. Jomelli, sung by Sig. Guadagni. *Scherza*

*il Necchier* ; compos'd by Sig. Brevio, sung by Signora Frasi.

P A R T II.

Concerto by Mr. Carbonell.

*Peno, si per un Ingrato* ; compos'd by Signor Jomelli, sung by Signora Mellini.

*Spezza lo Stral piagato* ; compos'd by Signor Jomelli, sung by Signora Saiz.

Concerto by Mr. Miller.

*Ah ! non lasciarmi No* ; compos'd by Signor Bertoni, sung by Signor Guadagni.

*Prove Sono* ; composed by Mr. Handel, sung by Signora Galli.

P A R T III.

Concerto by Mr. Vincent.

*Di questo Cor fedele* ; compos'd by S. Lampugnani, sung by S. Laschi.

*Heroes, when with Glory burning* ; compos'd by Mr. Handel, sung by Signora Galli.

*O Sleep* ; compos'd by Mr. Handel, sung by Signora Frasi.

*Son Confusa Pastorella* ; compos'd by S. Jomelli, sung by S. Mellini.

*O Lovely Peace* ; compos'd by Mr. Handel, sung by Signora Frasi and Signora Galli.

A GRAND CONCERTO of Mr. HANDEL'S

Pit and Boxes to be put together, and no Persons to be admitted without Tickets, which will be deliver'd that Day, at the said Office, at Half a Guinea each.

Gallery Five Shillings.

The Gallery will be open'd at Four o'Clock. Pit and Boxes at Five.

To begin exactly at Six o'Clock.

*N.B.* The Tickets deliver'd to the Subscribers to this Charity, will admit One Person into any Part of the House.

It was then possible to attach relevant sections of each advertisement to the appropriate category, analogous to 'unitising' data as described by Saunders et al. (2007: 480). To facilitate this process, relational data analysis and entity-relationship modelling were carried out on the data categories to produce a series of interlinked database tables described in detail by Harbor (2008); (2013: Vol.II Appendix B). A database table being simply a method of organising data elements into a series of columns and rows, this can be thought of as a comparable approach to the use of matrices in data display as described by Miles and Huberman (1994; Saunders et al., 2007: 493–6). Thus, value was added by eliciting the structure of the texts and constructing a complementary database containing a series of tables to store the structured elements. In this process, use was made of various coding systems to add value, ensure standardisation and facilitate analysis (Harvey and Press, 1996: 224–5; Miles and Huberman, 1994: 55–72; Schürer, 1990). For instance, names appearing within advertisements were categorised as performers, composers or beneficiaries; individual concerts, venues and ticket-selling locations were classified using emergent categories. At this period when orthographical norms were not yet fixed, standardised spellings were determined using standard reference works (Highfill et al., 1973–91; Sadie, 1980; Van Lennep et al., 1960–8); names and piece titles not appearing in these works were normalised using instances in the database itself. The entire process yielded a very rich data source describing concerts in London over an extended time period during which concert-giving was gradually establishing itself as a commercial activity. This article will thus trace the beginnings of the organisation of music as a business, focussing specifically on aspects of the marketing of concerts.

When dealing with speech or text, the basic concept underlying content analysis is that the words contained within the speech or text are classified into a smaller number of content categories, each of which may consist of one or more words. The words, phrases, or other units of text classified as being in the same category are then presumed to have similar meanings. In the context of the public concert between 1660 and 1749, content analysis can be used to describe and make inferences about the rhetoric of concert advertisements, analyzing the techniques of persuasion used and trying to identify trends in the persuasive content of the advertisements. This type of rhetorical analysis concentrates on how messages are delivered and what are their intended or actual effects (Krippendorf, 2013: 16). When carrying out content analysis, the first task is to select a unit of analysis: in this case the text of each advertisement in its entirety was taken as the basic unit for analysis. Content categories were established using an emergent coding technique: carrying out a preliminary examination of the data and constructing a category system based on themes that emerged from the advertisements themselves. Ideally a category system should be mutually exclusive so that each unit of analysis is placed in a single category (Krippendorf, 2013: 132; Wimmer and Dominick, 2006: 159), but in this case portions of text within an advertisement were assigned to the appropriate category so that each text fragment only belonged to a single category, while an advertisement as a whole may have used several of the persuasive techniques identified. Harbor (2017) describes in more detail the method of content analysis used to facilitate such analysis of the persuasive elements of the advertisement texts.

### **International Market in Professional Musicians**

Between 1660 and 1750 the character of the music profession in England began to change: musicians moved from positions where they acted as live-in servants to a status more akin to that of freelance professionals. They had to learn new skills to find work, acting in a more entrepreneurial fashion, negotiating fees and contracts, undertaking a variety of enterprises, advancing themselves by self-promotion and manipulation of a market through social networks. An increase in performer's virtuosity and the development of the commercial concert resulted in a gradual enlargement in the market for musicians and an increasing dominance of the professional musician in public performances. The widening gap between amateur and professional performers, between listeners and performers, was a concomitant of the rise in virtuosity and skill which served to both demonstrate and justify musicians' professional status (Ehrlich, 1985: 3–5; Rose, 2005). In contrast to the majority of other towns and cities in Britain as well as to those in Europe, where concert-giving tended to be associated either with court musicians or with societies of amateur music lovers, London was able to support a large and growing number of full-time professional musicians who held the primary role in the organisation of public commercial concerts. It was also during this period that London became a focus for a growing international market in musicians and foreign musicians who came to London were more likely to be soloists than rank-and-file musicians. The concert given as a benefit for the Fund for Support of Decay'd Musicians or their Families on 21 March 1749 boasted a glittering array of Italian vocalists, with instrumental soloists including the German-born Handel who also directed the concert (see Figure 2).

At this period, concerts were almost exclusively promoted by entrepreneurial composers and/or performers rather than specialist concert promoters; the development from self-managing musicians to independent concert agents did not occur until the nineteenth century (Weber, 2004). Benefit concerts, for instance, were normally organised by the musician who would directly benefit. Examining details of benefit concerts at a range of venues 1740–1750 it is striking to see how the number of foreign musicians increases in the more prestigious and expensive venues, a reflection of the fact that many were renowned soloists who would merit their own benefit (Harbor, 2013: Vol.2 Appendix O). A similar effect can be seen in the promotion of concert series: the vast

majority of named promoters of concert series were musicians, mostly composer/performers, but again many of them were of foreign extraction and this foreign domination is even more noticeable at prestigious venues, such as the Vendu, York Buildings, Hickford's, and the patent theatres (see Table I). While there were English musicians who were well-regarded soloists and composers who arranged their own benefits and promoted concert series, there seems to have been no bar to visiting foreign musicians of standing doing likewise.

Table I: Named Promoters of Concert Series

<b>Year</b>	<b>Concert Series Promoter</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Occupation</b>
1672–79	John Banister	Residences/schools	English	Composer and Violinist
1678–1714	Thomas Britton	Britton's house	English	Small-coal dealer
1690	Mr Hughes	Mr Hughes', Freeman's Court	English	Singer
1690/1	Johann Wolfgang Franck	Two Golden Balls, Bow Street	German	Composer
1691/2	Johann Wolfgang Franck / Robert King	The Vendu	German / English	Composer / Violinist and Composer
1693	Pier Francesco Tosi	The Vendu	Italian	Singer and Composer
1694	Pier Francesco Tosi	York Buildings	Italian	Singer and Composer
1693/4	Johann Wolfgang Franck	The Vendu	German	Composer
1693–97	Gottfried Finger	York Buildings / The Vendu	Moravian	Composer and Violist
1697/8	Jakob Kremberg	Hickford's, James Street	Polish	Composer and Lutenist
1698/9	Robert King / John Banister, Junior	Exeter Exchange	English / English	Violinist and Composer / Violinist
1706	F. Hicces	His lodgings, Finch Lane	English	?
1713	Nicola Haym	Hickford's, James Street	Italian	Composer and Cellist
1718	Johann Signismund Weiss	Mr Weiss's lodgings, Park Place, then St Paul's Churchyard	German	Composer
1729	Louis Grano	Hickford's, James Street	English	Trumpeter
1731/2	Francesco Geminiani	Hickford's, James Street	Italian	Composer and Violinist
1732–50	George Handel	King's Theatre, Haymarket/ Theatre Royal, Covent Garden	German	Composer and Organist
1733	Carlo Arrigoni and Giuseppe Sammartini	Hickford's, James Street	Italian	Composer and Singer / Composer and Oboist
1733	Henry Holcombe	Hickford's, James Street	English	Composer and Singer
1743	H. Page	Ben Johnson's Head, Little Britain	English	?
1743	Henry Davies	Britannia, St Michael's Alley	English	?
1745	Willem de Fesch	Theatre Royal, Covent Garden	Dutch	Composer and Violinist
1747–8	Niccolo Pasquali	Hickford's, Brewers Street	Italian	Composer and Violinist
1747–9	Filippo Palma	Hickford's, Brewers Street	Italian	Singer
1749/50	Signor Manfredini	Hickford's, Brewers Street	Italian	Singer

The craft of concert giving was one which musicians quickly learnt: writing in his commonplace book in 1703 or 1704, the German composer Johann Sigismund Cousser included a section headed 'Was ein virtuose, so in London kommt, zu observiren sol' which contained information he had obtained from the German composer Jakob Greber, who gave concerts in England in 1703/4 (Samuel, 1981). Musicians who held a benefit concert would arrange it themselves, booking a hall, engaging other musicians to play, distributing tickets, paying musicians, receiving and tallying money and unsold tickets from those who had distributed them, and so on. All this in addition to choosing the music, perhaps composing new pieces especially, ensuring there were enough copies, and rehearsing the musicians. While in the Marshalsea Prison for debt, John Grano organised several concerts and wrote of the arrangements he had to make in his prison diary; unfortunately, they do not seem to have been successful in raising him sufficient funds to arrange his release, one lost him money and another only cleared 30 shillings. (Ginger, 1998: 156).

### **Types of Concert**

Musicians experimented with different types of concert in their efforts to attract an audience: benefit concerts, concerts at spa resorts and pleasure gardens, subscription series, and oratorio concerts. Banister's first concerts were held daily, Sundays excluded, but a weekly series format gradually became more common. The benefit concert was based on a system common in London theatre contracts from the 1680s to the 1880s whereby weekly salaries were supplemented by the proceeds of a seasonal benefit (Hume, 1984; Troubridge, 1967). Musicians, however, adapted this system by arranging concerts for their own or a charity's benefit held in various venues. London spa resorts began to advertise music as part of their attractions from the summer season of 1696, with concerts taking place at Richmond Wells (*Post Boy* 11 July 1696). A subscription system had been used since the early seventeenth century for publishing more expensive books and music. From the first decade of the eighteenth century this was adapted by musicians to individual concerts or concert series, with payment usually expected before the event (Clapp, 1931; 1932; Hunter and Mason, 1999). Subscriptions gave some certainty in advance of the number of tickets which would be sold, and also helped to encourage repeat purchases and build up a loyal audience. The Scottish singer John Abell shrewdly offered seating priority to subscribers to his individual concerts (*Post Boy* 17 May 1701), but the subscription system was more frequently applied to a series of concerts sold as a package at a discount. A short series of oratorio or oratorio-like works given by Handel at the King's Theatre in the Haymarket in the 1731/32 season was obviously a success, as the following few years were increasingly dominated by series of concerts featuring oratorios and sacred music by Handel and others. 1736 saw the beginnings of a growth in concert-giving at pleasure gardens in London with the opening of the Spring Gardens at Vauxhall (*London Daily Post and General Advertiser* 17 and 19 May 1736) and others in subsequent years. This was an early period in the development of the commercial concert, so we see musicians trying out different concert formats to discover which might be successful; those which were flourished, others would eventually drop by the wayside. For instance, the benefit concert, which was so popular during this period, is now extremely rare except in the form of charity fund-raising concerts, whereas subscription concerts series are still offered by most large orchestras.

Gradually an accepted weekly timetable of musical events developed. Oratorio concerts, most similar to opera, were concentrated on Wednesdays and Fridays in Lent (when opera was not allowed) but might also substitute for opera on Tuesdays and Saturdays, the main nights for opera performances throughout the season. Subscription series, benefits and single concerts tended to avoid Tuesday and Saturday nights when opera and oratorio held sway; Friday was a favoured day for both ordinary and oratorio subscription series. Many leisure resorts held entertainments of some kind daily, but for those which presented concerts, Monday seems to have been a popular night. This timetabling over the week shows an awareness by musicians of the necessity to hold concerts on days when there was less competition for the available audience, an awareness of commercial realities.

In addition to the music of the concert itself musicians added extra features and benefits in order to strengthen the appeal to different segments of the potential audience. Concerts formed part of the overall experience at the pleasure gardens and spa resorts, but concerts held elsewhere might include extra features such as orations or poetry, or be followed by a ball or dancing. Some musicians also advertised free printed copies of the words of the sung parts of a concert as an added benefit of attendance.

### **Concert Programming and Repertoire**

Influenced by the romantic concept of the artist as genius, current ideas around arts marketing emphasise the idea that the artist or musician should **not** follow the marketing concept by producing a product as a response to the desires or interests of the consuming public but should seek consumers who are attracted to the product (Colbert, 2003; Hirschman, 1983). However, in the period under study, decisions concerning concert design and programming reveal that musicians promoting concerts in London were prepared to modify their programmes to some extent by performing specifically requested pieces, or by altering the timing or date of concerts to suit a potential audience. For instance, John Abell offered to arrange concerts for any who desired them, consisting of their choice of his wide repertoire (*Post Man and Historical Account* 29 November 1701). Commonly occurring

phrases at the beginning of advertisements, such as ‘At the desire of several Ladies of Quality...’, may well be falsehoods, but at the very least they try to give the impression that the concert was given at the express desire of some members of its audience. More emphatic wording may refer to the choice of individual pieces of music, changes in timing or to subscription arrangements and are thus more convincing witnesses of willingness by musicians to cater to the express desires of their audience, as shown below:

The French Pastoral that hath been perform'd twice at the Musick Meeting in York Buildings being desired once more by some Persons of Quality, shall be performed for the last time at the same Place on Thursday next, being the 6<sup>th</sup> Instant (*London Gazette* 3 May 1697).

Before the development of the commercial concert, many public musical performances accompanied some other event, such as a church service or other ceremony which imposed a structure into which the music had to fit. Released from this constraint, musicians now had to consider how to structure their entertainments and what might appeal to a possible audience. Starting with a Banister concert in 1678, some concerts were advertised as consisting of music composed by a single composer, often referred to as either a ‘consort of musick’ or an ‘entertainment of musick’, with the composer frequently organising and playing at the concert. This type of programming became less frequent as the period wore on and was not advertised as such after 1720, except in the case of large-scale oratorios, odes and serenatas. The overwhelming majority of concerts were billed as consisting of a variety of genres, of both ‘vocal and instrumental musick’ (Harbor, 2017: 1184–1185) and concerts consisting of music by more than one composer came to dominate almost completely. The vocal pieces were often arias selected from popular operas or oratorios of the day and sung by those who would have performed these roles in the theatre. Instrumental pieces were most often concertos or solos, with the occasional operatic overture. All-instrumental concerts, so common today, made up less than 0.5% of all advertised concerts (Harbor, 2017: 1184 Table 6).

Concerts were sometimes described as being divided into a number of sections, known as ‘parts’, ‘acts’ or ‘entertainments’. The first concert advertised as being in three individual parts was a benefit for the singer Ann Turner Robinson held in 1719 but did not list full programme details (*Daily Courant* 25, 26, 27 and 28 February 1719). The violinist Giovanni Stefano Carbonelli’s benefit on 14 March 1722 understandably concentrated heavily on instrumental music, there being only a single song in each ‘entertainment’ with three concertos in each section and an additional two instrumental solos in the final section (*Daily Post* 12 March 1722). By contrast, a charity benefit on 21 March 1749 (see Figure 2) gave more prominence to vocal pieces, each section starting with either an operatic overture or an instrumental solo and followed by a series of operatic arias and duets. What these advertisements emphasise is the succession of varied genres: concertos, instrumental solos and songs for the Carbonelli benefit, and overtures, an instrumental solo and songs for the 1749 charity benefit. Despite the perseverance of the three-part concert design until the end of the period, gradually a standardised two-part programme format became more popular, usually with ten to twelve pieces, alternating instrumental and vocal items. Within each section, the regular succession of pieces — overtures, songs, concertos, solos — helped to impose order on what might otherwise have been a continuation of the haphazard nature of early concert programmes complained of by Roger North (Wilson, 1959: 13).

At the Restoration, Charles II’s fondness for French dancing and dance music led to a surge in the popularity of French-influenced music. However, this was soon superseded by the vogue for Italian musical styles, popularised by the arrival of Italian violinists and other musicians from 1670 onwards (Mabbett, 1986; Williams, 1973) and the popularity of Italy as a destination for the ‘grand tour’. Italian opera arias and Italian or Italian-influenced solo sonatas, trio sonatas and concertos soon appeared in concert programmes and continued to be popular for the rest of the period under study. However, this is not to say that British music was relegated to a ghetto of ‘English’ concerts or the pleasure gardens as seems to have been more the case in the second half of the eighteenth century. English music was performed in many concerts: arias from Handel’s English oratorios were favoured just as much as Italian opera arias, and the continuing English fondness for *concerti grossi* long after they had gone out of fashion in Italy was also evident. At moments of particular national pride or danger appropriate music might be programmed. John Abell, for instance, put on several concerts ‘In Honour of the Queen’s Coronation’ in April, May and June 1702. In the late summer of 1745, a time of upheaval caused by the Young Pretender’s Rebellion and conflicts between France and England, a number of concerts with a patriotic theme were put on. At Vauxhall Gardens the entertainments, which were to have finished on 24 August, were ‘continued sometime longer; His Majesty’s happy Arrival being hourly expected, on which joyful Occasion a new Ode will be perform’d, set to Music by Mr. Arne’ (*Daily Post* 24 August 1734). At Cuper’s Gardens music accompanied by fireworks showing the recent ‘storming and taking Fort Louisbourg’ in Canada was performed from Saturday 24 August until 26 September (*Daily Post* adverts from 26 August to 26 September 1745).

Much has been written about the vogue for ‘ancient’ music in the eighteenth century: Holman (2000) perceives this as ‘part of a wider aesthetic movement in Britain that was really an early manifestation of Romanticism’

which is witnessed by a growth in awareness of the past in the arts in general in the 1730s. On the other hand, Weber (1984; 1989; 1992; 1994) sees this as the period when the rise of musical classics and the musical canon began to form. Among more recent composers, the music of Corelli and Purcell remained in the repertoire for some time after their death: Corelli was greatly revered in his lifetime, and Purcell was both popular and had died tragically early. However, the performance of old music in some concerts grew to some extent out of the fact that the repertoire of church music had necessarily become somewhat retrospective after the Restoration. This now started to become a tradition which carried over into an academic interest in and performance of older music. The mainstay of this was the Academy of Vocal Music, founded in 1726 and renamed the Academy of Ancient Music in 1731, which performed 16th- and 17th-century sacred music and madrigals. Prominent among its early members were church musicians, including performers and composers from the Chapel Royal, Westminster Abbey and St Paul's Cathedral.

However, the predilection for ancient music was something of a minority pursuit. With the exception of liturgical music, '...up to about 1800 music was a fashionable commodity that rarely outlived its creators by more than a generation' (Holman, 2000: 8). Indeed, advertisements for music to be performed at concerts in the period under study stress novelty, frequently mentioning that a certain piece is 'new composed', 'not yet perform'd' or that it has been 'performed but once before' (Harbor, 2017: 1184 Table 6, 1188). However, some pieces, presumably popular ones, received many performances: Handel's oratorio *Esther* was first performed on 20 April 1732 and then repeated another six times within the next month, and ten times more over the next three years. For instrumental music, the vagueness of common descriptions rather than the use of a specific title does not often allow one to see how frequently pieces might have been repeated. There are some exceptions, however: what was billed as Corelli's eighth violin concerto (concerto grosso op.6 no.8), for instance, was performed at least nine times between 1722 and 1742.

### **Concert Venues and Ticket Selling Locations**

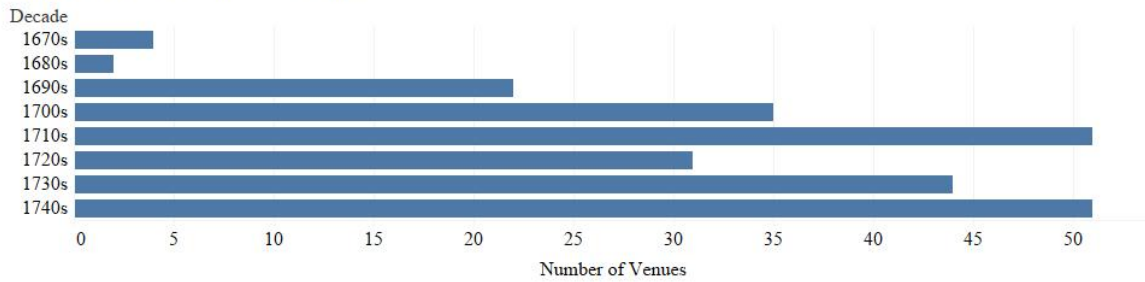
For the performing arts, the location of performing venues and the places or methods of ticket distribution can have an important effect on the success or failure of an artistic event since there is a limit on the amount of effort a consumer is prepared to make to travel to a venue or purchase a ticket. As with retail outlets, the best location for cultural venues is one that is in close proximity both to its potential consumers and to other venues of the same kind, as the synergising effect increases attendance. In the period under study, there was a gradual shift of formal music-making from the private spheres of church, court and aristocratic house to a more public sphere as witnessed by a growth in the number and type of public venues and by the increasing dominance of professional musicians in these new public venues (Brewer, 1995; Bridge, 1903: 60; Habermas, 1992: 39–40; Love, 2004). Few venues were built or indeed used solely for concerts; any large public room would suffice — theatres, the large rooms in taverns or those used as dancing schools. However, some venues were adapted and developed to make them more suitable for the purpose, and a few do seem to have been built with concerts and other public performances in mind, such as the 'Great Room' in York Buildings, the 'Vendu' (primarily an auction house), and performance spaces at some of the spa resorts and pleasure gardens [2].

The venue for Banister's first concerts was his own house, 'now called the *Musick-School*; over against the *George Tavern* in *White Fryers*' (see Figure 1), but as concerts started to be held more regularly, venues spread even further west and north into the more affluent suburbs, but also eastward into the City proper with concerts being held at the Livery Company halls or at City taverns. However, the main focus was definitely shifting westwards to venues such as York Buildings at the western end of the Strand, Hickford's premises first in Panton Street and then from 1738 in Brewer Street, and to the patent theatres in Covent Garden, the Haymarket and Drury Lane (see Figure 3). These venues together made up a cultural area in London designed to appeal to wealthier residents, and where high prices could be charged for a diverse range of evening entertainments. They were well located, being in close proximity both to their potential consumers so that they were easy to reach, and to other venues of the same kind so that the synergising effect might help to increase attendance (Colbert, 2007: 213–8). The pleasure gardens and spa resorts were, perforce, to be found either where springs were located, or in the less built-up locations on London's peripheries. As these resorts offered a range of entertainments in addition to concerts, the longer travelling time was perhaps justified by the prospect of a longer stay.



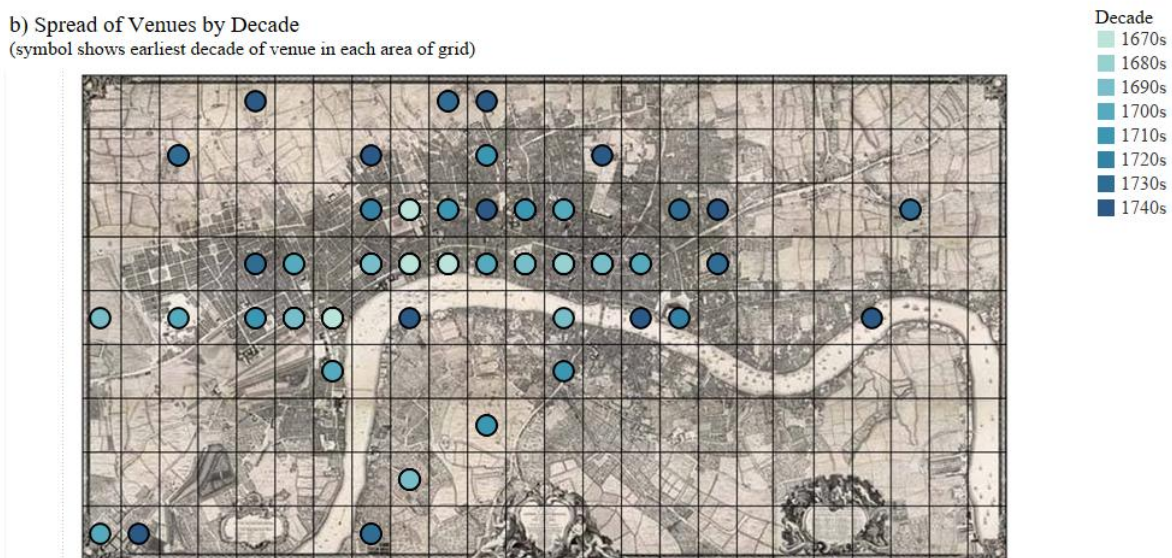
Figure 3: Concert Venues

a) Number of Concert Venues by Decade



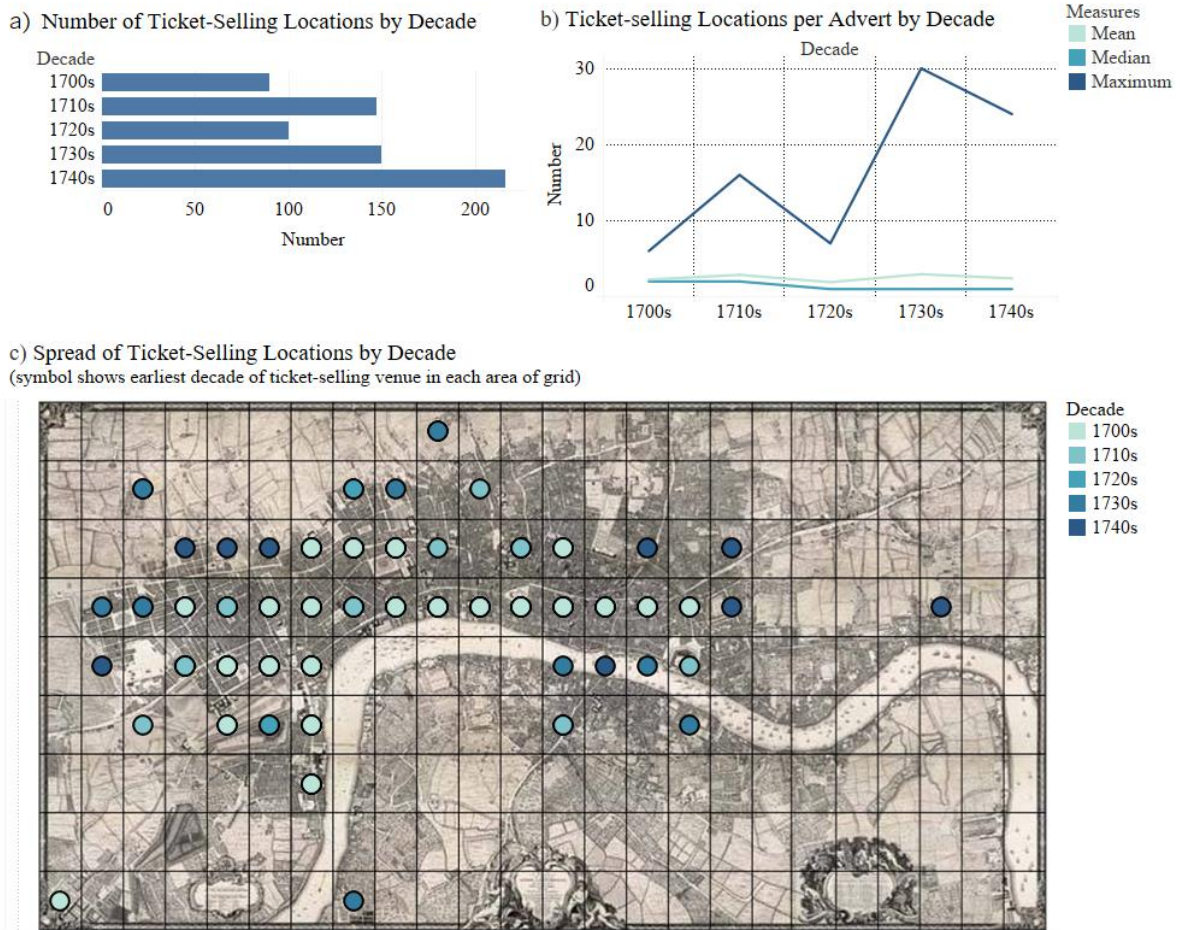
b) Spread of Venues by Decade

(symbol shows earliest decade of venue in each area of grid)



The location and decor of concert venues and the location and types of ticket-selling outlets both lead one to conclude that most concerts were designed to appeal to the relatively affluent. The earliest concerts do not mention ticket-selling locations, but as time went by, concert organisers obviously realised that it was a good idea to make it easier for potential attendees to obtain a ticket by increasing the number of locations and putting this information into their concert advertisements. In an effort to ensure that tickets were on sale in places where potential purchasers would be able to access them in the course of their daily activities, musicians promoting concerts used ticket-selling locations which were geographically distributed around the City of London and Westminster; the number and spread of ticket-selling locations increased as time went on, even though the mean number listed in each advertisement barely changed (see Figure 4). In excess of 560 different ticket-selling locations appear in the advertisements examined between 1672 and 1749.

Figure 4: Ticket-Selling Locations



The most obvious place to sell tickets was at the concert venue and tickets were sold at many venues either in advance or on the door at the time of performance. Other popular ticket-selling locations were coffee houses, taverns, and shops: the sorts of places people might visit as they went about their daily activities; tickets for benefit concerts were also often sold at the house or lodgings of the benefitting musician. Music and book shops appearing most frequently as ticket-selling locations in advertisements, undoubtedly a result of the close links between musicians, music shops, printers and bookshops, all of whom shared in the printing and selling of music. Other shops where one might purchase concert tickets tended to be those selling various luxury goods (see Table II).

Table II: Ticket-Selling Locations by Category

Category	Number of Locations		Shop Type	Number
Coffee	175			
Tavern	94			
Shop	89	→		
Residence	86		Book	25
Unspecified	73		Music	24
Concert Venue	56		Toy	12
Chocolate	12		Goldsmith	2
Residence?	5		Perfumer	2
Other	3		Snuff	2
Dancing School	2		Stationer	2
Chocolate/Coffee	1		Watch	2
School	1		Wig	2
			Brazier	1
			Cabinet	1
			Draper	1
			Drugs	1
			Food	1
			Hosier	1
			Joiner	1
			Linen	1
			Optician	1
			Printer	1
			Prints	1
			Silk	1
			Sword	1
			Upholder	1
			Unspecified	2

### Pricing Strategies

Setting a price for a cultural event sends a signal about the value of the product and will thus influence consumer perceptions and the level of product consumption. In addition to real and perceived costs, the concept of perceived value is another factor in setting prices; a high perceived value may allow a cultural organisation to charge high prices without affecting attendance adversely (Kotler and Scheff, 1997: 226–7). Then, as now, there was a perceived hierarchy of performers and performance spaces: one would expect certain performers to perform at particular venues, but not at others; particular types of concerts were associated with specific venues; and some venues could charge higher prices than others; there was also a careful distinction between the prices charged for different qualities of performer. Thus, tickets for lower status performers at an inferior venue might be 2s.6d. or less, whilst the presence of a star performer at a more high-status venue could command what Kolb (2005: 189) describes as a ‘prestige’ price of as much as 10s.6d. This range of different venues and types of performer meant that concerts were available at a range of prices to suit a range of incomes and for a slightly broader spectrum of society than might be thought.

The following comment shows that some concert organisers adopted a prestige pricing strategy as one way of ensuring that concerts were reserved for the wealthy during this period: ‘... at Consorts of Note the Prices are extravagant, purposely to keep out inferior People’ (*Female Tatler* September 5–7 1709). Thus, a concert by a celebrity musician at Hickford’s where tickets would cost 10s.6d. each would be beyond the reach of many, but an older contemporary of the milliner who in 1766 scraped together 2s. for a seat in the gallery at the Drury Lane playhouse and who stated ‘I seldom miss on a Saturday night’ would, if she so desired, have been able to afford a concert by a lesser musician at a cheaper venue (Hughes, 1971: 57). There are also instances where a more dynamic or discriminatory pricing policy was followed with those promoting concerts changing prices because of demand. The following is to be found in the news items rather than as an advertisement, but is illustrative:

On the 13th Instant there were a great Concourse of Persons of Quality at Richmond New Wells, to hear the Consort of Musick then perform'd, and that it was desired the Rate at coming in should be doubled, viz. to make it 6d. each.  
(*Post Boy* 18 July 1696)

Except for its last decade, the eighteenth century was a period of relatively low or even negative inflation in England and many prices, including theatre and opera admission, remained fairly stable (Hume, 2006; Hume, 2014: 376; Milhous and Hume, 1993), so it is not surprising that in general concert ticket prices behaved likewise. For instance, the prices charged for benefit concerts held between 1713 and 1750 at Hickford's in both its locations showed no significant change over the period. Many concert organisers appeared to adopt a competitive pricing strategy with prices which were broadly equivalent to the range of prices charged for seeing a play or opera at one of the patent theatres, pursuits with which concerts competed for an audience (Avery, 1968: liv–lviii; Avery and Scouten, 1968: lxx–lxxiv; Hunter, 2000; Scouten, 1968: lxxviii–lxxix). Promoters of concerts held as part of the attractions at pleasure gardens, wells and spa resorts, however, priced tickets more cheaply, presumably in order to attract a larger audience — something akin to a market-penetration strategy.

No information is available on whether subscribers for individual concerts received a price reduction, but for concert series, this was so. For Geminiani's concerts held at Hickford's in 1731/2, the price of subscription for the 20-concert series was four guineas; a subscribing lady might bring another lady guest for 5s. per concert, but non-subscribing gentlemen or ladies not accompanying a subscriber had to pay half a guinea (*London Evening Post* November 1731). Thus, subscribers saved 6 guineas if they attended all 20 concerts, a 60% discount; moreover, they could also lend their subscriber's silver ticket to another if they did not wish to attend. Handel's oratorio subscription series in the 1740s gave a lower discount of 33%, and by the 1790s even smaller discounts of 11% on subscription series are noted by Hume (2014). The value of subscriptions to those promoting a concert series was certainty in advance of a particular amount of income, which facilitated decisions on the performers to employ and other arrangements to make. It was also a way of encouraging others to attend: if an advertisement could state that a certain number of subscriptions had already been sold this would show others that it was a concert valued by those who had already made a purchase.

To whom would concerts have appealed at this range of prices? Hume (2014) considers that 'between 1688 and 1801, no more than about 3% of the families in England and Wales had sufficient income to purchase more than a bare minimum of "cultural" products'. Surviving records show that the theatres were rarely full in either the cheap or the expensive seats and that opera performances were no better attended (Hume, 2006; Hunter, 2000; Milhous and Hume, 1978). Hume is doubtful as to whether concerts could have competed with the theatres, which included large amounts of music within their theatrical performances; he also points out that music could be heard *gratis* in church or cheaply in taverns (Hume, 2006). Concerts, however, were available at a range of prices to suit a range of incomes. At 1s., the cheapest concerts or those given as part of the entertainments offered at pleasure gardens, wells or spa resorts might have suited the pocket of the middle class if they wanted to attend on anything like a regular basis (McVeigh, 1993: xiii–xiv; Scherer, 2004: 48). High-quality music and musicians could be heard at some of these venues which provided 'an elite product for mass consumption' (Hume, 2006), others provided a mixture of singing, dancing, acting and gymnastics more akin to what was to be on offer at Edwardian music halls or variety theatres. Handel's oratorios at 10s.6d., sometimes represented as signifying a move toward middle-class taste, would have been far out of their price range except as a very occasional treat (Hume, 2006; Hunter, 2000). Indeed, Hunter (2000) quotes a letter from *Common Sense*, 1738, probably written by Henry Fielding, which states that 'every Body knows that his [Handel's] Entertainments [oratorios] are calculated for the Quality only, and that People of moderate Fortunes cannot pretend to them'. Mid-range concerts at 5s. were as expensive as the best seats at the theatre, those at half a guinea, including Handel's oratorios, were as expensive as opera: only the wealthy elite could have afforded to attend such concerts regularly.

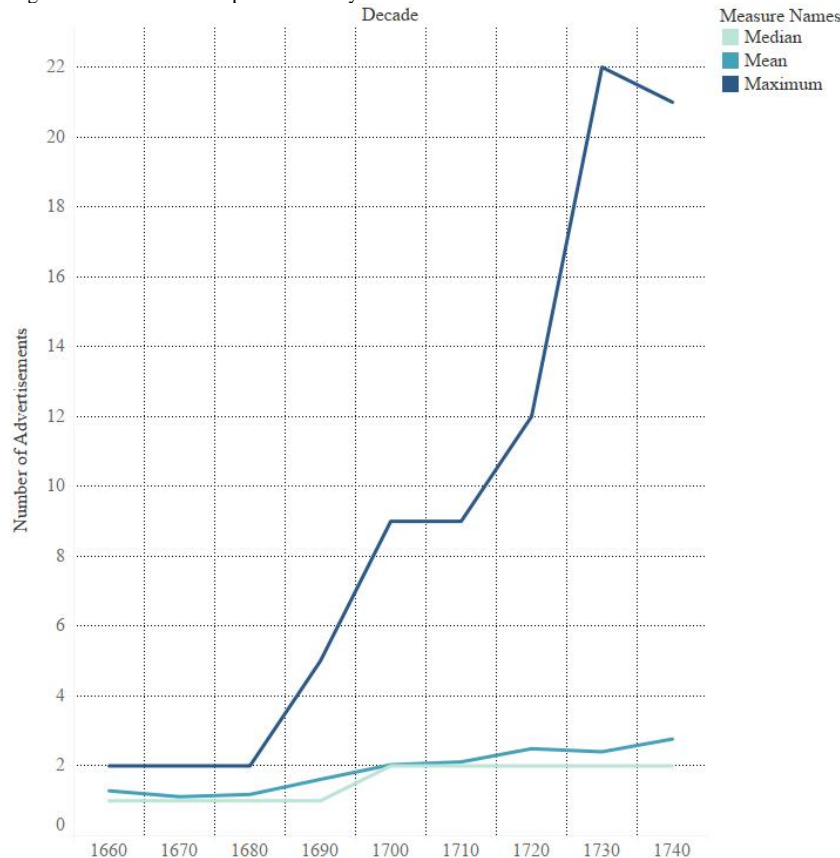
### **Pervasiveness and Persuasion of Advertising**

Two characteristics above all are held to typify present-day advertising: pervasive coverage through the use of a wide variety of media, and a sophisticated and subtle use of persuasive techniques to encourage consumption (Goldman, 1992: 17–19; Leiss et al., 2005: 9–13). Even at such an early date, both characteristics may be seen in the advertising for London concerts. The great boom in the printing industry and the concomitant increase in the number of newspapers following the lapsing in 1695 of the 1662 Licensing (Printing) Act provided a new channel by which musicians could advertise public commercial concerts, a method which had not been available to older established commercial entertainments such as theatrical performances and opera. While this increase in the pervasiveness of entertainment advertising may seem small by today's standards, it is only by taking into account the historical perspective that we can judge its effect (McFall, 2004a: 109; 2004b).

Statistics from 1704/5 show that the number of newspapers published was not inconsiderable, ranging from 1,600–2,600 on the least popular days (Friday and Wednesday), to 14,000 on a Thursday (the most popular day), though the number of readers may have been ten or twenty times greater still (Sutherland, 1934). Figures from

1712 show increases in most cases; however, some titles ceased publication both before this date, and more afterwards as a result of the introduction of stamp duty in 1712 (Snyder, 1968). Only a subset of newspapers carried concert advertisements on a regular basis. Not only was newspaper advertising a new channel of which musicians took advantage, but as it became possible to do so, they made increasing use of it (see Figure 5). The mean number of advertisements per concert rose from 1.18 in the 1680s, to 2.77 by the 1740s and while the majority of concerts still only received small numbers of advertisements throughout the period, the maximum number of advertisements for a single concert increased rapidly. While early London concert advertising could not attain the blanket coverage which the wide variety of media make possible for contemporary cultural events, the increase in advertising over the period in general, while not for concerts in particular, was a matter for comment at the time: Samuel Johnson (1759) warned that ‘Advertisements are now so numerous that they are very negligently perused’ (Bate et al., 1963: 125).

Figure 5: Advertisements per Concert by Decade



London’s concert advertisements, in common with other newspaper advertisements, attracted the attention of the reader of the newspaper by using the limited range of typographical devices that were available in newspapers of the day. The wording of the advertisement then served to arouse interest in the concert and create the desire to purchase a ticket and attend. It is sometimes held that at this period advertisements were mostly informational in content, and for concerts, they might present only the features of the product: time and date of the concert, venue, performer, and programme (Kolb, 2005: 165–6). However, this kind of basic informational advert is the exception rather than the rule. While the blatant exaggerations or falsehoods of eighteenth-century advertisements for medicines and the like may not have found their way into contemporary concert advertising, many texts were constructed in such a way as to convey a more or less concealed message either about the concert itself or the social benefits of attendance (Author). They made use of a variety of sophisticated persuasive appeals: product-oriented information arguing the quality and merits of the product; product image and symbolism promoting social motivations for consumption; personalized appeals based on endorsements of various types; lifestyle appeals showing concert attendance as a type of symbolic consumption, affirming class, status and self-identity; even spoiling tactics. Eighteenth-century musicians promoting concerts were making their potential customers aware of different types of product knowledge associated with the advertised concert and constructing a customer value proposition which would aid them in their decision as to whether to attend or not.

The advertisement shown below may serve as an example: while simultaneously giving information about the concert, several themes emerge. The advertisement starts with a lifestyle motif in the form of an endorsement: by



referring to 'Ladies of Quality' it is emphasising the prestige and exclusivity of this event and implying that attendees will be or aspire to be of the same social class. The long final sentence is dominated by the idea of novelty: 'Several New Cantata's', 'lately brought from Italy' and 'being the first time of appearing in Publick'. The idea of the quality of the performers is demonstrated by the assertion that the concert will be performed 'by the best masters', and Mrs Hemmings' unusual skill in being able to accompany herself on 'on the Harpsechord' while singing is also brought to the attention of the reader. The appeal of the foreign receives some notice as 'Italian Pieces, lately brought from Italy' will be sung.

At the Desire of several Ladies of Quality.

For the Benefit of Mrs. Elizabeth Hemmings.

**A**T The great Room in York-Buildings:

On Friday being the 21st Day of April, will be Perform'd,

A Consort of Vocal and Instrumental Musick, by the best Masters.

Several New Cantata's, with other Songs and Italian Pieces, lately brought from Italy, will be Sung by Mrs. Hemmings and others; and she will also Accompany to her own Voice on the Harpsechord, being the first time of appearing in Publick.

(Daily Courant 17 April 1710)

## Conclusion

The concert arose out of formal and informal occasions where music often formed part of other activities and London played a pioneering role in its development (McVeigh, 1989: 9–13; Weber, 2001). Here, public commercial concerts emerged in a fledgling form in the period around the restoration of Charles II in 1660, developing from private music meetings dominated by amateur performers and informal public performances by professionals in taverns via Banister's first advertised concerts in 1672. By 1750, music played a large part in London's life and musicians marketed their concerts using a number of techniques with which we are familiar today.

Musicians promoted regular concerts with a clear sense of programme planning to appeal to their audience. They held a variety of different types of concerts and made use of a variety of pricing strategies, including innovatory use of the subscription which offered discounts to regular attendees and a measure of advance knowledge of the size of the audience for the musician promoting the concert. Music in London was developing as an international and professional market: foreign musicians were attracted there because of the opportunities it offered them: they were aware of the fact that 'the English would follow musick and drop their pence freely' and sought to take advantage of this (Roger North, *An Essay of Musickall Ayre* c.1715–20 in (Wilson, 1959: 111)). Indeed, at the best concerts, the prices were 'extravagant', on a par with those for opera but with much lower costs. Thus, concerts were both a good chance to make money with lower risk and an opportunity to ensure that musicians brought their names before a wealthy clientele who might then hire them for lucrative private concerts or employ them as teachers for their children.

In late seventeenth- and eighteenth-century London, musicians would have had direct interactions with at least some of their audience: many musicians lived in the same areas as their potential audience, often in rented rooms above shops and taverns; they visited to give instrumental lessons, to play at private concerts or for dancing; the potential audience could often obtain tickets for benefit concerts from the benefiting musician's lodgings, or the benefiting musician would visit their house with tickets if requested (Harbor, 2013: Vol.1 269–273, 277–279). In view of this, modern-style consumer research was not necessary.

Musicians promoting concerts had to compete with the range of other entertainments, both public and private, on offer in London. Speaking only of musical events in the context of the difficulties of obtaining musicians to play at his benefit on 27 March 1729, John Grano comments: 'There was that Night the Ridotto, a Consort at My Lord Bingley's, the two Play Houses, a Consort at Hickford's and several private Assemblies' (Ginger, 1998: 211). Musicians experimented with concert types and pricing strategies, and made vigorous use of promotion to generate ticket sales for the new development that was the public commercial concert in London. What this discussion shows is that at this period when the music business was in its infancy, musicians instigated a range of marketing strategies in an effort to attract an audience which foreground the ideas which lie behind modern theories of marketing in general, and arts marketing specifically, in order to compete with other cultural events on offer and to attract an audience.

## Notes

[1] These are a subset of the references to music held in the full-text computer database known as *The Register of Music in London Newspapers, 1660–1750* (McGuinness, 1983; 1984–5). Subsequent developments in the design of the *Register of Music* are described in (Harbor, 1996; 2001 (publ. 2006)).

[2] The best-known examples are the Rotundas at Vauxhall and Ranelagh (Wroth, 1979: 201–20 and 303).

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