

Vampire Marketing's "Stake" in the Teenage Demographic

SUBMITTED BY: Bryan C. Burnett, Owen J. Roberts
High School, PA

SUBJECT(S): Management, Marketing

GRADE LEVEL(S): 9, 10, 11, 12

≡ OVERVIEW:

With the increasing popularity of social networking groups, especially among teenagers, word has gotten out about the legendary subject of vampires — as noted in an article titled, *Vampires: It's a Bloody – and Booming – Business*, on the Wharton Global Youth Program website. The article and the accompanying links provide a strong foundation for introducing marketing research concepts to my class. The vampire business has not only captured the teenage market at the movie theaters, but has created a growing love of literature around the topic. This lesson provides a foundation for discussion on the importance of marketing and market research to business success.

≡ NBEA STANDARD(S):

- Management, VIII. Technology and Information Management

≡ RELATED ARTICLES:

- ["Vampires: It's a Bloody – and Booming – Business"](#)
- ["Comic-Con and 'The World's First Hyperreality Spy Experience'"](#)

Purpose: Students will conduct marketing research to determine the solution to the problem under study within the market segment selected.

Objectives: Objectives for this lesson(s) focus around the information management component of the NBEA standards. In particular, the focus is on understanding market segmentation and its connection to market research analysis.

- Explain the importance of marketing information.
- Identify sources of marketing information.
- Analyze the environments in which business operates.

Resources /Materials: The following resources will be needed to implement this lesson on marketing research:

1. Technology: Internet access (make sure applicable websites are unblocked by tech support), computer lab/laptop cart with presentation software and LCD projector. (Smartboard in place of whiteboard if technology is available.)
2. Teacher resources: Anticipatory Set Guide, whiteboard/markers and the WGYP article, [Vampires: It's A Bloody – Booming – Business](#). Teacher will need to have some knowledge of market segmentation, survey development and data analysis techniques.

Anticipatory questions should include at least the following:

- Write the word “twilight: on the board and have students brainstorm things associated with it.
- What is marketing research and why is it used?
- What market do students belong to? Teachers?

Activities and procedures

1. The key issue: What parts of this lesson can I adapt to fit my class’s strengths and weaknesses.
2. Part I (market segmentation): Teacher leads discussion/notes on the topic of market segmentation (geographic, demographics, and psychographics, also called lifestyle

characteristics). Some key questions:

1. What market segment does this article address? Why?
 2. How would you define this class as a market segment? How did you come to that conclusion?
 3. What are key psychographic segment factors that would relate to the Vampire market's growth?
 4. Based on the information in the WGYP article, what is your estimate of the annual revenue of this vampire market? \$100 million? Billions?
 1. Allow students to search the Internet for the answer after they have provided an educated guess. Discuss differences. Bring in the fact from the article that *Twilight* the movie grossed \$70.6 million.
 5. What are your predictions for the market for the short term and long term? Is this a fad?
3. Part II (data collection): Teacher leads discussion/notes on the marketing research process. Outlined below is a suggested flow:
1. Teacher will develop the problem definition for the brief market research study to determine the Vampire market at the school.
 1. Sample problem definition: What is the popularity of the Vampire genre at Owen J. Roberts High School?
 2. After a brief discussion on types of survey questions (close v. open ended), the teacher will lead the class through the development of a survey to use in the research study.
 1. Key areas that would need to be covered: demographics (at end of the survey) with a bulk of the questions on psychographics.
 3. Teacher develops final 10-question survey with the class. Key concepts: Questions should provide for easy data analysis and should be linked to statements provided in the article (disprove/prove in analysis), demographics questions should be limited and placed at end of survey; all parts of segmentation discussion should be covered in relation to the Vampire article, and questions with yes/no answers should be eliminated.
 4. The class pretests the survey and makes corrections as needed.
 5. Teacher finalizes the survey and copies it for distribution to the class. Either 10 or 20 copies should be given to each student to help with data analysis section (percentages).
 6. Students collect the data throughout the day for next day's class on data analysis.
4. Part III (data analysis): Teacher leads discussion/notes on the analysis of the data collected, including the development of the findings and conclusions of the problem

under study. Place students in small groups to combine research data from the surveys that were collected from the student body. Each group will present to the class their groups findings. [Optional: Use laptops/computer lab to have students enter the data into spreadsheet software (Excel) and develop pie charts for placing into a presentation software (PowerPoint)]. The teacher will allow students to write their findings on the board and then discuss them with the class. Emphasis should be on the problem definition developed in Part II. Using the computers in the room, the students will develop a word processing document (Word) with their conclusions from the research linked to the article and their class's data collection/analysis. Possible questions to add in the development of the analysis:

1. What characteristics does our school have that match the segmentation of the market discussed earlier for Vampires in the article?
2. What are your conclusions for the strengths and weaknesses of the Vampire market?

Tying it all together

A seemingly complicated discussion and application of information management (marketing research) turned into easy concepts to grasp. Students were active in the discussion of the topics and the development of the survey. An astonishing 100% of the students returned the required surveys (10 per student). Some students struggled with using the technology (spreadsheet software). Students were able to draw conclusions based on the research and linked the research from the school to the research in the article.

Key points from the article that need to be linked to the research (did the data prove or disprove your problem definition):

- Thousands of young adults who belong to well-populated groups on Facebook are dedicated to all things Vampire (This was definitely true in our group. In fact, Facebook was almost 100% used, with about 50% belonging to a “vampire interest” group).
- Guys are not interested in “Twilight” the book, but vampire movies interest them (Again, our research showed that guys like vampire movies better than reading vampire books).
- More teens are shopping for vampire themed literature (proved in our research) and they include a lot more girls than guys.

- Vampire genre items are purchased at shopping malls (This was not the case in our study).
- Word of mouth and social networking have been main components in the popularity growth of the subject matter. (Our group proved this statement to be correct).
- Older vampire books are now being read (Very few kids in our study group were into this).
- “Twilight” has helped draw legions of new fans to the Vampire genre. (Almost 100% of the group surveyed said that “Twilight” has created a new interest in vampires for them).

Future activities that can be linked to this include:

- Faculty segment can be added to the Vampire genre popularity research study. Are faculty into the Vampire genre as much as teenagers?
- Small groups can collect their own research and present to the class rather than the entire class working together.
- Guest speaker from a local bookstore and/or movie store can be invited to talk about trends in the teenage market.

What worked and what I would do differently next time

Most students had some background in marketing research elements and had read/seen some part of the Twilight franchise. I think the lesson linked to the article provided a strong learning of the concepts. If just an article is provided for the students to read, the students will often skim it and exhibit a “so what” attitude. This article was timely and, coupled with the above lesson, provided a rewarding learning activity.

Improving upon this lesson:

One could use this project and article as a feature on the school’s television studio news report by showcasing the research side of the lesson and the results.