

## Abstract

The process by which the classical music business operates in the UK changed significantly through the marketing of a classical music recording which took place in 1989. EMI's recording of Vivaldi's work *Four Seasons* with the violinist Nigel Kennedy was given a unique marketing campaign for a classical music recording. Instead of the traditional marketing approach for a classical music release, pop marketing techniques were employed. In a different but related development, in 1990, the first of the Three Tenors concerts was held in Rome to mark the final match of the 1990 Fédération Internationale de Football Association's (FIFA) world cup competition. The success of this second record campaign lay in the novelty of three tenors performing together at a football competition. The result was classical music achieving worldwide exposure through global radio and television broadcasts. Both case studies help further classical music as a form of popular culture. Earlier precedent demonstrates pieces of classical music being used for adverts or films and becoming popular. For example Ravel's *Bolero* was used in a seduction scene in the film *10* between Bo Derek and Dudley Moore in 1984,<sup>1</sup> and by ice-skaters Torvill and Dean in the same year for the final of the 1984 Winter Olympics.<sup>2</sup> Another example is Orff's *Carmina Burana* sections of which have been used for aftershave and lager adverts as well as being sung at football matches.<sup>3</sup> Because the reach of the audience is larger than that in a traditional classical music setting, the pieces achieve a mass cultural perspective in this context.

My thesis examines the impact that the success of the *Four Seasons* and Three Tenors releases had on the classical music business and the development in marketing and selling techniques that emanated from their success. Examples of marketing campaigns post the *Four Seasons* are included to show the extent of non-traditional classical marketing techniques used subsequently by the classical music industry, some of which I devised and implemented.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.filmsite.org/ten.html>

<sup>2</sup> [http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/february/14/newsid\\_4156000/4156053.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/february/14/newsid_4156000/4156053.stm)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.guardian.co.uk/music/2009/jan/02/classical-music-film-carmina-burana>

My research also analyses how trading over the internet has had an impact on the music business as a whole, and how the classical music sector has followed the pop area of the music industry in creating different ways of selling to traditional and new consumers through online trading. This part of the thesis focuses on the period between 2000-2010, especially from 2006 when developments in this field progressed.

My study will draw on a Case Study approach using multiple data collection methods. Also employed is descriptive analysis using a combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques, in particular through industry reports. The reasons for the sales success of both recordings are examined in my thesis. The *Four Seasons* achieved 2 million sales and an entry into the Guinness Book of Records as the best-selling classical music recording of all time at that point.<sup>4</sup> The recording of the 1990 Three Tenors concert and the successive recordings of similar concerts in 1994 and 1998 led to these albums becoming the all-time best-selling classical recordings. For example, worldwide sales for the 1990 recording reached over 12 million CDs, cassettes and videos combined and 23 million for the 1990, 1994 and 1998 Three Tenors recordings.<sup>5</sup> These projects not only gave increased exposure to the classical music genre by expanding its traditional consumer reach, they also created a force for change in business models affecting the marketing and visibility of classical music since 1989.

A further significant factor in the success of these vocal recordings (as well as the chance for classical music to be heard outside its traditional boundary) was the use of the arresting aria *Nessun dorma* from Puccini's opera *Turandot*. This was sung by Pavarotti and used by the BBC for all its programmes broadcasting the 1990 football matches in the competition.

The effect of internet selling and downloading on the music business was encouraged by the creation of Apple's iTunes program in 2001. The invention of the iPod in 2002 and the legal entity of Napster in 2004 led to much increased accessibility of music. For classical music with its long movements and being part of a slow-moving market (compared to pop music), this area of the business only witnessed an increase in activity through the expansion of

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.emiclassics.com/artistbiography.php?aid=55>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.jcarreras.com/articles/1999/dfp071199b.stm>

Broadband nationally during 2006 and 2007, reaching 70% in 2009 (discussed on page 90, chapter 4). Since then, the growth of classical music e-tailers has forged a new way of operating in the classical music field. The thesis will give examples of the leading companies trading over the internet and their influence on the classical music market.

Contributions from practitioners in the music business inform my thesis through their own witnessing of changes in the classical music business since the *Four Seasons* campaign. My own experience as a former Head of Press and Promotion for both Decca Classics and EMI Classics, and also currently as a marketing and business consultant for classical music organisations, offers a useful and relevant addition to my research. My contribution to knowledge is to identify the adaptation of pop music marketing tools by the classical music industry over a 20 year time frame. My close involvement in the EMI *Four Seasons* campaign places me in a unique position to identify and evaluate the significance of the publicity campaign of that recording not only at that time but in the years that followed.