

# The film trailers essay sample

[Entertainment](#), [Movie](#)



A film really only has one shot at success. One way of achieving this is through specific and thorough marketing strategies and devices. The trailer is a device designed to sell the cast and concept of the film which will stir up immediate interest (Movietrailertrash. com, n. d). “ Trailers provide unique and specific rhetorical structures that fold visual and auditory evidence of the film production industry’s assessment of its actual audience (as well as its desires for potential audience) into a one- to three-minute cinematic experience.” – Lisa Kernan (Coming attractions, 2004) The 1950s loved technology. This era saw a major collision between technology and consumer culture. Hollywood’s attitude towards it was invariably reactive.

The 1950s was the first financially successful rollout of both widescreen and 3D processes. Filmmakers and entertainers owe a great deal of gratitude to this movement in spectacular screen display and the making of trailers (Johnston, 2009). The success of this device can be measured with the amount of seats sold for the opening of the full feature film. So what makes a trailer successful? According to Movietrailertrash. com (n. d) a trailer has to fulfil four departments. It has to be compelling, impressive, faithful and artistic. These four elements assure that the trailer stays true to the film and not setting the audience up for disappointment, whilst still being creative and appealing on screen. I will continue to discuss the conventions and techniques used to create trailers, as well as discuss possible structures for our experimental trailer according to the relevant genre. Narrative conventions

While trailers are a form of advertising, they are also a unique form of narrative film exhibition. The conventions they follow and how they are

structured greatly depends on the genre of the film (Kernan, 2004). A trailer will often be structured around the most appealing aspects of a film, disregarding the conventional narrative order. Comedies might use a funny moment taken from the ending of the film, near the beginning of the trailer. A selection of clips can be used to attract the widest possible audience, such as a romantic clip for an action film trailer. Horror films focus more on stylistic conventions and getting the film's theme across (Loock & Verevis, 2012). I will discuss this later. Drama trailers will aim to provide a basic narrative structure to guide us through the film's storyline. Voice-overs are one way of telling this story and credit information. In action and horror film trailers, voice-overs are used with text to convey the plot in a more dramatic and suspenseful manner (Loock & Verevis, 2012). Stylistic Conventions

All the elements that make a trailer recognisable and own to a specific genre form part of their stylistic conventions. The stylistic conventions of trailers are derived from the techniques used depending on the genre, once again. Trailer makers have developed clever techniques to deliver this short representation of the film when the plot does not come across clearly. Action films make use of a montage of clips while a narrator or text announces the plot, with fast paced music binding the suspense. Dialogue between characters often consists of one-liners and catch phrases, which the viewer can anticipate in the film.

Romantic dramas rely on the structure around the plot. The protagonist is introduced, their love interest is introduced and moments of them together make out the majority of the trailer. These modern trailers conclude by

announcing recognisable cast and crew, which evidently catches the audience's attention (Scott, 201). How and when graphics/titles are used also falls under the genre's stylistic conventions. Trailers need to pay attention to the font used, when it is displayed and the music that will support it. The classic role of titles is to introduce famous cast members and/or director and producers. The popular norm is to end your trailer with the film title through desired design graphics. All of these designs will form part of the entire film's branding and marketing (Johnston, 2009).

#### Themes reflected in trailers

“ The overall tone of a film trailer can also be directly influenced by the use of music in the trailer.” (Finsterwalder, 2011). Music can be used to portray a particular theme of a film as consumers often relate specific types of music with particular types of music, for example, soft music can evoke romance while variety in level and faster paced music enhances action or horror scenes. Comedies and dramas also often make use of commercial tracks. Finsterwalder (2011) further indicates that since the beginning of the MTV generation in the 1980s, trailers have relied heavily upon music as a way of highlighting particular aspects of the trailer, as well as increasing the overall pace of the trailer by connecting multiple scenes. Choosing the right track with corresponding shot selection and duration can be a direct depiction of the theme your film is trying to get across.

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