

Discourse analysis the adaptive behavior of music firms a music industry feedback...

[Business](#), [Management](#)



In Patrik Wikstrom's article "The Adaptive Behavior of Music Firms: A Music Industry Feedback Model," the author attempts to appeal to an audience already-educated in business, but not necessarily the music industry, basing his strategies on pure information and affecting a more personal, if informative, discourse with the reader. This is accomplished through a variety of techniques which are intended to lend him credibility, while still providing the audience with as much information as they require to understand the concepts that he is attempting to convey.

This approach is seen very easily in his manner of addressing the audience; at several times throughout the text, he refers to himself in the first person, "I," thereby establishing him as a character in the narrative - Patrik Wikstrom is meant to be speaking to the audience. Furthermore, he later associates himself with the reader by instructing the audience to change topics - "Now let us turn to..." (75) The use of 'us' is meant to supply us with a sense of trust and familiarity with Wikstrom, which is a tactic used to get him to relate and sympathize more easily with his findings and his strategies later in the text.

In terms of the intended audience of this article, its status as a text mostly (if not only) found in a media business studies journal tells the reader that its primary reader will most likely be a student of media business, who is reading this article for a class. Also, that its author is associated with an international business school gives us the background that his expertise mostly lies within business matters, and will therefore be read by those attempting to learn those things he is able to teach. If a reader is going to be

receptive to this article, they must be willing to take the time to understand a great number of graphs that illustrate business models, as well as sift through text that carries a great number of citations; namely, someone who is used to academic reading. A reader must work hard and understand the basic concepts of business in order to have the vernacular to successfully comprehend and finish reading the article. Still, the author assumes that the reader has at least a rudimentary knowledge of how the music industry works, as he refers to “obvious” examples, which implies familiarity on the part of the reader. (74)

It is clear from the text that the reader must be well-read, as well as have a good grasp of English vocabulary; many advanced terms and grammatical structures are used that, when presented with someone at a lower reading level, would confuse said reader. With that being said, Wikstrom attempts to get down to the point, as he prefaces the article by saying it is “condensed,” and by dividing it into sections that are easier to digest on their own. (70)

Intertextuality is a big part of this article, especially since a good portion of it is references to previous texts, articles, and the like, as well as several dozen interviews personally undertaken by the author.

Wikstrom assumes a number of things in his assessment of what is factual in the content of this article. For one, he banks on the accuracy and effectiveness of the data he has collected, whether from his many literary sources or the interviews he has performed with music industry professionals. Also, he takes his own strategies as gospel, showing that he knows, not thinks, that his strategies for adapting the music industry to

changing media environments will be effective. He surmises that his strategies and information would work to at least other licensing-related industries, such as television and film. (90)

In the article, the author styles himself as a legitimate interlocutor, and an authority on the situation; he does so both by having his associated institution (The Jonkoping International Business School) directly below his name at the start of the article, and through the sheer number of citations and references he contains, adding up to a staggering amount of research that, while still informing the reader legitimately, seeks to assert the author's knowledge of the material onto the reader. Wikstrom places himself on the side of music industry professionals, as his stance over the course of the article is to help these individuals succeed by providing them strategies to overcome the new problems faced within the industry. He shares their interest and investment in the success of their business and continued, if not increased, profits for their business models.

Another consequence of the citations and interviews Wikstrom has undertaken is to project himself as an authority on the subject; at the same time, he is honest about where he gets these sources. In this way, he is both expert and apprentice; the reader sees who he learned his tricks from, but then they learn the same tricks from the apprentice himself, creating a longer cycle of learning. What's more, Wikstrom took the information that he received during his apprenticeship and applied his own style of thinking to it, attempting to solve problems that his mentors were not solving.

This article assumes barely any collective archive, save for the essential tenets of industry that it is thought the reader would know in order to have the right vocabulary to read this text. Some of the few examples of collective archive lie in the namedropping of Paul McCartney, Stevie Wonder, and others as popular music composers, which requires at least the slightest knowledge of Western popular culture, which is assumed in the English-speaking, business-school attending readership of articles such as these. (74)

The author's sense of temporal orientation is modern yet broad; Wikstrom is both past and future oriented, spending nearly equal amounts of time showing how music industry models have behaved in the past, and showing how they would in the future (providing alternative models and strategies to adapt in the future to the changes that have been occurring in the recent past). The ultimate aim, obviously, is to fix the bigger picture of the way the music industry is run, something that would take years, if not decades, to fully complete. There is a large cause and effect component to this article, Wikstrom asserting that recently changing factors in the music business environment are bringing about the need for these changes to be implemented. (84)

If we are to take from this article the general level of discourse that is to be taken from journals regarding the music industry, there are some important things to take from it. First of all, articles would be written from a personal point of view, especially when an author is advocating change, as they will attempt to get you to relate to these changes. Wikstrom, for example, if he is

a typical author for this type of discourse, is presenting a problem in the industry he is discussing, and providing a thorough plan to fix the problems that he sets forth with a great deal of previous evidence. There is a great emphasis on information and research, providing a great deal of documentation and external sources. The author must be authoritative and provide justifications for his thesis, but he can safely assume the audience knows the basic vocabulary of the business, so they can approach the subject on more or less equal footing. The audience for this type of paper has a firm grasp of the English language, and can understand complicated concepts that are presented in a straightforward manner. With all of this in mind, one can better understand what can be expected when examining an article such as this, coming from the perspective of business professionals in the music industry.