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Don't give Grandma an ipod for Christmas: An Expository Study Examining the Consumer Behavior of Senior Citizens in the Digital Music Industry

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DON'T GIVE GRANDMA AN IPOD FOR CHRISTMAS:
AN EXPOSITORY STUDY EXAMINING THE CONSUMER BEHAVIOR OF
SENIOR CITIZENS IN THE DIGITAL MUSIC INDUSTRY

by

JOSHUA T. COLEMAN

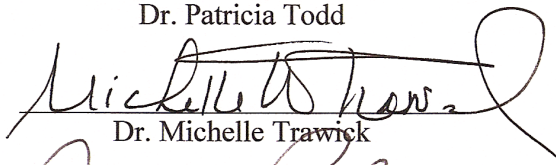
2009

A Capstone Experience/Thesis
submitted in fulfillment of the requirements of
University Honors College at
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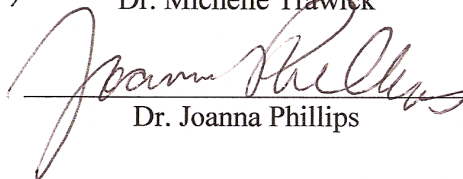
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ABSTRACT

Senior citizens are the fastest growing demographic today, and the digital music industry is one of the fastest growing aspects of our economy. This study explores the relationships and underlying correlations between these two facets. Three research methods were employed: field observation of a musician targeting his music to the elderly; data analysis of this musician's sales records; and a questionnaire seeking the purchasing and listening preferences of baby boomers and senior citizens. The results reveal that, as age increases, senior citizens' comfort purchasing and listening to music through digital methods decreases. A negative correlation between age, nostalgic marketing, and the Internet is explored as well. Suggestions are provided for the implementation of these results in the marketplace.

INDEX WORDS: Senior citizen, elderly, Internet, online, digital music, nostalgic marketing.

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LITERATURE REVIEW

Senior Citizen Demographics

Senior citizens are the most rapidly expanding group in the nation (Hobbs and Stoops 2002; Jones 2001; Savi, Ateşoğlu, and Önal 2008). Traditionally defined as those 65 and older, this population subset grew from 3.1 million people in 1900 to almost 35 million in 2000 (Hobbs and Stoops 2002). By the end of 2007, this number had increased to 38 million people (U.S. Census Bureau 2008), and the age distribution of the entire U.S. population has shifted from the relatively young to the relatively old (Hobbs and Stoops 2002). Comprising almost 13% of the total population, the growth rate during the past century for the elderly increased more than that for any other group (Polyak 2000).

While some predictions infer that the senior citizen population could increase to roughly 50 million people by the end of the decade (Lambert-Pandaud, Gilles, and Lapersonne 2005), more recent projections place the number at just over 40 million people (U.S. Census Bureau 2008). The percentage of total population is expected to increase from its current proportion of 13% to over 20% by the year 2050 (U.S. Census Bureau 2008), making one of every five people in the country above the age of 65, as opposed to one of every ten people in 1970 (Oumlil and Williams 2000). Due to the rapid rise of this population compared with the apparent decline in the population of 18-34 year olds, the elderly could outnumber this group by over 10 million people by 2010 (Hobbs and Stoops 2002), a number that is predicted to increase significantly over the next four

decades to the point at which there are twice as many senior citizens as there are 18-34 year olds by the year 2025 (U.S. Census Bureau 2008).

Perhaps the most well known adjunct to this rise in the population of senior citizens is the aging of the baby boomers, people born between the years of 1946 and 1964. This large group will reach the age of 65 starting in 2011 and will then be considered a part of the senior citizen population (Hobbs and Stoops 2002). Baby boomers began turning 50 in 1996 at the rate of nearly 300,000 people every month (Henderson 1998). There are more than twice as many baby boomers as there are current senior citizens, a number that will greatly impact the overall proportion of people 65 years and older in the years to come (U.S. Census Bureau 2008). On a similar note, among the elderly population, women typically outnumber men by more than two to one (Hobbs and Stoops 2002).

Senior Citizen Market

In the United States, senior citizens age 65 and up have the most discretionary income of any age group, with some estimates allotting them half the nation's disposable income, while others indicate that up to \$200 billion is spent each year (Oumlil and Williams 2000). Some figures even say the elderly control 70 percent of the net worth of United States households (Raymond 2000), while others claim the elderly controlled 75 percent of all financial assets in the country at one point in time (Kiplinger and Kiplinger 1998). It is also estimated that senior citizens have historically outspent those under the age of 30 by billions of dollars (Moschis 1996). These numbers are attributable in large part to government aids such as social security and Medicare as well as liberal pension plans. One study denotes that, at one point in time, senior citizens have had the potential

to leave behind as much as \$10 trillion to their children and grandchildren (Henderson 1998).

As can be expected due primarily to the nature of the economy with which they aged, senior citizens typically prefer services to be associated with their product purchases (Flanagan 1994). While sensitive when it comes to costs, the elderly are typically more likely to pay a higher price when special attention is received. As one study points out, “products tailored to senior consumers should be simple, user-friendly and easy for people with physical limitations to use” (Savi, Ateşoğlu, and Önal 2008). Similarly, as technology began to enter the marketplace, the elderly tended to experience difficulties when presented with rapidly paced, complex information or data given in large quantities (Gorn, et al. 1991). In recent years, businesses have faced the challenges of satisfying an elderly market by either creating new products targeted toward this rising population or improving old products with which senior citizens are already familiar (Moschis, Lee, and Mathur 1997).

The Elderly and the Music Market

Digital music is one of the most rapidly expanding areas in today’s economy (Beer 2008, Iyer and Eastman 2006, SeniorNet 2004). Consumers are storing thousands of songs onto portable music players as opposed to bookshelves and CD racks. Some groups, such as the elderly, are not adapting to this new kind of library as quickly as other, younger populations (Beer 2008). Even the style of music offered today is being acclimated slowly into the senior citizen population. One author believes “popular music is so pervasive that efforts to bring the old tunes back to life face stiff competition” (Ward 2003). Nevertheless, with senior citizens comprising the fastest growing

population, this rapid increase in the digital music market must be taken into consideration. Two aspects that could affect the potential for the elderly market's assimilation into the digital music world are nostalgia marketing and the Internet.

Nostalgia Marketing. Nostalgia is purely an emotional response (Goulding 2002). Fairley (2003) describes it as "a preference (general liking, positive attitude, or favorable affect) toward objects (people, places, experiences, or things) from when one was younger or from times about which one has learned vicariously." In essence, as people age, they might yearn for their past or feel a longing for possessions or experiences associated with their past. Also, in order to feel nostalgic toward something, one must be separated from the time for which he or she yearns (Sierra and McQuitty 2007).

Generally, for nostalgia to be summoned, a stimulus, or trigger, must occur. These could include physical artifacts, images, or written words that are associated with positive experiences in one's past (Goulding 2002). Concerning the music market, multiple studies purport that music and sound serve as ideal stimuli for nostalgic reactions (Goulding 2002; Holbrook and Schindler 1989; Havlena and Holak 1991; Sierra and McQuitty 2007). While some believe that, in order for nostalgic responses to occur, one must have direct memories of the past (Braun, Ellis, and Loftus 2002), others state that living in the past is not necessarily a requirement for feeling nostalgic (Chase and Shaw 1989). Though neither theory has any noticeable affect on response, two distinctions can be made concerning nostalgia: "real" or "true" nostalgia, based upon one's remembered past, and "learned" or "stimulated" nostalgia, which is vicariously evoked from verbal and textual accounts, products or possessions, and images from the past (Baker and Kennedy 1994). Similarly, it has been noted that gender differences exist when it comes

to stimuli and that women are more likely than men to appreciate and treasure memorabilia from their past (Havlena and Holak 1991).

This idea of individual recollections, whether inherent or learned, is not all-inclusive when considering nostalgia. Group identity also plays a role in the shaping of nostalgia, as this yearning for the past can be shared by members of the same time period or experiences for which one is longing (Goulding 2002). Unity between individuals who unknowingly share similar experiences can be formed, giving way to new group identities based solely around nostalgic feelings (Havlena and Holak 1991). Furthermore, being a part of a group with similar pasts helps shape individual identity and can impact the personal nostalgia one experiences by adding to the collection of one's repertoire of the past (Sierra and McQuitty 2007).

For marketers, the fact that a large number of people wish to revisit the past, especially senior citizens more prone to nostalgia, provides ample reason to pursue the idea of nostalgic marketing (Sierra and McQuitty 2007). Selling products that allow users to experience a time already passed appeals to nostalgic consumers. Advertising reminiscent of years gone by also has the potential to attract consumers yearning for the past (Havlena and Holak 1991). No matter which method is used – the products themselves or the advertising – marketers can capitalize on consumers' yearning for the past to provide a positive shopping experience that could influence customer behavior as well (Muehling and Sprott 2004). People may wish to purchase items that remind them of their past, trying to preserve or bring back their past, in a way (Motley, Henderson, and Baker 2003), and this incentive for products that may not be found in the abundance they once were gives many customers that much more reason to purchase (Reed 2002).

The Internet. In the past few years alone, Internet sales have increased significantly, with over \$100 billion being spent annually (Kopytoff 2006). It is having a progressively greater impact on the retail market as it becomes more naturally assimilated into American culture (Kopytoff 2006). Similarly, senior citizens are experiencing the most rapid growth of any population in the Internet market, despite their unfamiliarity and hesitancy with the digital universe (Guynn 2002, Eastman and Iyer 2005). Furthermore, this number is expected to increase in the coming years (Joseph and Stone 2005).

However, while they may be the fastest expanding online demographic, only four percent of Internet users are 65 and up (O'Leary 2000), even though the elderly maintain over 13 percent of the United States population (U.S. Census Bureau 2008). Only 24 percent of senior citizens use the Internet, compared with 59 percent of 50-64 year olds, 69 percent of 30-49 year olds, and 72 percent of 18-29 year olds (Landro 2005). Thirty-one percent of the elderly population has never used the Internet; conversely, 70 percent of baby boomers have (McGuire 2005). In essence, Internet usage is lowest among senior citizens (Bucy 2000), with one study indicating that the only group using the Internet less could be prisoners (Pepper 2002). Even though the next generation of senior citizens (baby boomers) possesses much more fluency with Internet usage, there is still a \$200 billion market that does not (Joseph and Stone 2005).

Of those seniors who are online, few are using the Internet to meet their shopping needs, with one study purporting just 23 percent of respondents (Iyer and Eastman 2006), and another pointing out a direct, negative relationship between age and online shopping (Weaver McCloskey 2006). Most online senior citizens use the Internet to remain in

contact with relatives and friends, with research indicating that the elderly are much less likely to use the Internet for product information, comparison shopping, or online purchases (SeniorNet 2004). Of those who do shop online, the top categories of products purchased include computer software/hardware, travel services, books, and automobiles (SeniorNet 2002). Furthermore, one study reveals that senior citizens who do purchase products online only did so once or twice a year (Reisenwitz, et al. 2007).

Some members of the senior citizen population simply have no interest in using the Internet. Due largely in part to a pessimistic attitude toward technology in general, senior citizens traditionally are not likely to pick up the Internet on their own (Modahl 2000). Avoidance arises from a variety of sources, including misconceptions that the Internet is hard to use (Trocchia and Janda 2000), too expensive, and too confusing (Lenhart 2000), along with an overall lack of experience and understanding (Reisenwitz, et al. 2007). Despite the fact that the elderly, due to a general decline in mobility and health, could potentially gain the most from utilizing the Internet (Priest, Nayak, and Hamilton 2007), one study indicated that a large majority of the elderly do not think they are missing out on anything by not using the Internet (Guynn 2002).

The senior citizens who are online also suffer from an overall lack of confidence when using the Internet, especially when compared to younger users (AARP 2000). The elderly tend to become lost and confused when going online, a notion that only increases their discomfort to a greater degree (Slone 2003). They use more caution when online than do users familiar with the Internet, reading all the information presented on web pages and clicking every link, most of which younger users would know to skip (Saranow 2004). Because they are less confident online, senior citizens are less likely to

purchase online, with women displaying significantly less surety than men (Reisenwitz, et al. 2007). This lack of confidence among the elderly is due in part to sources beyond their control such as financial fraud (Lee and Geistfeld 1999) and the fact that they were not able to grow up with technology such as computers and the Internet (Joseph and Stone 2005). However, it is important to note that senior citizens are not generally satisfied with their ability to use the Internet (Iyer and Eastman 2006).

Of particular interest to this research, one study by Reisenwitz, et al. (2007) found that consumers prone to nostalgia showed significantly different results than those not affected by nostalgia. More specifically, those more heavily nostalgic used and accessed the Internet less, shopped and purchased online less, exhibited less experience using the Internet, and felt less comfortable online than those not prone to nostalgia. It can be surmised, then, that while the elderly population and the Internet market are both rising rapidly, senior citizens prone to nostalgia display an inverse relationship to online sales. The implications for marketers and, more specifically, the digital music industry are discussed in this study.

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study, completed through three different marketing research techniques, is to determine and analyze:

- the relationship between senior citizens and nostalgia marketing in the digital music industry
- the relationship between senior citizens' purchasing behavior and the digital music industry
- the relationship between the music listening preferences of senior citizens and the digital music industry

Two market research techniques utilized data gathered from Jason Coleman, a young pianist and independent artist. Coleman is the grandson of Floyd Cramer, a Country Music Hall of Fame inductee and one of the most recorded country music pianists of all time. Due to his grandfather's recognition, Coleman employs nostalgia marketing to promote four albums featuring Cramer's music through his website, retail stores around his hometown of Nashville, Tennessee, and concerts throughout the South-Eastern United States.

For the purpose of this research, field observation was conducted to determine the basic demographics of Coleman's target audience, and an extensive analysis of Coleman's sales records over a two-year period was undertaken as well. A third market research technique was employed utilizing a survey distributed to a sample of baby

boomers and senior citizens. The questionnaire assessed both subsets' perceptions of music purchasing preferences and music listening preferences.

Field Observation

Jason Coleman granted permission for me to employ two observational studies at two different locations at which he played piano to promote his music. Coleman sold his albums while playing his keyboard at two locations: Apple Barn Cider Bar and General Store at Opry Mills, a shopping mall in Nashville, Tennessee, and The Opry Shop in Opryland Hotel, also in Nashville. Next to Coleman and his keyboard stood a sign reading, "Jason Coleman, Grandson of Piano Legend Floyd Cramer," with the names "Jason Coleman" and "Floyd Cramer" nearly the same size.

I sat on a bench twenty to thirty feet away from him and kept records of how long consumers seemed to express interest in Coleman, an estimate of their age, their gender, and their race. I also kept track of the album from which Coleman was playing music at the time consumers first expressed interest to ascertain whether or not individual songs could attract consumers more than others, but nothing was discovered of any consequence. Also, I denoted who actually purchased Coleman's albums, but because the intentions for purchasing could not be known, this data turned out to be irrelevant as well (Appendix A, Figure 3). For example, someone may not have purchased Coleman's music because he or she already owned multiple copies of each album. Such motivations could not be determined from observational studies.

Results. At Apple Barn in Opry Mills Mall during the holiday season, crowds are inevitably denser than at other times of the year. Coleman set up his keyboard and promotional materials and played for roughly three hours to raise awareness of his music.

His music could be heard anywhere from 50 to 100 feet away from the store, depending on the density of traffic. I observed over a period of two hours. During this time, approximately 104 customers showed direct interest in Coleman, either approaching his table and keyboard, picking his albums up from his table or the cash registers, or speaking to him while he played.

Of these, only 24 stayed for four minutes or longer. The majority of consumers remained for two to three minutes. Sixty-six people, over half, appeared to be of senior-citizen status, while only four looked to be younger than the age of 30. While ages cannot be adequately defined from mere observation, the overall impression could not be denied that the elderly showed more interest than their younger counterparts. Similarly, 65 consumers were female, while only 39 were male. Race was observed as well, and the results were easy to interpret: 100% of observed consumers were white (Table 1).

Three days later, I performed the same observation as that at Apple Barn, only this time at the Opryland Hotel, outside The Opry Shop. Selling country music albums and memorabilia, as well as Coleman's music, this location would seem to be a beneficial spot for Coleman to perform. However, because the hotel was less crowded than a shopping mall during the holiday season, over the same period of two hours, I observed just over half the amount of customers who expressed interest at Apple Barn. Fifty-two people were observed with similar results to those found in the first observation.

Sixteen people stayed longer than four minutes, a greater proportion than discovered previously, but still not close to the majority. Most consumers expressed interest for one to two minutes. Forty-two people appeared to be elderly, which is also a greater proportion than the results found at Apple Barn. This is due partly to the fact that,

in general, younger families visit Opry Mills more frequently than the Opryland Hotel. Again, while approximate age cannot be determined from observational studies, the impression of overwhelming interest from the elderly is undeniable. Thirty consumers were female and 22 consumers were male, providing nearly the same ratio as the first observation (Table 1). Also strikingly consistent, everyone observed was white.

Combining the results from both studies provided a rough average of the data. The average customer devoted slightly less than three minutes to Coleman's music. Sixty-nine percent of all observed customers appeared to be senior citizens, and the female to male ratio is almost exactly 60:40. In other words, a majority of Coleman's customers are senior citizens, with females slightly outnumbering the males (Table 1, Figure 1). All observed customers were white, providing a good idea of the race to which Coleman's music most appeals.

Table 1.
Field Observation Results

	Apple Barn	Opryland Hotel	Combined Results
Minutes¹			
1	14	11	25
2	41	20	61
3	25	5	30
4 or more	24	16	40
Age			
< 15	0	2	2
16 – 30	4	0	4
31 – 45	15	0	15
46 – 60	19	8	27
61 – 75	64	42	106
76 <	2	0	2
Gender			
Female	65	30	95
Male	39	22	61

¹ Total time consumers expressed interest in Coleman.

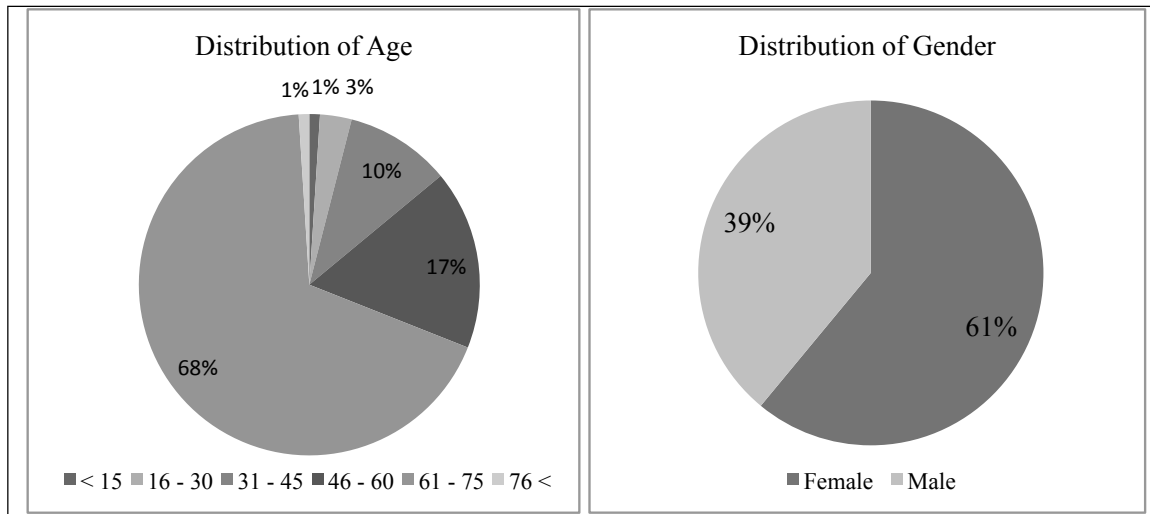


Figure 1.
Graphical Representation of Field Observation Results

Sales Records Analysis

Jason Coleman provided records of his sales from a two-year time period, August 2007 to July 2009, including the methods by which his albums were sold and the contribution to overall profit each method incurred. Coleman has divided his sales methods into seven categories: *complimentary* (distributed at no charge to the receiver), *general* (distributed through personal contacts), *mail order*, *web order*, *performances*, *retail*, and *Parkway* (distributed at his home church, Parkway Baptist Church). Complimentary sales contribute nothing to overall profit. Albums sold at performances are priced at an average of \$15.00, while Coleman only receives an average of \$7.00 from those sold at retail stores. All other methods contribute roughly \$12.00 to overall income.

Results. When looking at quantity alone, the highest percentage of sales comes from the retail category. Over half of Coleman's sales took place in retail stores around his hometown of Nashville, Tennessee, a total equaling 52%. The next highest amount

comes from albums sold at live performances and concerts, 26%. General sales contribute 8% of all albums sold, while mail orders, complimentary, and Parkway sales contributed just 4%, 3%, and 2%, respectively. Of particular interest to this research is the amount of sales that took place through web orders – just 6% (Table 2). Even though it is higher than three of the sales methods, this low percentage of Internet sales is not strong enough to indicate that Coleman’s customers frequently use the Internet to purchase his music.

As was mentioned earlier, the price of his music varies based on the channel through which it is sold. This knowledge is important; while over half of Coleman’s albums are sold through retail channels, this category only contributes 36% of total estimated income. Similarly, though roughly a quarter of Coleman’s albums are sold at his performances, 41% of estimated income is attributed to performance sales. This is primarily due to the highest price of \$15.00 at which his albums are offered. General orders, mail orders, and Parkway sales contribute just 9%, 5%, and 2% to overall income, respectively. Once again, the web order category is directly in the middle of the seven categories, though a contribution of 7% to overall estimated income is still not noteworthy. (Table 2).

Table 2.
Jason Coleman Sales Records, August 2007 – July 2009

	Total CDs	% of Total	Average Selling Price	Estimated Income	% of Total
Complimentary	140	3%	\$0	\$0	0%
General	303	8%	\$12.00	\$3,636.00	9%
Mail Order	162	4%	\$12.00	\$1,944.00	5%
Web Order	223	6%	\$12.00	\$2,676.00	7%
Performances	1,063	26%	\$15.00	\$15,945.00	41%
Retail	2,022	52%	\$7.00	\$14,154.00	36%
Parkway	62	2%	\$12.00	\$744.00	2%

Survey Analysis

A questionnaire was distributed to two large classes at Parkway Baptist Church in Goodlettsville, Tennessee on a Sunday morning preceding the day's lesson. Because the classes are typically segmented by age group, one class provided a large sample of baby boomers while the other provided a large sample of senior citizens. Caution must be taken when generalizing the results of this survey. While the sample is highly representative of Jason Coleman's target audience, it may not necessarily be representative of the overall senior citizen population. Therefore, the results can only be discussed in the context of Coleman's audience and marketing implications.

The questionnaire consisted of only four questions, two of which were demographic, and was primarily used to validate inferences already made from the previous two methods of marketing research (Appendix B, Figure 4).

The first question asked respondents to rank their preference for purchasing music from one to five, with one being the most preferred method and five being the least preferred method. Five choices were given that coincide with Coleman's methods of sales: in person, at retail stores; in person, at concerts/performances; online order; mail order; and telephone order. The results of this question will also be used to substantiate the claim that Coleman's target audience consists of senior citizens. If senior citizens' purchasing perception matches Coleman's records of purchasing behavior, a good indication will be established that his audience is relatively old.

The second question on the questionnaire was very similar to the first. Respondents were asked to rank their music listening preference rather than their music purchasing preference on the same scale as the first question, one to five. The options

given included cassette tape; compact disc (CD); live/at a concert; portable music player (iPod, MP3 player, etc.); and radio. While no other data was collected for this study pertaining to music listening preferences, this question was asked primarily to ascertain any differences between purchasing and listening preferences. For example, it is assumed that consumers who do not feel comfortable purchasing music through the Internet would not feel comfortable listening to music through digital methods either.

The third and fourth questions were merely demographic in nature, asking for gender and age. The age question was broken down into categories, ranging from under 44, 45 – 54, 55 – 64, 65 – 74, 75 – 84, and 85 and up. Three of these categories fall into the range of baby boomers (64 and below), and three categories pertain to senior citizens (65 and above). Splitting the age categories evenly provided for simplified analysis upon obtaining the results by seeking variations among age categories as well as the two age segments.

Five different versions of the questionnaire were distributed, the only differences in each concerning the first two questions. While the five answer choices in both questions were presented alphabetically, each version of the questionnaire started with a different option. For example, in the question pertaining to purchasing behavior, suppose each answer option could be labeled numerically from 1 to 5. Each version would start with a different number, so that the answer choices in version one would be presented as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, the answer choices in version two as 2, 3, 4, 5, 1, and so on. Because the first answer choice respondents see could inadvertently influence their answering decision, simply shuffling the order of the choices helps to eliminate research bias.

Results. Ninety-two completed surveys were collected. Concerning the age distribution, 14 respondents were designated as 44 and under, 18 as 45 – 54, and 20 as 55 – 64, comprising a total of 52 respondents whose age is 64 or below (falling into the baby boomer subset). Fifteen respondents were designated as being 65 – 74 years old, 17 as 75 – 84, and eight as 85 and up, comprising a total of 40 respondents considered to be senior citizens due to their ages being over 65. The median age range is 55 – 64. Forty-nine of the respondents were female.

For the first question, respondents were asked to rank their preferences for venues for purchasing music by indicating which of the five response choices was their first choice, second choice, and so on. Response options included in person, at retail stores; in person, at concerts/performances; online order; mail order; and telephone order. The range for each of the response options was 4, indicating that each option for purchasing music received at least one of each ranking (1 through 5). Overall, the lowest median (indicating the highest preference) fell into the retail category at 1.5. Telephone was ranked the least preferred method of purchasing music according to a median of 4 (5 indicating the lowest possible preference) (Table 5).

Analyzing the frequency distributions reveals the general level of preference among all respondents. The retail category was ranked with a 1 or 2 (indicating respondents' ranking as their first or second preference) by 72.8% of all respondents. Purchasing music at concerts or live performances received a score of 1 or 2 from almost half (41.3%) of all respondents. Of interest to this research, 45.7% of all respondents ranked online purchasing with a 1 or 2, indicating an overall relatively high preference for purchasing music through the Internet (Table 3).

Table 3.
Frequency Distributions of Survey Results for Purchasing Preferences

		RETAIL	CONCERT	ONLINE	MAIL	PHONE
RANKING	1	46 ¹ (50% ²)	11 (12%)	18 (19.6%)	9 (9.8%)	8 (8.7%)
	2	21 (22.8%)	27 (29.3%)	24 (26.1%)	10 (10.9%)	10 (10.9%)
	3	12 (13%)	21 (22.8%)	14 (15.2%)	28 (30.4%)	17 (18.5%)
	4	7 (7.6%)	13 (14.1%)	14 (15.2%)	27 (29.3%)	31 (33.7%)
	5	6 (6.5%)	20 (21.7%)	22 (23.9%)	18 (19.6%)	26 (28.3%)
¹ The first numbers denote the actual number of responses. ² The percentages represent the number of responses divided by the total number of respondents.						

The second question asked respondents to once again rank their preferences from one to five for five options, one indicating the highest preference and five indicating the lowest preference, this time concerning their preferences for listening to music. The options for this question included cassette tape; compact disk (CD); live/at a concert; portable music player (iPod, MP3 player, etc.); and radio. Once again, the range was four, indicating that every rank was given at least once for each option. CDs and radio revealed medians of 2, indicating a high preference (1 being the highest preference). Both digital methods and cassette tapes revealed medians of 4 (5 being the lowest rank possible), designating these two categories as the least preferred among all age groups (Table 5).

Looking at the frequency distributions for each category within the listening preference options once again reveals the general level of preference among all respondents. The radio category received a ranking of 1 or 2 (1 being the highest ranking) from 62% of all respondents. The listening to CDs option reveals that 54.3% of respondents rank this category as a 1 or 2. The two categories with the highest frequency for the lowest rankings are among the listening preferences: cassette tapes received

56.5% of respondents' scores of 4 or 5 (5 indicating the lowest preference). Similarly, digital music methods reveal a frequency of 54.3% of the lowest rankings (Table 4).

Table 4.
Frequency Distributions of Survey Results for Listening Preferences

		CASSETTE	CD	LIVE	DIGITAL	RADIO
RANKING	1	8 (8.7%)	22 (23.9%)	13 (14.1%)	16 (17.4%)	33 (35.9%)
	2	17 (18.5%)	28 (30.4%)	11 (12%)	12 (13%)	24 (26.1%)
	3	15 (16.3%)	21 (22.8%)	23 (25%)	14 (15.2%)	19 (20.7%)
	4	20 (21.7%)	15 (16.3%)	27 (29.3%)	21 (22.8%)	9 (9.8%)
	5	32 (34.8%)	6 (6.5%)	18 (19.6%)	29 (31.5%)	7 (7.6%)
¹ The first numbers denote the actual number of responses. ² The percentages represent the number of responses divided by the total number of respondents.						

Recoding the data so that all responses from the first three age categories (under 44, 45 – 54, and 55 – 64) are collapsed into one new group (referred to as baby boomers) and all responses from the last three age categories (65 – 74, 75 – 84, and 85 and up) into a second new group (referred to as senior citizens), a few contrasts are of note. While online purchasing preference received an overall median of 3, baby boomers indicated that online purchasing is their second-most-preferred method of purchasing music, with a median of 2, behind purchasing at retail stores. For the same category, senior citizens revealed a median of 4, making online purchases their least preferred method of purchasing music. Similarly, while digital music listening methods received an overall median of 4, baby boomers indicated a mid-range preference for listening to music through digital means with a median of 3. Senior citizens exposed digital music listening as their least preferred method of listening to music with a median of 5 (Table 5).

Table 5.
Median Ranking for Purchasing and Listening Preferences by Age Group

	Baby Boomers	Senior Citizens	Total
Retail	1	2	1.5
Concert	3	2	3
Online	2	4	3
Mail	4	3	3
Phone	4	3.5	4
Cassette	5	3	4
CD	2	3	2
Live	4	3	3
Digital	3	5	4
Radio	2	2	2

Cross-tabulations were performed between the two recoded age groups, baby boomers and senior citizens, to determine if preferences differed significantly for either preferences of where to buy music or preferred music format by age cohort. Of these tests, only three revealed any significant difference between the two subsets and their preferences ($p < .05$) (Table 6; Appendix C, Figures 5 & 6).

In terms of differences in preferences for music formats, one category, cassette tapes, revealed a significant difference ($p < .001$) (Table 6) between the two subsets' preferences, confirming the frequency analysis showing senior citizens' preferences for listening to cassette tapes (42.5%) over baby boomers' (15.38%) (Figure 2).

Of particular importance to this study are the two other categories revealing significant differences between the two age cohorts: online purchasing and digital music listening categories. Crosstabs analysis indicates baby boomers' preferences for both

online music purchases and digital music listening (iPods, MP3 players, etc.) over senior citizens' ($p < .05$). Specifically, for online purchasing preferences, baby boomers prefer to a much greater degree to purchase their music on the Internet (61.54% to 25%, $p < .001$) (Table 6; Figure 2) , while they also prefer listening to music through digital music methods significantly more than senior citizens (36.54% to 22.5%, $p < .05$) (Table 6; Figure 2). However, while a significant difference may exist, baby boomers still indicated only a mid-range preference toward digital music listening methods (median of 3, indicating it would be third of five choices); that is, even though baby boomers do prefer these categories more than senior citizens, it does not seem that baby boomers are using these methods widely.

Table 6.
Chi-Square Scores for All Categories

Retail	.140
Concert	.078
Online	.001
Mail	.586
Phone	.139
Cassette	.001
CD	.184
Live	.327
Digital	.003
Radio	.183

CASSETTE					
	1	2	3	4	5
BB¹	3 ³ (5.7% ⁴)	5 (9.4%)	6 (11.3%)	12 (22.6%)	27 (50.9%)
SC²	5 (12.8%)	12 (30.8%)	9 (23.1%)	8 (20.5%)	5 (12.8%)

ONLINE					
	1	2	3	4	5
BB	13 (24.5%)	19 (35.8%)	10 (18.9%)	5 (9.4%)	6 (11.3%)
SC	5 (12.8%)	5 (12.8%)	4 (10.3%)	9 (23.1%)	16 (41%)

DIGITAL					
	1	2	3	4	5
BB	11 (20.8%)	9 (17%)	11 (20.8%)	14 (26.4%)	8 (15.1%)
SC	5 (12.8%)	3 (7.7%)	3 (7.7%)	7 (17.9%)	21 (53.8%)

¹ BB = Baby Boomers
² SC = Senior Citizens
³ The first numbers represent the actual number of responses.
⁴ The percentages represent the number of responses divided by the total number of respondents.

Figure 2.
Selected Cross Tabulations Between Age Cohorts and Sample Preferences

DISCUSSION

Having completed and analyzed three sets of marketing research results, the following implications can be made concerning the relationship between senior citizens, nostalgia marketing, and the digital music industry:

- as age increases, the effectiveness of nostalgic marketing through online methods decreases
- as age increases, comfort with purchasing music online decreases
- as age increases, preference for listening to music through digital methods decreases

Senior Citizens and Nostalgic Marketing

Verified through field observation, it is clear that Jason Coleman utilizes nostalgia marketing to promote his music. Putting forth Floyd Cramer's name along with his own, Coleman relies on the familiarity with Cramer his customers may possess. Because Cramer's popularity peaked during the mid-20th century, those customers most inclined to respond to Coleman's nostalgic marketing efforts are those to whom Cramer's music is relevant. That is to say, customers who were raised listening to Cramer's music will most likely respond positively to nostalgic marketing efforts promoting Cramer, and customers whose parents listened to Cramer's music may respond with slight recognition. Furthermore, customers who have no association with Cramer's music because they were born after Cramer's peak popularity will have little to no response to nostalgic marketing

efforts, mainly because these customers will not feel nostalgic for the music being promoted.

It was observed that a majority of Coleman's customers are among the elderly. This notion was also validated through analyzing the survey results – senior citizens' perceptions of music purchasing behavior matched the recorded behavior of Coleman's customers through his sales records more accurately than that of the baby boomer subset. Though an approximate age could not be determined for Coleman's target audience, these two indications, plus Coleman's personal insistence that his audience primarily consists of senior citizens based on his performance attendance, strongly suggest that Coleman's typical customer is indeed among the elderly.

That being established, Coleman's sales records must be compared with his marketing efforts. In essence, Coleman utilizes nostalgic marketing catering to senior citizens, and only 6% of his sales are attributed to online purchases. It can be determined, then, that nostalgic marketing catered toward senior citizens does not result in a proficiency of Internet sales. Also, because baby boomers do not respond as well to Coleman's nostalgic marketing yet display higher overall preferences for purchasing music online, it can be surmised that, as age increases, the effectiveness of nostalgia marketing through the Internet invariably decreases. The Internet should only be used in correlation with nostalgic marketing when targeting consumers who have shown historical comfort with the Internet.

Senior Citizens and Digital Music Purchasing Behavior

As the results of the questionnaire revealed, there is a statistically significant difference between baby boomers and senior citizens when it comes to purchasing and

listening to music through digital methods. More specifically, baby boomers prefer both purchasing and listening to music through digital methods (such as the Internet and digital music players) more than senior citizens. This directly coincides with the majority of literature exposing senior citizens' discomfort with the Internet in general.

Furthermore, when looking at Jason Coleman's sales records, it is clear that his primary audience, the elderly, prefer shopping for music in person, as retail stores and live performances contributed to 78% of albums sold. As was mentioned before, senior citizens are not as adaptive to change as younger generations, so it only makes sense for them to exhibit purchasing behavior reflective of their past.

The fact that over 60% of baby boomers indicated a preference for purchasing music online, compared with 25% of senior citizens, cannot be ignored. In two years, the first baby boomers will reach the age of 65, thereby classifying them through traditional marketing literature as senior citizens. However, due to the stark contrasts between baby boomers and senior citizens, such a transition may never take place. Baby boomers may not "become" senior citizens once they turn 65; rather, the minimum age for what is classified as a senior citizen may increase. With this in mind, marketing efforts through the Internet for senior citizens must be handled artfully. This subset may never fully embrace the digital music industry, a concept that may be difficult for marketers to address while all other demographics display increasing preference for Internet shopping.

Furthermore, due to senior citizens' tenacity to purchase music in person, profits could actually increase when products are targeted to this market. For example, Coleman makes the most money from albums sold at concerts, and senior citizens have displayed significant preference for purchasing music at live performances, especially when

compared with baby boomers. With this in mind, it can be assumed that, through traditional marketing methods, senior citizens could increase revenue by the mere fact that they prefer to purchase music through methods other than the Internet.

Senior Citizens and Music Listening Preferences

Listening to music through digital methods received the lowest collective scores for senior citizens on the questionnaire. However, it must be initially noted that 20.5% of senior citizens ranked digital music listening preferences with a 1 or 2, indicating high or relatively high preferences. Two assumptions can be made toward this proportion: the 20.5% of senior citizens who prefer listening to music through digital methods directly coincide with the 25.6% of senior citizens comfortable purchasing music online; or this proportion received digital music players as a gift from younger generations and are therefore not necessarily comfortable purchasing music online. The latter option is not preferable to marketers in that one sale of a digital music player does little good if multiple sales of digital songs and albums do not go with it.

The overwhelming majority (71.9%) of senior citizens who do not prefer listening to music through digital methods is not unexpected, especially when compared with the 64.1% of senior citizens who are not comfortable purchasing music through the Internet (as indicated by a 4 or 5 ranking, with 5 being the lowest preference available). While the case could be made that music appealing to senior citizens is now available in new or remastered versions, the fact remains that senior citizens may not be interested if said versions are offered digitally. New versions of older music are not necessarily a bad idea, but traditional marketing methods may need to be employed in order to achieve the highest profit potential.

IMPLICATION FOR MARKETERS

The use of this information for marketers is potentially quite practical. Keeping in mind that senior citizens are the fastest growing demographic in the nation and a potentially \$200 billion market, how best to handle this unique market's comfort in today's egocentric society must be considered. Research has shown that the elderly are not as comfortable using the Internet as younger generations, and yet the nation is moving toward a digital society quite rapidly. While some products and services should embrace the digital revolution wholeheartedly, products targeting an elderly demographic may want to wait. Using traditional marketing methods as opposed to digital marketing methods may be the best route for marketers of senior citizen-targeted products or services.

Comfort with purchasing products through the Internet cannot be gained overnight, especially when it comes to products like music that the elderly currently have very little preference for purchasing online. Therefore, seeking to immediately immerse the elderly into the Internet environment may not be beneficial at this time; in reality, it may in fact detract from the likelihood of senior citizens ever becoming completely comfortable with the Internet. Senior citizens also do not prefer listening to music through digital methods, a direct contradiction to the direction society is currently heading.

In essence, any music targeted toward senior citizens should not be marketed through the Internet, merely due to the lack of response that would most likely be received. However, because the world is growing vastly digitalized, some assistance could be given to the elderly to encourage them to embrace the digital market. That is, immediate immersion into the digital music industry may not take place, but marketers can plant seeds now that could facilitate change in years to come by combining traditional marketing efforts with digital methods (i.e., offering incentives to visit a product's website such as web-only coupons).

A more specific example with regards to this research involves Jason Coleman. He may not want to completely overwhelm his audience with his website, but he could place a sticker on his albums encouraging consumers to visit the site to remain current with his music and performances. Such a simple procedure would encourage senior citizens to visit the website without being overly obtrusive or demanding and could increase senior citizens' perceptions of the Internet, assuming the website is easy to navigate and elderly-friendly. Acts like these should be pursued through marketing efforts seeking to facilitate change in the buying behavior of senior citizens, especially in the digital music industry, though such change may not come for a very long time.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Though the audience for Jason Coleman has been established as being relatively old, a more precise definition should be acquired in future research. While the questionnaire revealed solid results, a much wider sample would be beneficial. The results may not change drastically, but validation would be increased significantly if the sample size were to be increased by even a few hundred respondents. Also, a more representative sample would allow researchers to generalize the results to the senior citizen audience as whole as opposed to Coleman's music alone. Furthermore, no experimental research was utilized for the purposes of this study. Utilizing a product like Jason Coleman music, causal studies could reveal specific issues senior citizens face when embracing the digital society.

Though out of the control of this research, a similar if not nearly identical study could be conducted within the next three to five years. Because the national Census takes place once every decade, and since this research was conducted one year before the next Census will be collected, data reflecting the demographics of the rapidly changing nation could reveal differences between 2000 demographic results and those of the 2010 Census. Also, research could be started over the next five to ten years that monitors the assimilation of baby boomers into the senior citizen age group to see how this generation adapts to the connotations of being considered among the elderly. An interesting notion to pursue is whether or not the status of "senior citizen" will change over the next few decades as more and more baby boomers reach the age of 65.

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APPENDIX A

The following is a copy of the worksheet used during the field observation. I wrote down the time at which a consumer first showed interest and then proceeded to circle all observable demographic traits. Usually keeping track of multiple customers at once, I wrote down the time at which each customer moved on from expressing interest in Coleman and whether or not he or she purchased an album.

[illegible]

Figure 3.
Field Observation Worksheet

APPENDIX B

The following is a copy of the questionnaire distributed to the baby boomers and senior citizens. This is only one version of the questionnaire; the subsequent four versions look identical except for the ordering of the answer choices on the first two questions.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this short survey! Your participation is completely voluntary. Your answers will remain confidential and will not be distributed in any way beyond the use of this research. By answering the following four questions, you are giving your informed consent to be a subject in this survey.

Please rank the following methods of **purchasing** music by your personal preference, with 1 being the most preferred method and 5 being the least preferred method.

- ☐ in person, at retail stores
- ☐ in person, at concerts/performances
- ☐ online order
- ☐ mail order
- ☐ telephone order

Please rank how you prefer to **listen** to music, with 1 being the most preferred method and 5 being the least preferred method.

- ☐ cassette tape
- ☐ compact disk (CD)
- ☐ live/at a concert
- ☐ portable music player (iPod, MP3 player, etc.)
- ☐ radio

What is your gender?

- ☐ male
- ☐ female

What is your age?

- ☐ under 44
- ☐ 45 – 54
- ☐ 55 – 64
- ☐ 65 – 74
- ☐ 75 – 84
- ☐ 85 and up

Figure 4.
Questionnaire

APPENDIX C

RETAIL					
	1	2	3	4	5
BB¹	31 ³ (58.5% ⁴)	13 (24.5%)	4 (7.5%)	3 (5.7%)	2 (3.8%)
SC²	15 (38.5%)	8 (20.5%)	8 (20.5%)	4 (10.3%)	4 (10.3%)

CONCERT					
	1	2	3	4	5
BB	3 (5.7%)	13 (24.5%)	14 (26.4%)	8 (15.1%)	15 (28.3%)
SC	8 (20.5%)	14 (35.9%)	7 (17.9%)	5 (12.8%)	5 (12.8%)

ONLINE					
	1	2	3	4	5
BB	13 (24.5%)	19 (35.8%)	10 (18.9%)	5 (9.4%)	6 (11.3%)
SC	5 (12.8%)	5 (12.8%)	4 (10.3%)	9 (23.1%)	16 (41%)

MAIL					
	1	2	3	4	5
BB	4 (7.5%)	4 (7.5%)	16 (30.2%)	17 (32.1%)	12 (22.6%)
SC	5 (12.8%)	6 (15.4%)	12 (30.8%)	10 (25.6%)	6 (15.4%)

PHONE					
	1	2	3	4	5
BB	2 (3.8%)	4 (7.5%)	9 (17%)	20 (37.7%)	18 (34%)
SC	6 (15.4%)	6 (15.4%)	8 (20.5%)	11 (28.2%)	8 (20.5%)

¹ BB = Baby Boomers

² SC = Senior Citizens

³ The first numbers represent the actual number of responses.

⁴ The percentages represent the number of responses divided by the total number of respondents.

Figure 5.
Cross Tabulations Between Age Cohorts and Purchasing Preferences

CASSETTE					
	1	2	3	4	5
BB ¹	3 ³ (5.7% ⁴)	5 (9.4%)	6 (11.3%)	12 (22.6%)	27 (50.9%)
SC ²	5 (12.8%)	12 (30.8%)	9 (23.1%)	8 (20.5%)	5 (12.8%)

CD					
	1	2	3	4	5
BB	15 (28.3%)	19 (35.8%)	11 (20.8%)	5 (9.4%)	3 (5.7%)
SC	7 (17.9%)	9 (23.1%)	10 (25.6%)	10 (25.6%)	3 (7.7%)

LIVE					
	1	2	3	4	5
BB	6 (11.3%)	7 (13.2%)	10 (18.9%)	17 (32.1%)	13 (24.5%)
SC	7 (17.9%)	4 (10.3%)	13 (33.3%)	10 (25.6%)	5 (12.8%)

DIGITAL					
	1	2	3	4	5
BB	11 (20.8%)	9 (17%)	11 (20.8%)	14 (26.4%)	8 (15.1%)
SC	5 (12.8%)	3 (7.7%)	3 (7.7%)	7 (17.9%)	21 (53.8%)

RADIO					
	1	2	3	4	5
BB	18 (34%)	13 (24.5%)	15 (28.3%)	5 (9.4%)	2 (3.8%)
SC	15 (38.5%)	11 (28.2%)	4 (10.3%)	4 (10.3%)	5 (12.8%)

¹ BB = Baby Boomers

² SC = Senior Citizens

³ The first numbers represent the actual number of responses.

⁴ The percentages represent the number of responses divided by the total number of respondents..

Figure 6.
Cross Tabulations Between Age Cohorts and Listening Preferences