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# Popular Music in the Marvel Cinematic Universe: How Songs Connect to Characters and Prompt Audience Engagement

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## **Abstract**

This research investigates the use of popular music in Phase 3 of the Marvel Cinematic Universe. How the songs connect with individual characters, storylines, and if the audience engages with the songs featured. Past research has proven popular music can enhance audience engagement with a film by setting the tone. This research looks at the results on Google Trends to see if the 81 popular songs featured in the 11 films that create the MCU Phase 3 saw an increase of online searches. This research reveals the benefit to the artists partnering with the Marvel Cinematic Universe, along with action taken by the audience after viewing the film.

**Keywords:** Film, Pop Culture, Marvel, Branding, Songs, Music, Product Placement, Character Motif, Consumer Behavior, Content Analysis

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The purpose of this research is to view an alternative way to gauge how consumers react to product placement in films, by how Marvel uses popular music to navigate the storyline, and the impact on the popular music and musical artists featured in the films. The practice of product placement has evolved into partnerships that benefit the film industry by incorporating tangible products in their movie allowing the audience to relate with the storyline, in addition to being a benefit to the third party partnering with the MCU for increased awareness and sales. This research specifically looks at the placement of popular music and musicians within the 11 films in Phase 3. The popular music used in Phase 3 of the MCU ranges in original release dates from 1910 to 2018, which suggests one way the MCU can reach and interest a broad demographic. While product placement effects are sometimes difficult to determine, this research investigates the impact of the partnerships by examining the interest in the popular music featured in the films via Google and YouTube searches around each film's U.S. release date. Building upon previous research from Clark (2019) that researched the product placement in Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) films, this research will include the 11 films that create Phase 3 of the MCU that were released between 2016 and 2019.

According to Chang et al. (2006 p.579), "product placement began in 1895, where companies would provide products as props to be used in films." The practice of product placement has evolved into partnerships that benefit the film industry by incorporating tangible products in their movie, allowing the audience to relate with the storyline, in addition to being a benefit to the companies providing the products by allowing them to reach their audience from a different arena hoping to increase sales. Previous research, including articles from Karrah (1998) and Ma et al. (2021), has discussed the benefits and disadvantages of product placement. This research specifically looks at the placement of popular music and musicians within the Marvel Cinematic Universe Phase 3. The MCU demographic reach is broad, Lacina (2020 p.20) said "More than any other movie franchise, the MCU draws a large, diverse, and frequent audience for its storytelling." Lacina's research proves that "contrary to stereotypes, adult fans are about evenly split between non-Hispanic whites and people of color, and that the latter segment will expand as the youngest MCU viewers grow up" (2020, p. 20). This knowledge is powerful when examining the popularity of the MCU and how third parties benefit from partnerships with them. This research will investigate one way the MCU is able to reach a broad demographic through its use of popular music in its films. Danieliova et al. (2009 p. 45) "discussed the worth of product placement in successful films, and a limitation the article uncovered was how to gauge abnormal returns for the company's sales surrounding the release of the movie." Launch of new products, promotions, and partnerships outside of the MCU film are reasons companies could see abnormal returns surrounding the release of the films they partnered with. Considering the popular music used in Phase 3 of the MCU ranging in original song release dates from 1910 to 2018, this research hopes to show the positive impact of the partnerships by the interest in the popular music featured in the films from previous decades. After performing a content analysis of the 11 films that create Phase 3 of the MCU, the 81 popular songs discovered were researched using Google Trends to find if the popular songs saw an increase in Google searches after being featured in the films.

## Literature Review

Chang with et al. (2006) reviewed product placement from its origin in 1895 through the release of E.T. with Reece's pieces. This article showed how product placement has been used in movies for more than a century to enhance a storyline. Humans have an inner yearning to portray one's sense of self, and a real brand's product allows the consumer to relate with the perception of the brand to focus on that feeling. The purpose of product placement inside films is to offset the production cost of the film by brands paying to be placed in the film while expanding the reach of people speaking about the film. This happens by the brand being proud to tie their name with something bigger than them and giving them an opportunity for cross-promotions.

Product placement offers a benefit to the filmmakers along with the company providing the product. Product placement also helps set the tone of a given scene. This literature describes the research and the development of product placement. Chang et al. recorded in 1978 that product placement began in the 1930s. Terms used before product placement include exploitation, tie-ups, tie-ins, and trade outs. Chang et al. go into detail about how each term was utilized within the film industry to increase revenue and how product placement became a common practice. This literature will help with understanding the product placement system and how it is used to benefit the filmmakers and the advertisers. Chang et al. research also pointed to negative impacts to consider in the current study. The content analysis gives keywords that describe product placement that will allow for broader research; however, it did not cover the digital era and digital media outlets now available.

Diehl (2012) conducted a case study covering the history of music in film and how the film and music industry have each helped each other out to broaden their reach. This case study suggests further research that will be conducted in the following research covering:

“Using existing sales and radio data, researchers could track an artist or song before, during, and after the launch of a film involving that artist or song to measure any incremental increases or decreases and attempt to discover the overall impact of the film on the artist's career.” (Diehl, 2012, p.44 )

Danielova (2009 p.46) explains that product placement within films has the potential to improve brand equity, and improvements in brand equity have long been associated with increased consumer demand and increases in cash flow levels.”

Where Clarks' article covered specific products in Phase One and Two of the MCU, the research conducted will focus on the popular music component of films, and Diehl's case study will assist with defining how to identify the genres of each film with the use of IMDb.

Karrh's (1998) content analysis gives insight into what brand placement/product placement looks like in modern media This study laid a foundation on what brand placement is, how it is used and will help direct the present research by looking for items that may not be as obvious, but essential to the current culture and products used in the films. Similar to Chang et al. (2006), Karrh provided legal and background information and used qualitative studies and content analysis to help formalize their research that will benefit my research. They also focused on purchase intention and attitude-based effects that will not be covered in my research but would be a good area for future research.

Danielova and Wiles (2009) studied 126 product placements in films during 2002. Danielova and Wiles used a cross-sectional analysis to find abnormal returns to companies who partnered with the films discussed in their event study analysis. The study assisted with the current research with the authors' section on determinants of placement worth and how they achieved those numbers by showcasing how and where the product was used in the film. Danielova and Wiles also included a model of their code sheet and table variables, along with their collection procedure, which helped formulate my code sheet and codebook. This article contained helpful, concentrated knowledge on films, as opposed to other studies focused on TV and music.

Like Danielova and Wiles, Ma et al. (2021) acknowledged that music is an important part of the film-watching experience by enhancing the experience and enjoyment of the film. The authors explore the history of the use of music and film and discuss the benefits and disconnects that can occur by partnering with artists in films.

While Ma et al. discussed the possibilities of partnerships, Balasubramanian (1994) explained an additional practice of product placement, Hybrid Messages, and how this benefits the movie producer to stay true to his story and gives the brand a way to be involved without making the movie an infomercial. Balasubramanian's article explained in detail about the options for hybrid messages that include infomercials and emergent hybrid types unrelated to the current research. Balasubramanian gave an accurate description of how hybrid messaging works and how all companies involved can execute this practice in a non-obtrusive way.

Matthes et al. (2019) conducted a content analysis covering 250 movies between 1991-2015. The authors made a note if the placement was verbal or physical and whether the product placements specifically targeted children. Matthes et al. (2019) used the balance theory. The published research gave specific detail how the different products and brands interact with the storyline and provides a beneficial guide to a code sheet for the present research and how product placement is used to get the attention of its audience and how it impacts children. However, it does not include information directly tied to the MCU.

Lacina's (2020) chapter gave insight into the demographics of Marvel film viewers. She provided details of the race, age, and household status. This background information was beneficial to this research as it shows the MCU reaches a diverse demographic audience that allows the filmmakers and brands to identify a product partnership to follow throughout the individual storylines of a character and creating brand awareness between characters and consumers.

Clark's (2019) content analysis covered Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the MCU leading to the present research of Phase 3. Clark suggested further research of product placement inside the Marvel Cinematic Universe, and his paper discussed how Marvel partnered with brands to enhance the storyline of the films and the characters. Clark hypothesized that product placement navigated the storyline. Clark concluded that strategic marketing managers review the storyline with the writers and directors of the films to see where partnerships will add depth to the plot. I was able to use portions of his code sheet to complete my code sheet for the current research project.

Clark's (2019) thesis examined the connection to the storyline, which led to this project's first research question.

*RQ1: How does Marvel utilize popular music in the narrative?*

Based on the findings of Clark (2019) and Ma et al. (2021), this research project seeks to discover the impact of popular music placed within the MCU Phase 3.

*RQ2: Did the songs in the Marvel Cinematic Universe films in Phase 3 result in more online searches for those songs?*

In addition to the impact of song placement on audience actions after viewing the films, this research looked at the original release dates of the films used in MCU Phase 3 and whether there was a connection between release decade and search results.

*RQ3a: What decade of music is most used in MCU films in Phase 3?*

*RQ3b: What impact does the song's decade have on Google Trends searches?*

This literature review covers the broad topic of product placement as well as concentrated areas related to my research. Previous articles explained how product placement began and how it has transformed through the years with the changing trends. Each of these scholarly articles is consistent with the message of how product placement works, the different methods used, and the industry transformations. The current project shows how one movie franchise has used product placement, specifically music-related placement, and consistency to produce popular films. With strategic partnerships, promotions, and tie-ins, the MCU has been able to successfully lead the film industry.

## **Methodology**

The methods used in this study include content analysis of the popular music used within the 11 films that comprise MCU Phase 3 and investigating Google searches for the popular music featured in each film. Notes were made as to whether the song was placed in the background, to set the tone of a scene, or foreground, meaning it is being used within the storyline. In addition to listening for song placement, this study watched for visual references and mentions of song titles or artists, along with recording the amount of screen time the popular music received. A review of the closing credits was essential to verify all popular songs were recorded. Google Trends was used to research each song using a time frame beginning a month before the movie was officially released in the United States and ending one month after the official U.S. release date to verify if the popular music received an increase in searches surrounding the U.S. premiere of the film.

Following the content analysis of Clark et al. (2019) for Phase 1 and Phase 2, a content analysis of Phase 3 would be beneficial. The goal is to build upon Clark's research and to expand the current product placement literature by emphasizing the popular music MCU uses in its films. Clark created research notes using Google Docs, beginning with recording every film associated with the first two phases of the MCU, which this study followed. Before watching the films, the researcher noted the film title, the United States official release date, the average run time of the film, along with each of the film's MPAA rating along with the U.S. and Canada opening weekend earnings. While watching the films, Clark noted each appearance and timing of product placements, popular culture references, and the use of licensed music. Like the current study, Clark went beyond his content analysis to use external documents related to

product placement. This technique was proven as efficient for Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the MCU and was adopted for the present study of Phase 3.

Clark (2019) describes a phase as “the complete set of films that Marvel Studios deemed to be the most connected based on major plot development/events” (p. 15). According to Clark (2019), MCU Phase 1 ran from *Iron Man* in 2008 to *The Avengers* in 2012, and Phase 2 began with *Iron Man 3* in 2013 and ended with *Ant-Man* in 2015.

MCU Phase 3, which is the focus of the current project, began on May 6, 2016, with *Captain America Civil War* and concluded June 26, 2019, with *Spider-Man: Far from Home*. The purpose of this research is to focus on Phase 3 of the MCU films.

The next action by Clark was post identification, where a number sequence was assigned to each film. The current study did the same; 11 films were found to be in Phase 3. For the proposed research, each film was numbered within its respective phase starting from 1 and ending with 11. Beginning with *Captain America Civil War*, that was released in 2016, and ending with *Spider-Man Far From Home* which was released in 2019. Reference Tables 1-3 for a breakdown of the movies within each phase.

From there Clark coded the date when each film was released and each time there was evident brand placement. Clark (2019) explained:

“The items in this section placed a focus on the artifact’s visual placement within the shot of the film. If the artifact was present in either the foreground or background, it was coded. For this aspect, it was a matter of looking to see if the artifact was necessary to the overall progression of the film’s narrative” (p. 15).

In place of traditional product placement, this research covering Phase 3 of the MCU will code if popular music was placed in the background to set the tone of the scene or foreground, meaning it is being used within the storyline. In addition to listening for song placement, this study watched for visual references and mentions of song titles or artists. Any instance of an artifact that was shot or utilized in such a way that placed a heavier emphasis on an artist or song, whether it was visually shown or mentioned in a line of the script, was noted. A song that was not easily identifiable was identified using the Shazam application with a smartphone during the viewing of the film to verify if the song heard was a popular song versus a piece of the film’s score. If the song was a piece of the film’s score, it was not included in the coding. These are important steps to add to the research previously completed by Clark (2019). Adding to the brand announcement coding, time stamps noting the length of screen time for each song placement were coded. A review of the closing credits was essential to verify all popular songs were recorded.

To complete the research, Google Trends was used to gauge consumer interest in the popular songs placed in the films in Phase 3. Google Trends tracks Google and YouTube searches. Google Trends was used to research each song using a time frame beginning a month before the movie was officially released in the United States and ending one month after the official U.S. release date. These dates were chosen to include the interest from pre-release red carpet events, bootleg circulation, and for interest shown by the audience who was not able to attend the weekend the movie was released. Google Trends uses a proprietary scale from 0 to 100 to simplify the results. The numbers represent the search interest relative to the highest

point on the chart for the selected region and time. A value of 100 is the peak popularity of the term, whilst a value of 50 means that the term is half as popular as related terms.

Before proceeding, the code sheet reliability was tested through intercoder reliability testing. A second coder ran through the equivalent screen time of 10% of all of Phase 3. A test was run on the accuracy of the code sheet by watching a film from a previous phase to determine the agreement of the code sheet. IMDb was used to reference the official U.S. release date, the MPAA ratings, the movie genre, and the earnings the film received.

## Results

There are 81 popular songs featured in Phase 3 of the MCU. Each peaked on Google Trends with a 100 rating within the two-month time frame surrounding a movie's release date. Fifty-seven of those songs peaked on the weekend of the official U.S. release date or the second weekend following the release. The results of this research are an indicator that looking at the number of Google searches is a worthy tool in gauging the effectiveness of product placement partnerships with a film. The majority of the popular songs used in Phase 3 of the MCU are Classic Rock songs that were released during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. Table 4 represents the number of impressions of each popular song in relation to the decade of their initial release.

## How Marvel Uses Popular Music

Based on the content analysis, Marvel used popular music in different settings including fight scenes, introducing new characters into the storyline, and even setting the intensity of a scene as Pink Floyd's "*Interstellar Overdrive*" did in the crash scene of *Doctor Strange*.

After coding the 81 songs present in the 11 Phase 3 MCU films, including the decade each popular song was originally released, the 1970s decade was discovered to be the most prevalent with the mode being 1976 for the original song release date. The original date of release ranged from 1910 to 2018. In addition to the actual songs being played, there was also a higher number of artists mentioned in the films from the 1970s. The artist Looking Glass received the highest records on the code sheet that included character mentions of the lyrics ( $n = 21$ ) along with the song "Brandy" playing throughout the storyline, and the longest amount of time played on screen with its appearance in the *Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2* film featuring Chris Pratt as Peter Quill.

## Marvel Cinematic Universe Impact on Song Searches

Across the 11 films in Phase 3 of MCU, the researcher found 81 popular music entries. Each of the 81 songs was independently searched on Google Trends, and the highest number of searches received for each song was recorded within the two-month time frame, starting a month before the movie's release, and extending one month afterward. Each of the 81 songs recorded reached the highest benchmark Google Trends rates searches (100) during the two-month time frame surrounding the films' United States release date.



## Most Frequent Decade of Music Used

The popular music from the 1970s as most commonly used in Phase 3 of the MCU films. This decade is valuable to set the stage of certain films with Iron Man and Captain America traveling back in time in *Avenger's Endgame* to visit a S.H.I.E.L.D. facility and the 1971 song "Hey Lawdy Mama" by Steppenwolf was used as transition to lighten the tone from the previous scene. *Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2* also incorporates music from the 1970s as its origins are set in 1980 where music from the 1970s would still be relevant. The MCU carried the brand awareness for *Guardians of the Galaxy* throughout the entirety of their appearance in Phase 3 by using music from the 1970s when introducing the team into the movie *Avengers Infinity War* with the song "Rubberband Man" by The Spinners; "Rubberband Man" is the only popular music reference featured in this film. The MCU continued this practice in *Avengers Endgame* by playing the 1972 single release of "Supersonic Rocketship" when introducing a portion of the *Guardians of the Galaxy* team, then again used the 1974 song "Come and Get Your Love" by Redbone when introducing Peter Quill into the storyline.

## Impact of a Song's Decade

Google Trends can track the number of inquiries on any given day. Google Trends does have the ability to present data on the relevance the popular music had in pop culture prior to the release of the movie allowing to gauge if the songs received an increase in searches after being featured in the films. 1970s classic rock has the most impressions throughout Phase 3, and while the popular is seeing an increase surrounding the movie's release dates, it should be noted that this genre is keeping the attention of the audiences it is attracting. Marc Hogan with Billboard stated "Classic Rock music target demographic was once between the ages of 25-54"; however, as seen in a 2018 Statista report with 3,000 respondents representing ages 16 -65+ Classic Rock was in the lead for favorite music genre with representation in all age brackets as seen in Table 5.

## Discussion

The 81 songs each showed an increase in Google/YouTube searches surrounding the release of the MCU Phase 3 films. This research indicates that the popular music featured in the films received a positive outcome in the form of name recognition that could lead to the increase of downloads/streams of songs, the resurrection of relevance in pop culture across a variety of age demographics that would drive brand recognition and demand for an anniversary album or drive ticket sales for an upcoming tour. Adding popular music into films not only sets the tone of a scene to enhance the film, it is a way to reach multiple demographics by merging past pop culture trends with current trends.

This trend is evident outside Phase 3, and can be seen in other films and television series. The 2018 *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse* that uses a combination of popular music across multiple decades including *People Get Up and Drive Your Funky Soul (Remix)* released in 1973 by James Brown, John Parr's 1984 *St. Elmo's Fire (Man in Motion)*, *Hypnotize* released in 1997 by The Notorious B.I.G, paired with current popular music. Current pop culture artists heard in film include Juice WRLD, Post Malone, and Jaden Smith. (IMDb) While *Stranger Things* has revived *Running Up That Hill* by Kate Bush originally released in 1985, and Metallica's

*Master of Puppets* originally released in 1986 that landed on the Billboard Top 100 list, after its premier in the season four finale of *Stranger Things*.

## Findings

Upon coding and researching the popular music inside Phase 3 of MCU, each of the 81 songs peaked on Google Trends with a 100 during the two-month time frame surrounding a movie's release date. Additionally, out of the 81 popular songs in Phase 3 of the MCU, 57 peaked at 100, either the weekend of the official United States release date or during the second weekend following the official United States release date. Related queries and related topics revealed similar searches surrounding topics related to the film, the artist, and other songs featured in the film. Showing additional interest in the songs and movies in popular music and the MCU. These searches show the benefit popular music receives from partnerships with films, especially blockbuster MCU films that earned between \$216,648,740 and \$858,373,000 during the U.S. and Canadian official opening weekend (IMDb). Marvel can use information like this to show the value of product placement partnerships to their partners such as artists, and businesses. This information highlights that the MCU has an active and loyal fan base as it shows the audience has an interest in the products featured in the MCU films.

Marvel used popular music in the narrative strategically; they were able to find popular music that would enhance the viewer's experience versus throwing songs into the movie that would be a disconnect. There are 81 popular music entries from Phase 3 of MCU. Each of the 81 songs was independently searched on Google Trends and the highest number of searches received for each song was recorded within the two-month time frame. The *Guardians of the Galaxy* franchise is known for having an emphasis on the music in the film. The character Peter Quill is given a Walkman by his dying mother that he uses throughout the first *Guardians of the Galaxy* movie and then replaced in Volume 2 with a Microsoft Zune. As the *Guardians of the Galaxy* team grows, they begin to use popular songs to hype themselves to be successful in battle. This can be seen at the timestamp of 4 minutes and 44 seconds when the *Guardians of the Galaxy* is introduced at the beginning of the film and preparing for a fight. The end of *Guardians of the Galaxy Vol.2* also shows how Marvel uses music to help tell a story as Peter Quill shares his headphones with baby Groot and they listen to *Father and Son* by Cat Stevens on the Zune. Where the audience is able to hear the song playing while seeing artist's name, the name of the song, and the digital artwork are visible in the hands of Chris Pratt.

*Captain Marvel* set in the 1990's has a soundtrack that consists of feminine rock music in the 1990's including No Doubt's *Just A Girl*, and *Waterfalls* by TLC. Whereas, *Black Panther*, is the only film within the MCU franchise to date to exclusively use popular songs from the current decade as a result of a collaboration with a popular artist. Kendrick Lamar produces a self-titled stand-alone album in conjunction with the film's promotion with a to exclusively use songs within the decade the film was created, with *Black Panther*, Marvel partnered with the popular artist Kendrick Lamar to create the music to be placed in *Black Panther* alongside the score. For *Black Panther* to be the first stand-alone film featuring an African-American as the lead role, a partnership with Kendrick Lamar solidified the dedication Marvel had to make this movie stand out and be successful. *Black Panther* was set in the 2000's, and adding music from a previous decade would have been a disconnect for this film.

Captain America is partnered several times with songs from the 1940's and 1950's, as he was a soldier from World War II and frozen they are able to set the tone of *Captain America's* demeanor allowing the audience to relate to his personality, whereas AC/DC is played more when Iron Man comes onto the screen to portray his intensity to bolster himself and showcase his party lifestyle. While searching these songs independently from the films themselves, Google Trend searches would populate related search topics that were being requested during the same timeframe while searching for the statistics on AC/DC's *Doom and Gloom* that appeared in *Avengers Endgame*; related topics included, *Iron Man*, *Tony Stark*, and *Avengers and Guardians of the Galaxy*.

### **Limitations**

Following Clark's (2019) research of product placement inside Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the Marvel Cinematic Universe, this research takes a deeper look of product placement in the form of pop culture references through popular songs throughout the progressing storylines in Phase 3. Google Trends reports on data starting in 2004 to present date which provided this research the required information on searches of the popular music surrounding the release of the movies, the research could be expanded with access to Nielsen or Google Trends API that would give cohesive insight on where the individual popular songs charted when they were originally released along with where it placed on the charts once it premiered in the films, and the retention rate showing how many loyal followers continued to listen to the popular music searched after initial interest. This could show how popular music stays relevant decades from the original date of release.

Apple Music and Spotify were not viable options for this research as the information available to the public only reports the current number of monthly followers of an artist and excludes the information pertaining to a particular song. From this research, it was uncovered how the MCU uses popular music to set the tone of a scene. The MCU uses popular music to help portray the story they are telling. Led Zeppelin's *Immigrant Song*, was used in Thor and can be heard during the scenes that Thor realizes his power comes from within. Another example of this partnership is between Ant-Man and David Cassidy's *Come On Get Happy*, when Scott Lang is released from house arrest and is able to begin living a normal life, *Come On Get Happy*, is played. Future areas of studies would be reviewing how popular music is used with Phase 4 of the MCU, and getting the specific data from Nielsen or Billboard to see where each of the songs charted upon official release dates and comparing that to the performance surrounding the launch of the films.

Research surrounding product placement and pop culture are important, because of the popularity and relevance play in the lives of everyday people. It is hard to detect what legislation or data mining practices may come to fruition, but it is certain that if you hear a good song, you will want to listen a little closer and remember what feelings you had the first time you heard it. "La Cucaracha" is the perfect example of this with it being released in 1910, and still receiving strong search results in 2018 when it was featured in *Avenger's Endgame*.

## **Future Research**

A closer look into the popular music genres throughout the MCU phases of the franchise as a collective. Future research would also benefit looking into the use of popular music across other film franchises, television shows, and commercials to gauge the engagement of the consumer after the impression. Additional research could investigate how the products surrounding the popular music performed in correlation to the partnership.

## Appendix

*Table 1:*

*Marvel Cinematic Universe Phase 1*

|   |
|---|
| <i>Iron Man</i>                           |
| <i>The Incredible Hulk</i>                |
| <i>Iron Man 2</i>                         |
| <i>Thor</i>                               |
| <i>Captain America: The First Avenger</i> |
| <i>The Avengers</i>                       |

*Table 2:*

*Marvel Cinematic Universe Phase 2*

|  |
|--|
| <i>Iron Man 3</i>                          |
| <i>Thor: The Dark World</i>                |
| <i>Captain America: The Winter Soldier</i> |
| <i>Guardians of the Galaxy</i>             |
| <i>Avengers: Age of Ultron</i>             |
| <i>Ant Man</i>                             |

Table 3:

Marvel Cinematic Universe Phase 3

|                                       |
|---------------------------------------|
| <i>Captain America Civil War</i>      |
| <i>Doctor Strange</i>                 |
| <i>Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2</i> |
| <i>Spider Man Homecoming</i>          |
| <i>Thor Ragnarok</i>                  |
| <i>Black Panther</i>                  |
| <i>Avengers Infinity War</i>          |
| <i>Ant Man &amp; Wasp</i>             |
| <i>Captain Marvel</i>                 |
| <i>Avengers Endgame</i>               |
| <i>Spider Man Far From Home</i>       |

Table 4:

Song impressions in Phase 3 with corresponding decade

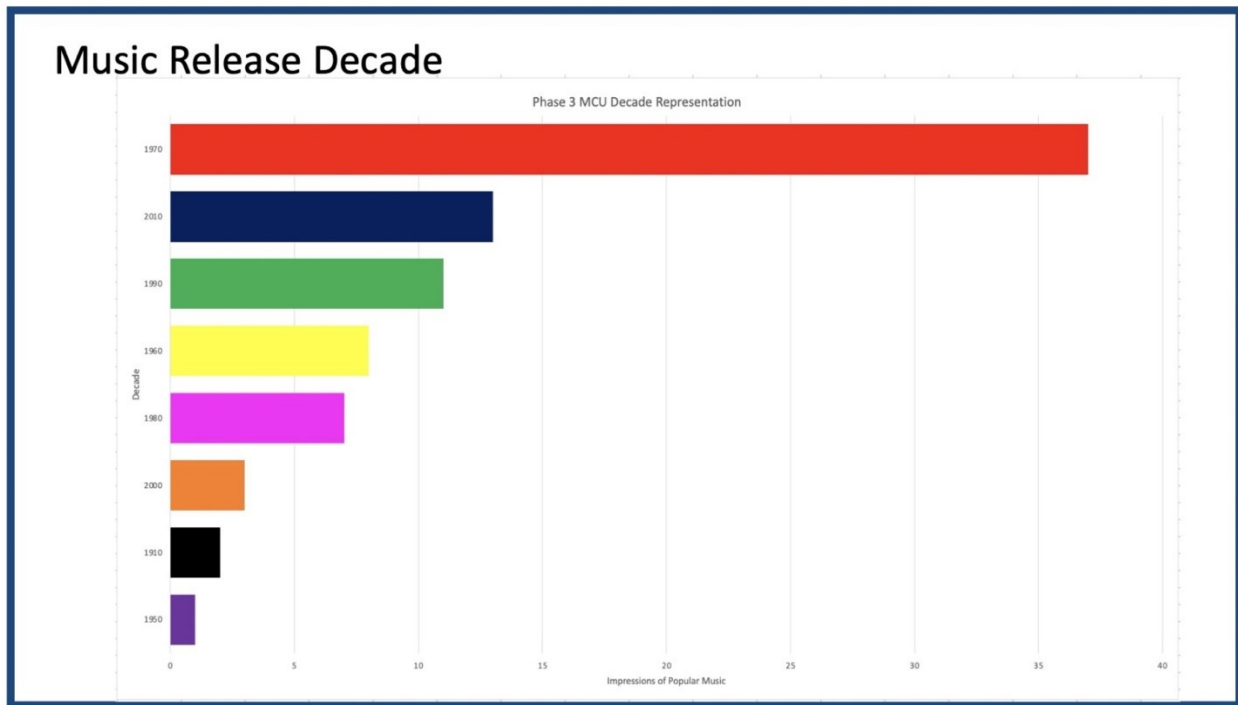
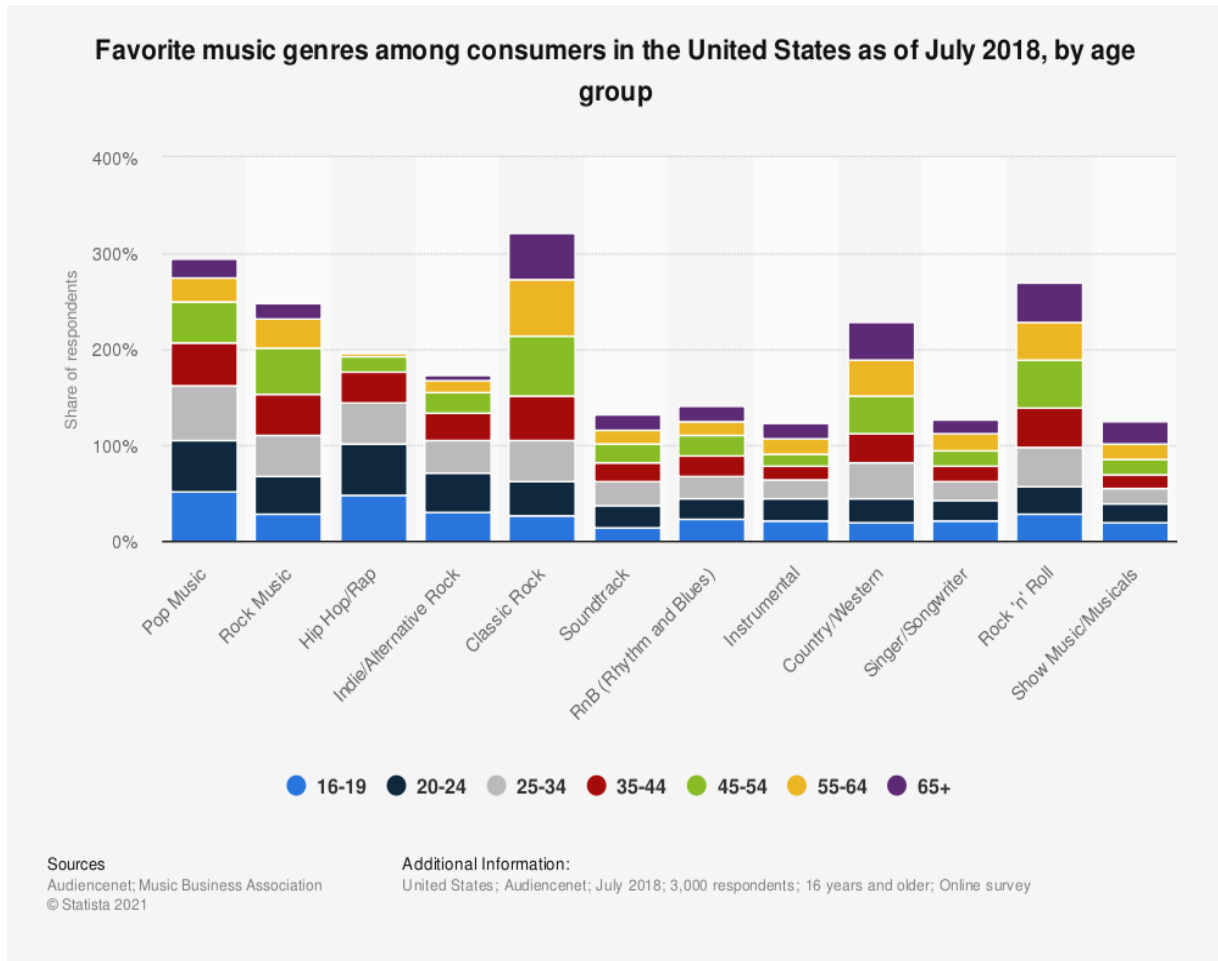


Table 5:

Statista 2018 Favorite music genre by age group





## MARVEL CINEMATIC UNIVERSE CODE SHEET

Adapted from Clark (2019)

**CODER ID-** sole coder, utilized coder reliability (an agreement between two or more coders that agree on an operational quantifiable definition of a coding category; a definition used to answer a research question) is most likely the way to go.

**BRAND ID-** Representation of the phases of the MCU. Phase One films indicated by a 1, Phase Two films are indicated by writing a 2. Phase 3 will be indicated by writing a 3.

**PRODUCT ID:** Based on the individual films order released based within the frame of the phase number associated with them.

**POST DATE:** Refers to the official U.S premiere date of each MCU film.

**BRAND PLACEMENT:** How the featured brand and or product is framed within the world of the MCU film it is present in.

- 1.) Foreground: Easily identifiable or recognizable in close proximity to characters, actions, or events.
- 2.) Background: Placed further away from characters, actions, or events.

**INTERACTIVE USE:**

- 1.) A song or artist is directly mentioned by a character at any point in the film.
- 2.) A song or artist directly used by a character in the film.

**NARRATIVE USE:** How a brand and or product is influencing the story of the film.

- 1.) The song or artist serves or directly impacts the narrative developments of the film.
- 2.) The song or artist does not serve or directly impacts the narrative developments of the film.
- 3.) **BRAND ANNOUNCEMENT:** The way in which a brand or product is introduced into the film.

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## Appendix

The following includes the pages present the films within Phase 3 of the MCU, along with the official release date, the timeframe of searches and trends pertaining to this research, and the list of popular songs that appear in each film. Additionally included are graphs that were used to identify the findings of this research from Google Trends with a complete list of songs in order of appearance.

Random sampling by a third party was used to identify which songs were graphed for this research. The third party was asked to choose 9 numbers between 1 and 81 that would provide over ten percent of the population for the sample. The sample provided by the third party were song numbers, 7, 32, 43, 56, 72, 18, 27, 80, and 12. For the purpose of a cohesive delivery of the research, the songs below are listed in order of which they appear in Phase 3 starting with song number 7.

### Code Book for Graphs

- Movies are listed in order of release date, with songs listed in order of appearance of each song.
  - (\*) Indicates a song was used multiple times within a film.
- Data source: Google Trends (<https://www.google.com/trends>)

### Film List

Film 1:

*Captain America Civil War*

Release Date: May 6, 2016

Song Search Date: March 6, 2016 – July 6, 2016

Songs Included:

|                                 |                     |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| <i>Try to Remember</i>          | Jerry Orbach        |
| <i>Pie Jesu</i>                 | Andrew Lloyd Webber |
| <i>I fall in love to easily</i> | Chet Baker          |
| <i>Left Hand Free*</i>          | ALT-J               |

Film 2:

*Doctor Strange*

Release Date: November 6, 2016

Song Search Date: September 6, 2016 – January 6, 2016

Songs Included:

|                               |                     |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| <i>Shining Star</i>           | Earth Wind and Fire |
| <i>Feels So Good*</i>         | Chuck Mangione      |
| <i>Interstellar Overdrive</i> | Pink Floyd          |
| <i>All the Single Ladies</i>  | Beyonce             |

Film 3:

*Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2*

Release Date: May 5, 2017

Song Search Date: March 5, 2017– July 5, 2017

Songs Included:

|                                 |                          |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>Brandy*</i>                  | Looking Glass            |
| <i>Mr. Blue Sky</i>             | Electric Light Orchestra |
| <i>Lake Shore Drive</i>         | Aliotta Haynes Jeremiah  |
| <i>The Chain*</i>               | Fleetwood Mac            |
| <i>Southern Nights</i>          | Glen Campbell            |
| <i>My Sweet Lord</i>            | George Harrison          |
| <i>Come a Little Bit Closer</i> | Jay & The Americans      |
| <i>Bring it on Home to me*</i>  | Sam Cooke                |
| <i>Wham Bam Shang-a-lang*</i>   | Silver                   |
| <i>Father and Son*</i>          | Cat Stevens              |
| <i>Surrender</i>                | Cheap Trick              |
| <i>Flash Light</i>              | Parliament               |

Film 4:

*Spider-man Homecoming*

Release Date: July 7, 2017

Song Search Date: April 7, 2017– September 7, 2017

Songs Included:

|                                   |                    |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Can't You hear Me Knocking</i> | The Rolling Stones |
| <i>The Underdog</i>               | Spoon              |

|                             |             |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| <i>Blitzkrieg Bop*</i>      | The Ramones |
| <i>Going up The Country</i> | Canned Heat |
| <i>Save it for later</i>    | The Beat    |

Film 5:

*Thor Ragnarök*

Release Date: November 3, 2017

Song Search Date: September 3, 2017- January 3, 2018

Songs Included:

|                         |              |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| <i>Immigrant Song*</i>  | Led Zeppelin |
| <i>Pure Imagination</i> | Gene Wilder  |

Film 6:

*Black Panther*

Release Date: February 16, 2018

Song Search Date: December 16, 2017- April 16, 2018

Songs Included:

|                      |                                    |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|
| <i>In the Trunk</i>  | Too Short                          |
| <i>Wakanda</i>       | Baaba Maal                         |
| <i>Berebere</i>      | Idrissa Soumaoro & Ali Farka Toure |
| <i>Wololo</i>        | Babes Wodumo Feat. Mapintsha       |
| <i>Hangover</i>      | Psy Feat. Snoop                    |
| <i>Pray for Me</i>   | The Weekend                        |
| <i>Nervous</i>       | White Dave                         |
| <i>Opps</i>          | Vince Staples, Yugen Blakrok       |
| <i>How Dare You</i>  | Professor                          |
| <i>Sleep Walking</i> | Mozzy                              |
| <i>All the Stars</i> | Kendrick Lamar & SZA               |

Film 7:

*Avengers Infinity War*

Release Date: April 27, 2018

Song Search Date: February 27,2018- June 27, 2018

Songs Included:

*Rubber band Man*

The Spinners

Film 8:

*Ant-man & Wasp*

Release Date: July 6, 2018

Song Search Date: May 6,2018- September 6, 2018

Songs Included:

*Come on Get Happy\**

David Cassidy

*Spooky*

Dusty Springfield

*La Cucaracha*

Unclear

Film 9:

*Captain Marvel*

Release Date: March 8, 2019

Song Search Date: January 8, 2019- May 8, 2019

Songs Included:

*Crazy On You*

Heart

*Kiss Me Deadly*

Lita Ford

*What A Man*

Salt-N-Peppa Feat En Vogue

*Connection*

Elastica

*Only Happy when it Rains*

Garbage

*Waterfalls*

TLC

*You Gotta be*

Desirée

*Come As You Are*

Nirvana

*I'm Just A Girl*

No Doubt

*Mr. Postman*

The Marvelettes

*Celebrity Skin*

Hole

Film 10:

*Avenger's Endgame*

Release Date: April 26, 2019

Song Search Date: February 26, 2019 – June 26, 2019

Songs Included:

|                                   |                             |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>Dear Mr. Fantasy</i>           | Traffic                     |
| <i>Super Sonic Rocketship</i>     | The Kinks                   |
| <i>Doom and Gloom</i>             | The Rolling Stones          |
| <i>Come and Get Your Love</i>     | Redbone                     |
| <i>Hey Lawdy Mama</i>             | Steppenwolf                 |
| <i>La Cucaracha</i>               | Unknown                     |
| <i>It's Been a long long time</i> | Harry James & His Orchestra |

Film 11:

*Spider-man Far From Home*

Release Date: July 2, 2019

Song Search Date: May 2, 2019 – September 2, 2019

Songs Included:

|                                  |                    |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| <i>I will Always Love You*</i>   | Whitney Houston    |
| <i>Stella Stai</i>               | Umber to Tozzi     |
| <i>Bongo Cha Cha Cha</i>         | Caterina Valentine |
| <i>Back in Black</i>             | AC/DC              |
| <i>I Wanna Be Your Boyfriend</i> | Ramones            |
| <i>Vacation</i>                  | The Go-Gos         |