

Group project – personal review and summary

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2303 words

This review will detail my personal involvement in the task of producing assets for the group portfolio, its presentation, structure, and objectives.

This will include both reflection on the influence of multiple types of modern methods of content delivery and how new developments in technologies in shaping how music is made, promoted, and consumed. This review will refer to best industry practice and will comment on how these best practices are possible a wolf in sheep's clothing and may present in actuality, a pitfall to artists and music businesses.

This review and reflection will clearly present the understanding, skill, comprehension, and appraisal of the submitted portfolio and will identify possible improvements and errors that were potentially overlooked. Investigation, analysis, and critique of technologies, theories, and tactics that are considered industry standards are used as a reference in this review. This will also work in correlation with the research implemented into my own strategies and methods.

This was a task that required a very individual based mindset when it came to areas such as research, development of ideas and innovating the most efficient use of the group's £5,000 budget. This task also required a certain level of team work when it came to organising assets, making decisions on how much funding to allocate to each sub task, who in the team would be handling what and of course the team had to consistently communicate to ensure both continuity throughout the representation of the brand, fluidity in the delivery of ideas and to ensure that larger tasks such as the calendar organisation were allocated sufficient completion time windows. The team worked extremely well and was made up of myself, Marcel, Shannon, and Isabella. The group, operating under the alias of 'Dragon Force 5' did an extremely good job of organising our in-person meetings. This formed the basis for the success of our group's research and resulting assets. We met as a group once a week commencing the 9th of November. Once we reached the week commencing the 2nd of December, we increased the frequency of the meetings to two or even three times per week. This review will expand upon certain steps involved in the delivery of the project, ideas in the report will be supported by the data, analytics and research detailed in this review.

Task Allocation

George – Boiler Room poster, NFT design, NFT research, incorporation of PopEx, researching and isolating the target market, construction of the release calendar.

Marcel – Budget allocation, marketing methods, research on smart accounting, release schedule research and organisation, artwork.

Shannon – primary organiser of the release calendar, research and coordination of the Boiler Room event, research of online and traditional marketing methods, merchandise research.

Isabella – development of media assets including, video concept and research, assembly of the one sheet, Album artwork editing, audience growth, marketing research.

The number of assets and ideas included in the project

when organising our project, we wanted to ensure that no stone was left unturned, we as a group felt we had not only the manpower to tackle a high volume of tasks but also a budget that would have the capacity to facilitate each task to a professional standard.

In hindsight we certainly had a team that was organised and more than capable of researching and developing these assets to an extremely high level, however the sheer volume of assets made it challenging, but not impossible to include. The challenge of assembling such a vast amount of assets was overcome by including all shared assets in the project, however some sections such as the live event in my case, were explained to a lesser extent than the NFT release included in the strategy. This approach of highlighting and explaining certain aspects of the project allowed for me to home in on the most relevant assets, explaining their relevance in further detail and explaining exactly how they were more pertinent than other assets.

The group pooled together our assets and research; the assets included across the project are as follows:

- Original artwork
- Target market and competitor analysis.
- Photoshoots
- Music video concept
- NFT release
- Merch
- Press communication
- Boiler Room Live event
- Track Remix
- Social media promotion
- Posters/promotional posts

Upon the execution, organisation and structuring of my portfolio it was important to prioritise certain assets based on how pertinent I knew them to be. I did not want to explain so much what, but rather place my focus on why in this project. Simple mechanics of the industry such as the included photoshoot and the artwork need not to take up too much of the word count, it was important to brush over these smaller tasks and focus on the key assets in making this release as successful as it could be. With over eleven assets to work into a two thousand five-hundred-word portfolio, I decided to explain in detail the following:

Marketing

- A clear target audience
- Competitor analysis
- Font, copywriting, and tone
- The importance of linking marketing assets together to create a concise and clear direction for the brand.
- The market conditions

Merchandise

- Merchandise as a revenue stream and another method of brand to fan engagement.

- The direct link between NFTs and how both can work together, for each other.
- The method of product delivery and why drop shipping works for our release/revenue model in place.
- The link between the brand and its competitors when it comes to merchandise. (We sell merch because our competitors are making more from their merch than their monthly listeners!)

NFT Release

- The value of blockchain technology for artists and music businesses
- The future possibilities of introducing event ticketing, exclusive demos, samples, and artwork exclusively and securely via blockchain (PopEx)
- A full explanation as to why Daemon needs to adopt this new technology.

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My focus on these three areas of the project derived from the ever-growing importance of new technologies, systems and how these are changing the way we are creating and releasing music, both in the industry landscape of today and most importantly the industry of tomorrow.

I wanted this release plan to incorporate as many modern methods of product delivery as possible. The music industry is heavily reliant on data, so I focused on the target market and developing a clear understanding of who our consumers are.

With so many online assets another important facet to any music business is brand continuity. With brand continuity it creates authenticity and fan loyalty. This consistency is implemented across all assets and includes the copywriting of online content.

By synthesising the same methods of research and development of an artist's brand often implemented by major labels, the group was able to quickly gain an understanding of:

- Daemon's character, creative profile, artistic direction and his fanbase.
- The correct market positioning to maximise content engagement and return on monetary investment from our £5,000 budget.
- The industry landscape, market conditions, best practice and pitfalls of Daemon's music genre and associated culture.

The group obviously didn't have the advanced in-house research database capabilities of companies such as Universal, Sony or Warner. But what we did have was an understanding of the steps that these companies use to develop release campaigns.

The steps we implemented in order are as follows.

1. Understanding the artist and the brand
2. This understanding commands the target market
3. The target market informs the marketing approach and appropriate marketing placement.
4. All of the above are made reference to when researching or creating any assets
5. The market results and consumer feedback are both used to then decide the next step in an artist's career.

One of the strongest aspects of our campaign was our visual branding and artwork. The team all had a hand to play in collecting photos, editing images, adding fonts etc.

This was made possible through the team's use of Canva, Adobe photoshop and open-source A.I photo development software. In hindsight what also made the design process extremely fluent and consistent was the understanding of our product and who we were going to reach, there was certainly no shortage of design ideas.

One aspect of our project that I should certainly have detailed further was our social media/online marketing strategy. Although the group discussed and produced a significant number of online assets, the method of promoting these online assets was in my opinion slightly lacking. However, In terms of how our marketing strategy lines up against current industry best practice, there is a lot to be said for innovative assets with a low spend as a pose to simply paying for any online service to promote your music. By having a lot of assets in this project it was pointed out by Isabella, that it would place a great deal of content out there, meaning that more interactions with the brand would be taking place, which means more data (almost all of our assets are based online so analytics are readily available) to put towards building a clearer image of the artists market performance, fanbase and of course, it will potentially command the next move in his career.

With access to numerous forms of software and technology, in the music industry landscape anyone can become a success from their bedroom. The modern methods being utilised in our own project are a direct reflection of how the industry is changing, the pace has increased and so has the volume of content in the digital stream flowing around the world.

But although this stream in the music industry runs deep, (to the tune of an estimated 100,000 tracks being uploaded a day to certain streaming platforms) only 2% of those uploaded tracks will receive more than 1,000 streams. This means with a structured approach to digital content and with a little bit of strategy, chances of successfully cutting through the noise of the 98% is very much attainable.

One way in which some are cutting through the noise is simply by paying for others to help them make more noise, meaning a high budget will almost always gain some views and a click through or two, but without intuition and strategy all that noise can quickly fade quickly. By not relying on others to help you cut through the mix and by generating and distributing your own assets, full control of the project is maintained.

Another aspect of how technology directly impacted our workflow was the ease at which we could share files, organise shared documents on google drive as well as communicate with one another at all hours with use of WhatsApp and Zoom meetings.

The benefits of this are immeasurable, it enabled the group to seamlessly:

- Suggest ideas and put them into development instantly e.g., creating album cover mock-ups, merchandise ideas etc.
- Inform the entire group of decisions of ideas instantly
- It ensured we all had matching assets and were always on the same page.
- The group could accurately communicate ideas remotely when unable to make it to in person sessions via use of Zoom meetings.

Research and data points

With access to an unlimited source of research and data via the internet, verifying the feasibility of marketing methods, learning from other mistakes, market conditions and analysis of competitor performance, are all readily available online.

Our data and research were carried out across a variety of sources and with use of platforms and services such as:

- Spotify streaming statistics of competitors
- Chartmetric was used to research the target audience
- Music business worldwide for reference to best practice
- I consulted the open sea website when researching NFT development
- Statista

The availability of these resources allowed for the team to turn around such a vast number of assets in a minimal time frame, as well as to a professional standard.

Conclusion

The group was successful in assembling a release plan that fulfilled our initial objective in carrying out this project. The plan integrated a variety of assets and methods that came from all corners of the group. The team was made up of an extremely motivated, organised, and dedicated work force. Often the smaller details in a group exercise are overlooked, the value in good time keeping, fast communication, respect and patience are often taken for granted. A group is as fast as its slowest member, and at different stages of developing this project we all filled that position at least once. What allowed us to overcome these difficulties was trust, trusting that Marcel would have the numbers right or Shannan would organise the calendar dates properly and so on. This meant that we were all extremely comfortable in allocating work to one another without having to chase, check-up or verify the work was being done.

One of the benefits to having such a level of trust and respect for each other's work and decisions is the value of the feedback from one another. When tasks were completed by individuals in the group they were reviewed, with both praise and criticism alike. Due to the team's mutual trust, we could all critic each other's work and the feedback, good or bad wouldn't fall upon deaf ears. When working on a solo project not having a team around you is very isolating and can lead to a narrow-minded approach to a project. With such a multi-faceted release as our own it was invaluable to be able to utilise everyone's unique skills, experience, and knowledge to a shared end goal. The project used a system of iterative design skills, meaning that ideas and assets were often changed along the way and modified to accommodate new information or research, this in hindsight was the only way in which we could develop our plan, not all the information comes in at once, therefore an asset once thought to be finished and ready for submission can be changed in the case of new research.