

Festival Proposal

**MA International
Music Marketing**

Element 1 – Proposal

**Emily Rose Talbot
202467**

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Proposal:

For this proposal I will be discussing plans for an alternative music day festival that has multiple event days in different locations around the UK. This festival model is highly influenced by the retired USA based festival Vans Warped Tour. This festival allowed for fans of alternative music – (pop-punk, rock, metal) to see artists/bands in their home state. It would tour almost all over the UK and even Canada, whilst there isn't such space to do so in the UK, I believe on a smaller scale the model could really work and be adapted to suit the UK's needs. Preliminarily we would start by hitting the main capital cities similar to an arena sized tour, often that would include London, Manchester, Birmingham and Glasgow. Current competition for this idea in the would include UK based festival Slam Dunk Festival that run two all day festivals across two locations over May bank holiday weekend in the North and the South. Slam Dunk are solely focused on alternative music, rock, metal, punk, ska etc. However, I am proposing a similar event on a smaller scale but having more locations allowing for more availability to possible consumers, which was one thing that I have seen from online comments that affects the Slam Dunk crowd, the Midlands people who would want to attend don't want to travel to the North or South locations for example.

One of the major selling points for the festival is to be supportive of gender inclusion across the line up for the festival. By having this at the forefront of the campaign it creates a USP which can then generate activations from the press and sponsorships. Also, on a personal level it's something I feel strongly about helping push in mainstream press and it being at the forefront of people's minds when looking at a festival line up and booking a festival. It's one thing that a lot of festivals have talked about diversifying and including more non-binary, gender fluid, female artists etc. However, I want to make sure that it happens. Festivals have recently been coming under scrutiny to due to the lack of females/non-binary acts on line ups and for good reason. The goal for this new UK festival is to have a 50/50 split on the line up at the very least to allow for inclusion across all artists by giving those artists the right opportunities. I truly believe that this festival could be a trailblazer within the industry with the right marketing and strategy applied. I would like to think after seeing that it can be done, other festival bookers etc. would be able to follow suit and want to stand with the communities attached to LGBTQIA+ and others not just use it as a marketing campaign or strategy.

The target market for the festival would be a wide range from a younger audience to a slightly older audience, focusing on ages ranging from 16 – 40+, at

all genders. This is due to the USP of the festival but also has been influenced by the multiple locations. A younger audience has little to no income due to being in education, by bringing the festival closer to them there is a higher chance of driving ticket sales in the younger 'TikTok' market. Similarly, after talking to other promoters, older crowds tend not to travel too far for shows, or if they're forced to on certain tours/for certain festivals, they are not best pleased! Therefore, I believe bringing the festival closer to people will help bring sales in. Ideally for the festival ticket price we would be looking at £35-50, which is a relatively low ticket price for a festival, however hoping across the multiple sites it will make sense and again, a lower ticket price will certainly help bring more sales in, especially with a new start up festival where confidence in ticket buyers may not be very high. Start with the lower ticket price and build up towards it being £100 eventually after a few years. The line up will also be taken into consideration of ticket price, less income from sales will then directly reflect the size of acts that can play. Meaning that the line up will consist of midweight to independent artists, that will sell tickets but we won't be able to afford the heavy hitters in the first few years. I like this however because it leaves the festival room to grow, if we were to plan a massive festival with a huge ticket price and get all the 'big guns' in it is likely to fail. Whereas this business plan, smaller capacity, more locations, smaller ticket price for the time being will work much better for a first time festival. Having said that, we would aim to get at least 3 big names in and then fill the rest of the line up accordingly maybe even looking at local bands that would relish the opportunity to play a festival and have that platform. Allowing for the bigger names to draw in attention on the festival, but locally and on the ground in these different cities we have help from local people and local bands pushing the festival for us, great marketing that you can't pay for is word of mouth and I believe that will be one way we can achieve that. I would liken it to Godiva festival in Coventry that last year had 'Fun Lovin' Criminals' headline and then the rest of the line up was filled with mid to level bands and local bands with acoustic stages that a lot of acts from Warwickshire and the West Midlands attended. I also feel that it will be a great platform for smaller artists to be discovered and celebrated.

The location choices for the festival will be based on statistical research around potential festival acts popularity on Spotify and across social media platforms. This can be easily tracked, researched, and monitored so we have assurance that we're making the right choice when bringing in the big acts and spending the majority of the budget we will have allocated for bands. By looking into where the fans of alternative music are peaking the locations of where to book the venues is then informed directly from the data. As this festival will vary from city to city similarly to a normal tour, the venues will be indoors, by pre-booking spaces already set up for live music it will allow for no time to be wasted on set up, also a massive reduction in costs. The costs for an outdoor festival can be monumental when you have to hire the land, the infrastructure for stages, bringing in food vendors, bringing in toilets and also security to actually man the huge site, therefore looking at pre-existing venues and indoor arena's etc. will be much

better for this project. Or at least to begin with whilst it grows and blossoms into a bigger festival where we may have the budget to look at moving it outdoors. For venue size 5000 capacity would be ideal, due to their being multiple dates it doesn't need to be a huge capacity in each location, additionally this allows for room to grow and develop over the years.

This Festival's success is going to be highly reliant on executed branding and interaction with influencers. Due to the demographic of the target audience it is important to keep that at the fore front of the campaign. To get the attention of the target audience it is essential to have the correct taste makers on board to push this festival towards the correct audience. By having a team that reflects the ideals of the festival is an important element to the USP of this festival. There is going to be a balance of female, non-binary and male team members across the board. One major partnership for the festival will be Safe Gigs for Women "Safe gigs for women is an initiative established by regular gig goers with the aim of creating a safer environment for women at gigs." (Women, n.d.). We feel strongly about having organisations like Safe Gigs for Women as part of the make up and fabric of the festival. We want to create a genuinely safe space for all patrons, performers and crew at the festival and we will want to continue to work with them through all our sites and throughout the years the festival takes place.

A Major team member who would be great to have on board would be Elsie Cobin- Music programmer at Amazon Music. She runs 'Rock Scene' 'Alt Scene' and 'Fresh Rock' there and has huge success in implementing Amazon's Rock Scene presents which is an online live music event created throughout lockdown, celebrating the best acts in the alternative scene. It has been a huge success for all bands involved such as Trash Boat, Wargasm, Press To Meco, Vukovi etc. and having them on board will only reap benefits for our festival and solidify achieving our goals. Having Elsie as part of the team or alternatively having the festival sponsored by 'Amazon music: The Rock Scene presents' would be an excellent partnership to have to launch the festival and place it in front of the right audience and expand that audience at the same time.

Other companies which would be great sponsors for the festival would be Dr Martens as they are a huge advocate for equality and their demographic is a huge part of the rock and metal live music industry. Our involvement with Docs will help on many levels, making the festival look cool and fresh from a branding perspective and give the festival some legitimacy. Considering how long Dr. Martens as a brand has been around, having them on board with a new idea and a new festival will be a huge asset for us.

"For decades, our LGBTQIA+ wearers have been lacing up their DM's and taking to the streets. Marching in our boots. And shaping them into a symbol of rebellion.

But despite everything they've achieved, the work is nowhere near done. LGBT homelessness is on the rise. Trans discrimination is rife around the world. In 2021, Pride remains as important as ever. So as we celebrate this year, we're going to help showcase why. Shine a light on the different ways people continue to celebrate Pride and draw strength from it. And help educate our community on issues facing our LGBTQIA+ wearers every day. As long as they need our support — until every single person feels respected, safe and seen — we'll keep shouting and marching with them. And continuing to support them in every way we can." (Martens, 2021)

By having a huge name on board with this project it again allows for the festival to be seen by new audiences. Additionally other partnerships/sponsors I will be looking into is Marshall Amplification, Volcalzone, TikTok and Signature Brew. With is partnerships there are opportunities to have activations on site at the festival. Interactive stations for the audience to engage with to then lead onto social media posting, to gain more traction and hype around the event.

It is essential to work with a PR agency who have experience working within the music industry and a great reputation already. I have been looking at working with Halestorm PR "London based PR agency, launched in 2013. Specialising in music, celebrity, events and brands." Halestorm have worked with many publications from print to digital. Their experience and knowledge would be a great asset to the festival team. Additionally, the team is an all-female team, again adding to the inclusivity of the festival.

Secondly, I think that it is important to work with influencers to push the new festival, Generation Entertainment works with Brand Partnerships & Talent Management. The talent at this agency again have experience working with promotional material for live events and the music industry. Working with influencers that already have a following across social platforms is an easy and effective way to build up our own audience/following for the festival.

Having 3T:Technical Tour Training involved on in the crew for the festival is of mass importance. 3T are 'Trained Black Women in Touring/Live Music.' (3T, n.d.).

As stated previously it is important for the festival's values are reflected through the crew and staff working on site. Secondly as production/stage manager I'd like to have Alice James, currently the production manager at Eventim Apollo, however she has experience in many other fields in the entertainment industry.

"An experienced Production Manager with a demonstrated history of working in senior management in the live events industry. Skilled in Technical Production, Event Management, Outdoor Events, Stage Management, Crowd Management, and Operations." (James, n.d.)

Promotional material for the run up to the festival will be 50/50 split between environmental guerrilla advertising approach and digital campaigns. Guerrilla

advertising allows for more creative and innovative campaigns, something out of the box and different, which is exactly where this festival lays. By having it be based in multiple locations it leans itself towards a multistage campaign. Something that isn't permanent but creates an eye-catching visual display that is engaging to the public. Projection is a great way to do this.

"Projection mapping, similar to video mapping and spatial augmented reality, is a projection technique used to turn objects, often irregularly shaped, into a display surface for video projection. These objects may be complex industrial landscapes, such as buildings, small indoor objects or theatrical stages." (Wikipedia, n.d.) This technique can be used across the landmarks of the chosen cities for the festival, this can be used to announce the locations. An eye catching and attention-grabbing activation to start off with is very important for this campaign.

Lastly I would like to partner with the digital agency Be-Hooked "We seize opportunities to create culturally impactful moments that last and help develop the excitement of your audience. We accelerate growth and engagement" (Be-Hooked, n.d.) I think by working with a company who already have great relationships in place is key to archive the goals for the festival.

This will be a huge project that needs a lot of planning and time management at the focus. With more research and discussions with leaders within the industry I will be able to create a detailed and successful marketing and launch campaign for this festival.

Timeline:

October – December 2021

Look at how much of a budget we would have to put the festival together, how much for staffing it, venue hire costs and then how much we have for bands etc. This will take 3 months of meticulous planning as we will have to budget for absolutely everything down to rider for bands, extra security potentially and any additional venue hire costs that may occur.

January – March 2022

Start looking at looking at curating the correct team and taking job role applicants to be part of the festival, we would start firstly with the higher up roles and work our way down, this will take 3 months as we will need a dream team of rep's to run the event, marketing, designers and promoters

April – June 2022

We will now sit down as a team and again discuss the specific budgets layed out, factor in as a team any costs they may think would incur, like extra spend for online advertising, physical marketing etc. and put the main bulk of the plan together

July – September 2022

We would secure the date for the festival with the venue's we are looking into hiring which will take the allotted three months' worth of time especially given the different locations etc.

October 2022 – December 2022

Now that we have the venue in place and our team in place, we can look at booking the acts for the festival with the promoters we've hired. They will talk to the booking agents that will give us the acts we want. The promoters can then liaise with marketing to push the festival to its highest potential

January 2023 – March 2023

After we have booked the festival, we will spend these months getting the PR we want for the festival, when we launch we want it in all the correct magazines, plugged on the radio, targeted ads going out online etc. so we will have to have

all assets, posters, video content ready to roll out in these months with a big press release to all media outlets we want to work with

April 2023 – June 2023

WE would use these months to build up to announcement in June 2023, a year before the festival, I feel anything more than a year's lead up would be a bit too much and would harshly impact ticket sales as people will not think to buy tickets for something so far away, especially when it's a new brand and confidence won't be very high

July 2023 – September 2023

This is where our marketing team come into full play and we really start hammering home the festival building online profile, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook and also pushing a to create a strong mailing list which in future years will massively help the festival if you can build it from day one

October 2023 – December 2023

We would bring in outside PR people to help smash the marketing... third party commissions you might work with (i.e. PR, radio, digital, agent, promoter, designer, videographer etc.) and very rough idea of budget.

January 2024 – March 2024

- Activate physical marketing make sure it's up around the cities on poster boards etc.
- Start advancing the festival with the bands and the venue to make sure all logistics are in place

April 2024 – June 2024 (Festival month)

Talk to the bands playing the festival and get video clips from them saying they're excited to play the festival next month, in the coming weeks and months up to the festival this kind of marketing would work great at getting last minute buyers in

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