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Module Title: Creation (ADAD7004_LON)

Assignment Title: Creation Reflection

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Introduction

In this essay I will reflect upon my efforts to achieve my goal of creating a professional portfolio, to showcase my skills as a music producer. The portfolio will be used to attract potential clients, artist managers and music publishers to my brand, for me to earn a living from my skills as a music producer. I will be analysing the components of the plan that I set out in my proposal initially, changes made to that plan along the way and exploring the steps I have researched, and the practical application of the hypotheses proposed.

I will attempt to showcase knowledge of where my plan had succeeded in gaining more traction towards my goal and initiatives that had been altered or removed due to external impediments, environmental factors, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, that has restricted movement and, in my case, in-person collaboration.

I will be critically evaluating each of the points I initially outlined, highlighting key considerations from my research, and attempting to detail how I will create a new approach to the attainment of my goal, past my studies. I will also be critically evaluating my resulting portfolio against more established practitioners, my peers, and my mentor, whilst highlighting successes/failures in achieving the direction of my goal and the development of my skills. I will then create a new plan from this, to highlight further skills I will need to develop to close the gap between my current position and where I am aiming to be.

Objectives and Direction

In my initial proposal, I had decided to target three specific target markets and audiences for my music: Record Label Staff (A&R's, Managers and Executives), Music Supervisors for synchronisation licencing (sync licencing hereafter), of my music in television and film and Unsigned upcoming independent artist through powerful branding and social media marketing techniques. Here I will discuss my research and execution into each of these areas and the subsequent changes that I decided to make during this time.

Although there are many different ways to succeed in the music industry, I decided to focus on these particular avenues, as they are unique from one another and require a slightly different skill set to succeed. They also happen to be the more common approaches that new producers are finding lucrative financially and to forge connections and a presence in the music industry, as, 'it's all about your reputation and what people say about you, personally and professionally' Storey, S (2020). Following a conversation I had during a 1-2-1 with Suzanna Storey, Tileyard's Senior Wellness Manager, Suzanna was able to talk to me about her successes and failure as an artist manager in the music industry. 'Reputation and building relationships are everything in the music industry, always try to professional in your interactions and put your best foot forward', sensing my anxiety about the quality of my portfolio, ...sometimes you get the opportunity you're looking for but you don't feel These factors are very important to understand how I could potentially succeed in them as they seem to have been successful for other producers, who have a similar style of music to mine and work in the urban music space.

Approaching Record Labels

Graham Phipps A&R and Artist Manager at Tileyard Studios, after listening to an early version of my portfolio (3 songs), suggested that I 'should find artists that are accessible and that you like. People on Instagram and Youtube are easy to reach out to and build relationships with and if you build songs together, not only will the collaboration make you a better producer, but you never know, the artist you work with may get signed or start gaining lots of tracking and you can build with them' (Phipps, 2020). This was fantastic advice from a seasoned professional, who is exposed to numerous song/beat submissions daily and emphasized the importance of a solid portfolio or catalogue of work.

Following the lead of other UK urban producer I came across Shahid Khan (a.k.a. Naughty Boy), who has steadily developed relationships with artists in the music business allowing him to release his debut album titled 'Hotel Cabana' in 2013, which was critically acclaimed, with accolades such as Brit and MOBO awards for singles such as 'La La La' featuring Sam Smith (who was then, relatively unknown).

The album is also full of features from well established international artists and now household names, such as Emile Sande, Ella Eyre and Sam Smith that are featuring on Naughty Boy's album, which speaks volumes of his personal and professional brand. All of these things came about from forging connections with music industry professional, working with artists and going above and beyond to help them, with Emeli Sande recalling that 'He paid for me to fly to Luton Airport, came and collected me, played the beat for "Daddy" in the car, and I just sang the first melody that came out. And he was like, 'yeah, remember that one'. I think we might have recorded it in the car. By the time we got to his studio, 'daddy' was the word that came out. And we built along that. We wrote three really good songs in that weekend' (McLean, C 2014).

Although reaching out to these artists is something that I could do immediately, I decided to wait until my portfolio was at least completed, so that I could demonstrate my best work, along with the advice about creating a powerful first impression from Suzanna I decided to pay more attention to putting my best foot forward with my portfolio and try to create some success independently.

Creating a powerful Online Brand

With the accessibility of music production software, virtual instruments and online e-commerce platforms such as Beatstars and Airbit, there has been a rise in recent years of music producers who can make a significant income through selling or leasing their music online to artists.

Airbit's CEO Wasim Khamlichi states that 'producers have earned over \$32 million on his platform alone with a few producers making six-figures every year selling beats.' – (Andrews, 2019). As lucrative as this sounds, in reality, music producers must have some components in place to gain traction on these platforms, as like other social media platforms, they are driven by algorithms and paid advertising to gain more exposure. Successful Beatstars seller Mike Trampe, for instance, offers some advice around this in his official Beatstars post (which is an official how-to guide endorsed by Beatstars CEO Abe Batshon), 'There's thousands of producers actively selling beats online right now, the competition is fierce. So

when you do get an artists attention and they come to your site to check out your music, you need to make it worth their time. You can do that by making sure you have a decent number of beats in your catalogue. A good number to aim for as a starting point is 30-50 beats, and a wide variety in your style (originality is key to long term success).’ (Trampe, 2017).

Successful producers on these sites usually aim to make ‘type beats’, an interesting term that quickly identifies writers and artists with the ‘type’ of music they are searching for, which also works well for the type of emotion the writer is looking for, ‘unlike MjNichols, who conquered the market by using search terms like “Kendrick Lamar type beat” and “Wiz Khalifa type beat,” Souler has also made a name for himself by broadening his search titles to include moods and themes, such as “Japanese type beat” and “Egyptian type beat.” These categories have sizable audiences, but not many producers know about them, which allows Souler to absorb the traffic. “I just find it fun to get inspired by all the different cultures out there,” he says.’ King, S (2020).

YouTube content creator and music producer Kyle Beats, for instance, has built a lot of his following through online tutorials and uploading full, (but tagged) beats, which generate income for him. Along with his organic reach, Kyle also invests heavily in the promotion of his other services, such as the now-famous ‘The Sauce’ plugin, which is heavily targeted through advertising on YouTube and Instagram towards the music production demographic.

Alternatively, Kenny Beats, has also found great success through his YouTube videos, having initially toured as a DJ, he later became more focused on music production and uses content creation in a slightly different way, not only to show his production and mixing processes but through video diaries of his collaborations with established artists, that he works with. The video series called ‘The Cave’ diaries, showcase not only Kenny’s hard skills in music creation and mixing but also the all-important soft skills he has to make artists feel comfortable in his environment, where he will create a song from scratch with them in his studio whilst detailing common themes and conversations he has throughout his creative process.

But why is a personal brand so important? Lucy Maciera, Tileyard’s Branding and Marketing specialist suggests that ‘people want to connect with other people. Logo’s and brands are great to establish product, but when you’re dealing with something as personal as music, people want to connect with you and see who they are connecting with.’ Macieira, L (2020). This was also something that was echoed by Tileyard’s Entertainment and Design Tutor Steve Cole and further, by Paul Allen’s ‘Artist Management for the Music Business’ book in my initial proposal research, that led me to this approach.

Sync licensing

In my research, I found that the gatekeepers of sync licensing seemed to be through the music supervisors of music publisher who have catalogues of music curated for specific use in TV and Film. Speaking with Harrison Stock, a radio producer for BBC Radio 1, he suggested that ‘you should keep a good relationship with producers, supervisors and curators in radio and publishing, I’d say put together a portfolio of really well mixed and varied songs, they don’t have to have lyrics on them, in fact, it’s probably better in some cases for radio that they don’t’, (Stock, H 2019). This was reassuring as my access to

reliable and professional artists was quite limited and allowed me to focus more on the sound of the production instead.

During last year's BBC Introducing event I was fortunate enough to form a connection with music supervisor and production assistant, William Wolstenholme at the BBC, who was looking for 'music bed's' or backing tracks to use throughout their programmes. William explained that through BBC Introducing's platform 'we receive so many submissions, that it can become overwhelming, however, the songs that tend to do well are either covers of older songs or upbeat pop songs, like the kind of music you hear in charts. There tends to be a lot more demand for urban and urban pop music recently', (Wolstenholme, 2019). This was great to hear, as it gave me the confidence to understand that there was a market for the genre of music that I like to make.

Another route I discovered was through advertising agencies who tend to favour cover songs, both in trailers and visual promotional campaigns. Whilst demonstrating a showreel from Position Music, A&R Emily Weber, suggested that artist 2WEI had found lots of success through their cover of Britney Spears song 'Toxic', creating a brand new and darker narrative around it. 'Ad agencies are our end customers...cover songs work well for them, even though I feel they have run their course' Weber, E (2019). This would be a great consideration for the future, but I felt that going in this direction would have required me to source more time from a vocalist that I had worked with and I decided to focus more on making music without vocals instead.

Deciding a course of action

As I had found a lot of crossover between the different approaches identified in my proposal, I began to create a roadmap of items that I would work on to increase my chances of finding paid work. From my conversation with Graham at Tileyard, I realised that he along with any other publisher or manager would need to 'see the hustle and collaboration in practice. People want to understand what you've done to try and gain exposure, before offering a deal to you. It also works in your favour, because if you have a strong enough brand and work that's out there, you have more bargaining power and can get a better deal', (Phipps, 2020). As discouraging as this could have sounded, I completely understood the point as it was one of the other avenues I wanted to try in this process and gave me the understanding that I was considering an option, that was feasible.

Brand and catalogue were recurring themes throughout my research, as was working with other artists. I began to go through my SWOT analysis (Fig 1), again and work on some of the weaknesses I had identified., I knew that I wanted a more personal brand and decided to speak with a graphic designer to understand how to best represent this. I spoke with a relative of mine, who is a graphic designer based in London and detailed my thoughts, on the rebranding of my image. The literal translation of my name (Amit) in English is the word 'boundless', which I thought would be a great music producer name and through our conversation established that the number eight and the capital letter B were very similar. This became the focus of our discussions and through some collaboration and brainstorming, we were able to come to a concept design, (Fig 2). A typical cost for a logo such as this would be £130, which includes the research and

development of the logo, which has yet to be produced at this time of writing. This would be a great addition to my brand, for video content for social media and streaming services and something that clients could easily associate with my work. UK Producer 'Steel Banglez', who is highly successful in the urban music genre has a similar approach, with his logo being visible on every music video that he is affiliated with. Along with this, each of his songs has a name tag during the intro, which not only makes his production instantly recognisable but sets an unconscious expectation in the listener's mind of what to expect, as he is well revered for his production style.

Along with this, I would want my personality and face to also be recognisable in my social media presence and sought to hire a photographer for a day. I spoke with another professional in my network who is a video and photography specialist and decided that I wanted to have some good high-quality photos of myself in a studio environment, portraying a personable and friendly nature, as this is the image I want to depict to potential clients.

Although I have a studio at home, I have decided to use a large studio with a vocal booth and some friends, to portray the image of me having fun with clients in a professional studio environment. Unfortunately, due to the restriction of movement and my photographer contracting the covid disease, I have been unable to do this, but with an average cost of £33 for a 3 hr session and free photography, this is a viable option once the national lockdown restrictions are eased.

A good by-product of this is content creation for my social outlets which could demonstrate my hard and soft skills in one. To make full use of this time I will also be able to film multiple clips of video of my creative process, whilst recreating the songs from my portfolio, which will allow me to create snippets of short-form video content, which would be ideal for Instagram, or long-form mixing and vocal sessions for Youtube. Therefore a 3-hour studio session could potentially allow me to develop a month's worth of content, which would be very economical, portray a professional image and allow my audience to connect with me.

In preparation for my branding work, I decided to set up a profile on Soundbetter.com, a platform to connect musicians with varying skillsets to each other, through paid opportunities. To access some of the premium features, such as responding to and being able to see job posts, there is a subscription fee of \$59 per month.

However, to understand if I had been successful in my pursuit of this goal, I would have to also define what success meant to me. Financial success is indeed key to making a living as a music producer, however as this can be ambiguous early on in a music producer's career, I decided that I needed to formulate some better-defined metrics to measure myself against.

Initially, I had proposed to measure my success through the number of streams on songs I created through my portfolio or followers I had gained through my social media efforts, however, after speaking with Graham Phipps and Lorenzo, I understood that a solid portfolio was more important and can help you to thrive even without any social media presence whatsoever.

Through e-mail lists, sales marketing funnels and direct marketing of drum kits, sound packs and beats through e-commerce platforms such as Beatstars or Airbit, music producers can build their following not only of songwriters, casual listeners or artists but also of other music producers, who would like to emulate their particular sound. Successful practitioner such as

Gabe from Legion Beats has been able to achieve this over several months/years by playing to social media algorithms, such as posted content daily, connecting with upcoming independent artists directly and utilising marketing strategies such as sales funnels.

These factors help individuals create brand awareness and create a following of their music, simply by appearing higher in streaming search results and building a reputation of quality. Along with interesting visuals and high-quality music, they tend to also have a personal story, frequently appearing in front of the camera and helping guide those who are two, three or even ten steps behind them in the journey. The 'value' here is fulfilling the underserved needs of beginner to intermediate music producers or beatmakers, who are keen to learn how they can replicate the sounds they hear in their favourite songs.

This type of value or connection can form long-lasting relationships with customers and can greatly increase one's chances of attaining repeat business if freelancing and even when working with signed artists. In my case, I had to build a portfolio to appeal to commercial/urban music consumers.

After speaking with Jamie Searls, he was kind enough to offer both his observations and some feedback that was given to him by the artists I had worked with on my portfolio. 'someone who was very approachable and easy to work with, which are soft skills that are crucial in this industry'. Upon review of my portfolio, Jamie offered that he would 'recommend more [songs] with vocalists/rappers for sure...Stellar work and looking forward to hearing more' (Searls, 2020).

As the direction of my project had changed slightly, due to the access I had to the artists I wanted to work with, I was unable to showcase some of my later work to Jamie but included some examples of my previous weakness of requiring more experience with vocal production.

Portfolio Creation & Addressing weaknesses

Responding to briefs & Vocal Production

During my ten days on-campus time at Tileyard Education I have been fortunate enough to be part of numerous songwriting camps, which have allowed me to gain valuable feedback and address some areas of my personal development plan, namely, working with artists, writing to brief and improving my vocal production skills.

I was also fortunate enough to work in person with some amazing and talented artists for the songs in my portfolio, during the relaxing of COVID-19 lockdown restrictions, at the Tileyard Education Studios. Being cognizant of each artist's wellbeing and encouraged them to take regular breaks to promote a very relaxed environment.

Standing Down

Working with the artist on a brief for a K Pop artist, with the reference song being Anne-Marie's 'Birthday'. Initially, I had thoughts as to the direction of where I wanted the song to go in but remembering the wise words from my mentor of 'be a servant to the artist', I decided to get the artist comfortable and talk about non-music related topics. I carefully listened to her talk about the things in her life that were going well, and the conversation

moved on to a traumatic incident in her love life. Keeping the artist in the emotion of what they are feeling, would encourage an emotional performance and allows them to vent in a very natural way. Feeling inspired, we went back and forth on the structure, lyrics, and melody of her voice for certain sections and ended up with a song that impressed Graham at Tile yard Music during our feedback session.

All performances throughout my work were captured on an Aston Spirit (and later a Stealth) Cardioid Condenser microphone with an Aston Halo reflection filter for soundproofing and pop shield to catch plosives. On the whole, the vocal performances captured were amazing and the artist was very familiar with good recording techniques. As suggested by famous recording engineer Al Schmitt I had the artist stay 'six inches from the windscreen with the windscreen an inch or two from the mic, so the vocalist is anywhere from seven to ten inches from the microphone. That's usually a good place to start depending on the kind of sound you are looking for' Owinski, B (2017). To convey the emotion of pain and frustration we decided that the vocal performance should be reasonable quiet and loud in particular areas and the producer also followed this same format. For the quieter parts, I asked the artist to stay within the six inches from the pop shield and for the louder parts, this distance was around eighteen or twenty inches.

Your Way

Unfortunately, due to time constraints and schedule, clashes both the artist and I could not connect to complete the song 'Your Way', so I decided to fit the original compositions vocals into the final mix, to demonstrate what I had learnt in my vocal production. Although for the most part, the song does sound in key, the final version had a pre-chorus added, changing the arrangement of the song, that the artist had not heard in the original version. As a result, I feel that this song did not sound the way I intended and after trialling the parts with autotune correction, I felt that the different fit the upbeat and funk feel of the original composition.

I was however extremely pleased with the mixing of my vocal production and the song itself, with a good blend of parallel compression, stacked vocals in particular areas and a very enthusiastic and fun performance from the artist. While devising a concept for the lyrics of this song I could see that the artist was struggling for motivation and potentially putting too much pressure on themselves to come up with a catchy hook. I immediately relieved them of this by making the session all about having fun and not expecting anything from the outcome. After talking more and connecting on this level we were both able to open up to each other about the song and go back and forth on the performance. The result was a feel-good song that has shades of Robin Thicke's 'Blurred Lines' and Prince's 'Kiss', (at one point the artist was laughing so much that we had to take a short break). This was exactly the type of emotion I wanted to capture in this performance, and I kept the laugh from one of the vocals takes at the end of the song, as it fits the overall mood I was aiming for.

For this song, I wanted to create something that could feature in a commercial but would also incorporate the feeling of happiness, excitement and movement. I feel that the vocal mix sits quite well, with my now expanded focus on this, however, some sections are not in tune, such as the pre-chorus and particular harmonies from the backing vocals. The reason for this is that the song was originally recorded without the pre-chorus and was heavily driven by the numerous layers of percussion. Due to schedule clashes and other commitments on both side, I was unable to set up another recording session online with the artist and instead,

used the vocals I had originally used from the previous version of the song. Overall, I am very pleased with the quality of this song and would expect it to work in a television commercial, potentially for a perfume or car advert.

Afroswing

A truly modern UK urban pop song, in the Afroswing sub-genre. Beginning with a simple chord progression in C Major, I was able to use two-layered pluck marimba sounds together to create depth and couple it with a nice bouncing bassline, that moves between octaves to give the song movement. The drum pattern is typical of this genre, with the addition of Indian percussion through a table roll to keep things interesting. Finally, I used Output's Arcade to chop a vocal sample which I pitched in many different ways to give the chorus something the listener can look forward to (as it's heard in the intro) and again in the bridge, using different parts of the same sample.

The feedback I received on this from Lorenzo Cosi was that it was 'awesome, deserves a great vocal', Cosi, L (2020). I was extremely pleased with the way this song ended up.

Pineapple

Being intentional about creating commercial music, I opted for a contemporary production style that would suit a pop boy/girl group. I initially thought this would fit for somewhere like Electric Pineapple, on a show like Love Island, but later decided to use a more standard song structure, to attract this target audience.

Baby

The reference for this track was Rockstar by US Hip Hop artist 'Da Baby', which gained a lot of success by 'reaching number one on the US Billboard Hot 100 in its seventh week' (Wikipedia, 2020) was the reference for this song. I felt that the

Fellow MA student Richard Buck suggested that the drums sound like they could do with more presence, 'Baby track I feel the snare is not powerful enough, needs a bit of punch or bringing forward', Buck, R (2020), which I later changed for my final submission.

Old Fashioned

I wanted to challenge myself to create a song that felt like it had live instrumentation in it, without the use of loops. Being favourable towards hip hop, I decided to use a minimal approach throughout the verses, allowing a rapper such as Kendrick Lamar (who I intentionally created the song for) to take centre stage with the lyrics and vocal performance. I decided to use a bassline that would drive the song forward minimally towards a climactic chorus, where the brass section appears, almost as a pleasant surprise. I feel like the song has a hip hop appeal, but would easily sit comfortably in the big band genre too, with audiences of all ages.

Ultimately the feedback received from Tilyard Music's A&R and Artist Manager, Graham Phipps was that he 'could see a smaller independent hip hop focused label using this, with someone similar to a rapper like Kendrick Lamar like you suggest', (Phipps, 2020). My mentor, Lorenzo suggested that 'it could be a better fit for sync than for an artists/label,

however, you should try to find people that you gravitate toward and reach out to them. You never know what artists are looking for', (Cosi, 2020).

Last Summer

The drums on this song began from a percussion loop, which began with a heavy kick, creating unwanted frequencies and tones. I initially tried to layer my kick over the top of this to disguise problem frequencies, however, I found that as each of the loops kick's were pitched differently. In my research around this problem, I discovered that there a few ways I could have changed this, for instance, sidechaining the loop to my kick every time it triggered, however, this created a thumping effect that I felt took some of the groove away from the loop and song itself. I opted for a brick wall limiter which I moved closer to the higher frequency, which

Lucid Dreams

For this song, I wanted to make something that had a little more aggression and energy but was quite traditional Hip Hop. The song was composed entirely of played instrumentation, with synth elements of modern hip hop production and a 90's hip hop drum pattern. This song was intentionally made for sync licencing, with a TV show such as Empire or Power in mind.

A New Hope

This song was created using a loop, which I played many different instruments over that complemented it. I then created an offbeat drum loop and high hat pattern, and played bass notes to create a more 'bouncy' groove. The sample had some degree of space, but once more reverb was applied, I found a guitar patch that I applied some experimental delay to, to give an almost mysterious sound to the track. The song was created for television or film in mind

Conclusion

Overall, I have thoroughly enjoyed the process of self-discovery through my efforts and making of my portfolio, even with the impediments I faced along the way. It has been difficult to navigate towards opportunities, with the restricted movement, as my preferred method of interaction is to connect and/or collaborate with new people in person. However, I have found a fair amount of success collaborating with artists virtually, once time has been set aside for this from both parties.

I have not had a chance to implement the business strategies wholly, as I have been working on creating quality music, but have also worked with a graphic designer and photographer over the vision I would like for my brand, with concept designs created and a guideline of a social media strategy resulting from this. Once I have created these, I can then offer value to the visitors of my social media sites and create engaging content to increase streams, views and followers. Along with this, I would like to collect an email list of clients that I can create a sales funnel for and provide value in the form of vocal recording and production tutorials that I have learnt throughout my final project.

With a validated portfolio, I have the confidence to approach these audiences and potentially work with artists to create finished songs. It is my opinion that the exposure of these songs

with my brand (be that through a logo, vocal tag of both) will eventually lead to further paid work and a reputation that I can leverage for further opportunities. I have learnt to become more intentional about my music, from sound selection to mixing techniques and to keep the artist at the forefront of my mind throughout the creative process, which has allowed me to already create a solid portfolio of work that I can use to attract more prospects.

If I could change the way I approached this project, I would potentially stay closer to the business objectives I had set out in my proposal, however, in order to be successful in this aspect, the foundation needed to be set, which I feel like I have achieved now. Although my focus to create a solid portfolio, (whilst being a primary aim), has not allowed me as much time to focus on my branding image and subsequent social media/marketing strategy. I have, however, designed a clear roadmap of goals that I can follow, refining or experimenting as I learn and move forward. I am excited at the fact that I have created a portfolio of work to a high standard, which has been validated/reinforced by the feedback I have received from my mentor Lorenzo, my peers and other practitioners, but with a purer focus on this, I could have been closer to fulfilling the forty-five minutes of music I have initially proposed.

I can conclude from my research, that being successful in the 'music business' is by practising the two parts of that phrase wholly, as there is a 'business' side and a 'music' side, that both require equal amounts of effort. Following the feedback, I have received I will 'create a buzz' (Phipps, 2020), around my brand, which I have been able to clearly define through my personal development plan, peer reviews and feedback. My SWOT analysis and personal development plan have given me a lot more clarity of my goals and personal identity, which will translate into my brand, music, and business interactions. It has also helped direct my research towards weaker parts of my production and allowed me to turn these into strengths, through the knowledge I have gained.

The external validation and clarity this course has given me, motivates me to feel confident to approach prospective clients and potentially, submit my music to smaller independent record labels, established/independent artists and music supervisors to forge new relationships. Now, I will continue to collaborate with other musicians and as my mentor Lorenzo has stated in his feedback, 'get to work with great vocalists man :) your production deserves it.' Cosi, L (2020)

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Appendix

Fig 1

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

Have my own studio and great range of equipment

Use this to connect with audience and record labels/other artist's or producer's

Create a new brand that represents me, and people can connect with

Studying an MA at Tileyard and access to the network here

Great soft skills and easy to work with, like to coach artists to improve performances

Extremely open to feedback and constructive feedback

Growth mindset, always challenging myself to be better but recognising my success too

Good with Social Media understanding the concepts of Marketing and Sales Funnels

Worked with students in the past and have a network of singers I have great relationships with

Distribution is all set up digitally through Distrokid already, I have a Spotify and all social media accounts too

Peers I can get to review my work and help give tips, both students and mentors

Great with technology and able to make my own branding with my photoshop and illustrator skills

Access to high profile music lawyer through my network

Weaknesses

Vocal production could use some work, I've not too much exposure to this in the past but getting better with each song writing camp

Mixing and stereo depth needs to be improved to sound radio quality, some mixes don't sound so big, lead melodies probably need more work to be creative

Don't really play an instrument well, so it takes me a lot longer to make chord progressions, even though this is minimised with plugins I own

Only know the people in the industry from my course and a few outside from events (BBC Introducing, PRS Events, Sync Con). Not sure I could just reach out to artists and producers that I have met because I do not have a strong relationship with them

No experience dealing with record labels or contract negotiations

Potentially no income to invest in this project

Not the highest level of equipment (no outboard sound cards, compressors, etc.). Computer is aging and I do not have a mobile setup

Opportunities

Venture into Sync a market I don't know very well, but I have songs that could potentially work better in sync than charts.

Grow my network and form relationships through my research and interviewing or asking for recommendations of other people I should speak to

Access to the whole Tileyard network, people who I don't know would probably be open to a conversation or coffee (I can easily commute in)

Based in London, so easy to attend seminars and network with new people (when they re-open)

Member of Musicians in London FB group, access to musicians to record songs with

My network can connect me with session musicians if needed who probably have their own recording facilities

Urban music is very popular now and as it's what I like to make I can make music that is relevant to upcoming and emerging artists

Journaling and getting to know myself better understanding why I choose to make music the way I do and how I can improve

Personal development plan give me a reflective practice and goals outside of my end product (music) that I can improve

Threats

Cannot record with artists who do not have their own set up

Cannot attend seminars to grow network and forge new

Many other producers with established brands that I'll be competing with

Not having the time to polish my whole portfolio to the highest quality I can.

Higher competition, with other producers (more new producers than ever before due to it being so accessible)

A second wave/lockdown COVID does not allow me to have access to network with people I would have a coffee with

I am competing with famous pop music producers as well as the Tileyard community and Alumni

Fig 2

Final Mockup of new logo Design

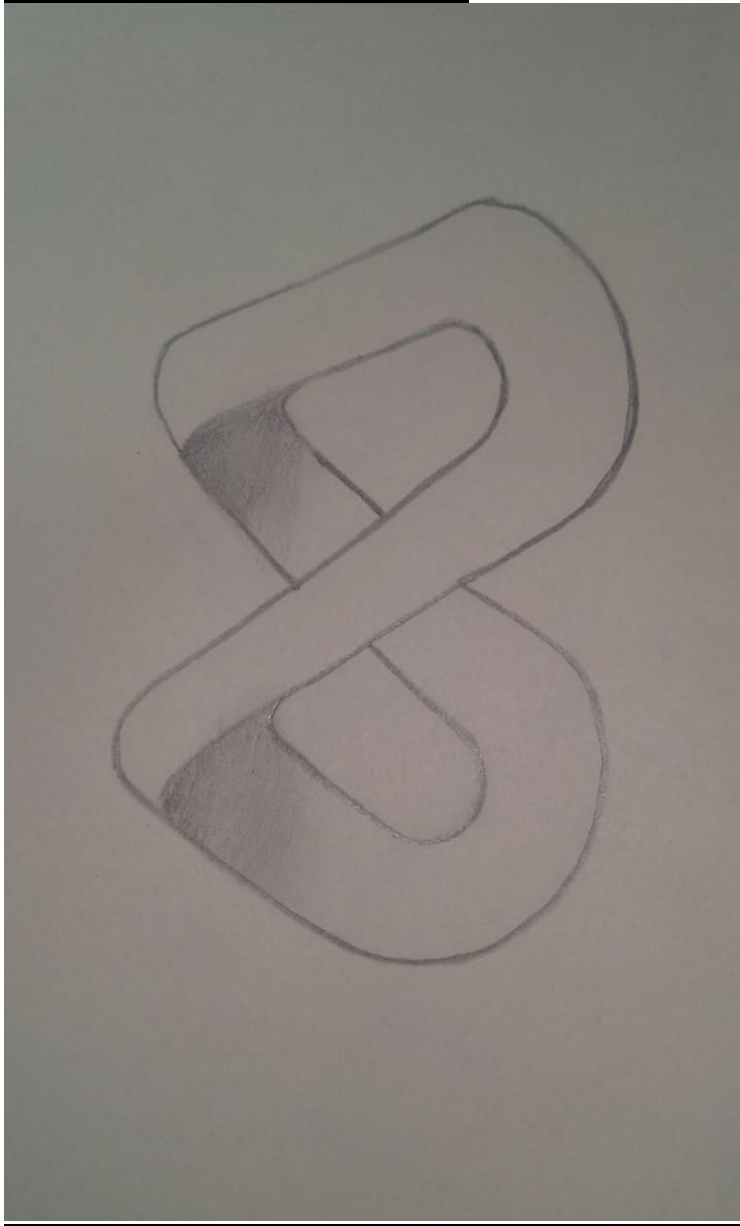


Fig 3

Personal Development Plan

Specifics

In this section think about the specifics of what you want to achieve.

What are your specific goals for this year?

Who do you specifically need to help you?

My Specific goals are....

To work with music publishers, labels and singers to create brief ready music and create a sustainable income from music production by the end of this year

Create an identifiable brand and 'sound'

Responding to briefs quicker, or having fully finished tracks to send to labels, with vocals on them

Measurable

How will you measure your goals?

Will you create a check list, chart, notes etc?

Who will help you achieve your goals?

I will measure my goals by....

The number of opportunities I can convert into paid work - find 3/5 streams of paid work before the end of the year

Number of streams on my released music or portfolio

Number of industry connection I can achieve

Achievable

In this section outline what you need to achieve and how you will go about achieving those goals. For example, what tasks need to be completed, who do you need to connect with or ask for help etc.

Is this goal achievable and what will success look like to me?

I will achieve my goals by....

I will aim to achieve this before the end of the year

Realistic (Relevant)

Are my goals realistic?

What will success look like to me?

Are these goals relevant?

Have I set the right goals?

How will I hold myself accountable?

My goals are realistic and relevant because.....

I will need to network with publishers and musicians within tileyard by referral or approaching brands and people I would like to work with.

The feedback/response I receive from the clients I submit work to - convert 3 opportunities on brief and to a high standard by the end of the year and analyse feedback and areas of improvement

Time-framed

What method can I use to set specific deadlines for myself?

How will I track my progress - weekly? monthly?

What specific deadlines do I have?

What goals should I set myself and when will I complete them?

My specific deadlines are –

I will aim to achieve these goals before the end of the year.

Personal & Professional Skills Development

In this section outline any areas of development with regards to your specific personal goals.

This can cover (but not limited to) the following areas:

- Communication
- Organisation/ Time Management
- Teamwork
- Interpersonal/ Relationship building and networking
- Emotional Intelligence
- Music/Singing/ IT/ Programming Skills

Please outline any areas you feel like you would like to grow and pursue further development. *

I have already made some connections in and received paid work, so I feel I'll be able to build on these results and respond to more briefs for success moving forward.

Personal Development Areas *

Develop 5-10 solid relationships with music industry professionals to send music back and forth to and receive specific feedback to aid my growth and creative direction by the end of the year

Professional Development Areas *

Create and generate leads through sales funnels and create a mailing list of potential clients - start this by the end of the month

Future Planning

This section is useful for setting targets and future planning. This is open to change and isn't set in stone, but will enable you to focus on building a plan towards your desired growth journey and career.

Where do you see yourself in 5 years time? *

As a successful and well-established music producer

What would you like to achieve in the next year? *

Multiple income streams from music full time and chart success

What do you need to do monthly to achieve your goal for next year? *

Build relationships in the music industry

Stay creative and work with musicians 1-2-1

What can you do weekly to achieve your monthly goal? *

I will check in with my goals on a weekly basis and measure my results based on a minimum requirement of things I need to do daily/weekly/monthly

Who do you need to help you with your goals? *

Meeting new people, being around other producers/creatives, mentoring from hip hop /rnb producers

What do you need to achieve your goals - e.g - resources, training, coaching, equipment, education etc. *

Introductions to labels, publisher and artists

Review and update results and implement an evening routine

Being more confident in the creation process

Tips and tricks to get the best out of the equipment I have

Networking and approaching new people in the industry to form relationships

Increasing brand awareness

Working more with singers

Spending more time in purpose built studios

Songwriting and developing melodies

Lorenzo Cosi feedback on Portfolio

Great job on these, sounding great. Specially the first few tracks sound amazing, impressive prod on Afroswing, for example.

Really good mixes in general.

- A new hope sounds awesome, great for sync like you said. Honestly no comments: really good job.

- Afroswing - awesome, deserves a great vocal.

- Baby - sounds really great too. You need to work with the right top liners and vocalists at this point, until you get something that you're really happy with. Your productions sound great, so get working on this side of things now. I understand it's difficult right now to do sessions, but try your best by sending these around to writers you know, doing zoom sessions; otherwise prepare the ground for when we will be able to work in person again.

- ex messages - maybe work a bit more on the vocal mix? sounds a little dry and boring. Could also use either a synth or some BVS in the chorus to feel bigger.

- lucid dreams: good for sync, could also try some Macklemore kind of vocals, maybe a bit more work on the drums mix (compression, cool distortion)

- pineapple - try and get some toplines

- your song - yes super good for sync.

My general feedback is the one next to Baby - get to work with great vocalists man :) your production deserves it.