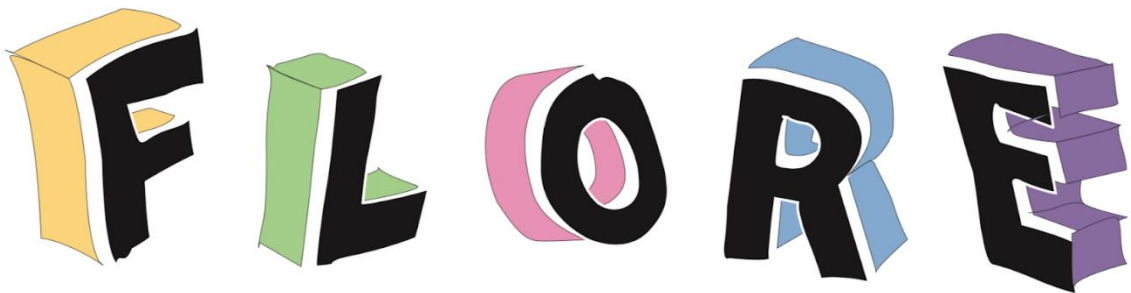


Reflective Summary:

H.E.F.T.D GROUP

ARTIST DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT



'POISSON'

By Tracey Kasongo (1908253)

Creative Music Management (BMTY7000_LON)

Discipline Tutor: N/A

Table of Contents

Introduction	Page 3
Involvement in portfolio	Page 3
Digital technologies within popular music	Page 7
Conclusion	Page 8
Bibliography	Page 9

Introduction

The portfolio assignment consisted of 5 members (Myself, Hannah Edwards, Emmanuella Idris, Flore Barbay and Daniel Arieleno) one of the group members is also an artist (FLORE) who was preparing to release newly recorded music, so we used one of her singles for the project. Besides the preparation of the single, FLORE had previous experience recording and releasing music which would offer an insight into previous data insights and the combination of prior experience that other team members brought was advantageous. For instance, I have experience in both corporate and freelance projects in addition to the music industry. Hannah has experience in public relations, Daniel in music production and Emmanuella in administration. Despite it being a collaborative effort, we decided to divide the workload according to our strengths.

The portfolio submission is a great way for any music professional or artist to understand elements involved in the practicality and creative processes of a single, EP, album release campaign. If you ask almost every music professional, agency or any level of musician they would all almost certainly agree that there is no right or wrong way to building a single release campaign. There is *no* formula! But what there is that may be useful are a few things especially if you have already released music.

Examples of what can be helpful for a single release campaign:

1. Good music – when there is so much music available having good music that cuts above the rest is valuable
2. Data – Most major labels would suggest this is highly important; some use metrics as a tool for new signees, the ability to garner traction for their music and increase fan growth independently
3. PR – independent or unsigned artists being able to gain some media exposure, reviews (regionally or internationally), blog posts
4. Social Media – showing personality, talent, audience engagement and building momentum
5. Registration of works – manage revenue income, codes, royalties

Involvement in portfolio

Due to my experience in marketing, I was tasked with developing the overall strategy for '*Poisson*'. I started independent artist management in September 2018 and so I've had some experience with managing independent music campaigns with small budgets and working with a mixture of artists. I wanted to understand and get an overview of FLORE as an artist and what her objectives were for releasing this single in order to curate a marketing plan that would reflect her aims. After gaining an insight into her personality and spending some time with her I suggested several methods to incorporate into the campaign. Having worked in social media for several years and understanding how influential it can be to music campaigns I wanted this to be a big element to the campaign. With a full mix-marketing strategy, I wanted to enable fanbase growth and participation, increase streaming value and boost single via playlists in current and new markets. With the combination of these approaches, the creativeness of FLORE and budget of £500 for the overall campaign, a third of which would be allocated to marketing, the exploration of a social media campaign that would involve CPC, media marketing, ads, fan engagement and networking should suffice.

Refer to examples of my involvement below (these are for illustration purposes and can be examined thoroughly in the actual portfolio). After several meetings with the team, we agreed to allocate between £0 - £200 for costs relating to marketing, PR and distribution.

Example 1 and 2

MARKETING STRATEGY (T)

The marketing strategy was curated around the newly released single 'Poisson' in addition to several objectives, for example, gaining traction for the song and artist, we wanted to enable fan engagement with FLORE through social media platforms for maximum exposure in the lead up to releasing her **E.P.** A look into further objectives will be analysed in depth below:

Marketing Strategy - including but not limited to objectives:

- Gain traction for the single in numerous French speaking countries i.e. Belgium, France, Canada, Switzerland, Luxembourg & any other than those with previously located fans
- Grown fanbase and engage with social media community via various platforms i.e. TIK TOK and Instagram
- Pitch the single to digital streaming platforms via playlists; Spotify, Deezer (French, Alternative Pop, Emerging Artists Sounds)
- Captivate the creative flair of the artist, her individuality and uniqueness in the video shoot in collaboration with students at UWL
- Increase presence and brand portfolio to industry peers; possible future collaborations
- Realistic and achievable goals
- Organise and plan visuals; using mood boards (refer to Appendix A) and follow the same consistency throughout branding unless we need to change the concept for example, the use of key colours and themes in iconography for the remix which may or may not be the complete opposite to create a contrast in new videography - Reference Rihanna ft Drake 'Work' videos - 2 concepts
- Distribution - decide on the main distributor, claim artist page (Spotify for Artist)
- Promotion - Understanding the audience, fan nurturing
- Media Strategy
- Promotional Plan - usually 8 weeks in advance (depends on calendar, any other conflicting events/dates), 8 weeks; follow up single and other material
- Promotional Plan Pt.2 - gaining PR reviews, industry feedback
- Radio submissions (bbc introducing, dj links), live performances and media engagement (single release party) possibly?
- Metrics, analysis of growth, whether it be on social media platforms, DSPs, streaming numbers etc

Key Performance Indicators

This is then followed by Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and an analytical review of metrics:

- Increased followers across social media i.e. +30% increase in followers from 821 to 1,101
- Single was chosen and featured on Spotify playlists such as POP Francise 2020 (Tamisier, 2020) and Verse Honing (Dancende Beren, 2019)
- Song was streamed over 15,000 times within the first few weeks
- According to DSP metrics, over 55% of listeners originate from French speaking countries and 8% in other regions such as Brazil (new markets)
- No press or journalistic coverage as of yet, TBC may recap in 3 - 6 months after reviewing marketing stage 1

Target Audience: Analysing previous fans and targeting new ones

We already know from pre-released music that the average age and target audience for FLORE is:

- ▢ 15 -30-year olds
- ▢ Geographical demographic shows her audience is relatively based around Europe (UK&IR, Nordics, France, Belgium, Switzerland and Germany) with a lower 5% percentage disbursed around South America, US, Australia
- ▢ Fans of FLORE will tend to listen to similar music from Bea Miller, Poppy, NOW NOW, Billie Eilish etc
- ▢ Alternative pop
- ▢ TIK TOK, create an account and have FLORE share behind the scenes content for remix video, get fans & users to create fun/friendly content mimicking video

Example 3

Timeline for the single: Next 6 months



Example 4

Breakdown of Marketing Costs

With Flore being creative, a lot of the artwork was done by herself from photography and limited purchase of props or utilising pre-owned items, students from UWL who collaborated with Flore did not charge a fee. Most of the marketing budget went to campaign ads, CPC, social media sponsored ads, distribution fee

1. Instagram sponsored ad - £6.99 for a week
2. Distribution fee for single on **Distrokid** - Musician: 1 band/artist, \$19.99/year
3. The average Instagram ads CPC is around \$0.50 - \$1.00, can reach \$3.00 per click - focusing on impressions (Influencer Marketing Hub (2019))
4. Assets (Artist, Marketing Manager, Creatives at UWL)
5. Submission of single on playlist - £0
6. Remix - Daniel production team?
7. SM competition run for fans, the best 3 videos using 'poisson' single will win between £25 - £50 (monitored by marketing team) must use the single and hashtags #FLORE #POISSON to enter
8. Live shows or events will be scheduled for later that year, maybe after release of remix, see which does better and also maximise artist/song exposure

= Total estimate cost: campaign budget - (£0+ to £200)

After consulting with FLORE, we devised a plan around her iconography. We wanted content assets to reflect her image, fun and flirty with an edge that can be quite dark and mysterious. For the video we wanted to send a strong message with a colourful tone, we wanted the assets to be bold and noticeable across DSP platforms, her single artwork to be striking and present her authentic self. Taking into consideration all these things, we chose to take a cost-effective and personal approach. A common theory in the industry is that media assets are a necessary part of a music release campaign. According to John Rigo (2017) at AWAL, Artists Without A Label, "visuals are everything. You need to make sure you've got visuals which are compelling and really grab an onlookers' attention". Some would say the way audiences view media has changed drastically i.e. MTV, music channels. A few critics would argue that there's a decline in music video quality since various companies have steered away from traditional methods of multimedia. You now have other forms of new technologies like YouTube and platforms online like GRM Daily in the UK that have become leaders in the field. Thus, making a good video is a good way to retain fans and introduce you to new ones.

Another strategy relevant to the portfolio task was identifying the methods of releasing music. Most people in the industry are familiar with costs related to producing and releasing music, but in today's era independent artists can enter the market through digital distribution. This has enabled emerging or independent artists to compete with major label artists unlike the past. Distribution platforms are instrumental to releasing music so choosing the right one for the campaign is important, analysing pros and cons that are in line with the objective goals. As an indie/alternative pop artist, we focused on using Distrokid for distribution as she has previously used them before although as a music professional I think there were other platforms equally suitable if not better that could offer her more for the type of music she does. The genre isn't as niche as classical, folk or grime and so there is potential to be featured on spotlights, playlist, emerging sounds etc especially as her sound is quite popular and like Billie Eilish. Even though you get to keep **100%** royalties on Distrokid, if you were to opt into their 'YouTube Money' service (finding videos that use your music) they take **20%** which is somewhat fair I suppose. Different distribution services all offer different things, so it is important to do your research

and pick the best one for you. It is always important bearing in mind metrics that can analyse where your audiences are geographically that will help when creating a campaign to target the right people and useful when putting on local/international live events.

A comparison chart comprised of feedback by Aristake is a great way to examine which to go.¹

Another useful theory in the industry is when to release music, Bein-Kahn (2016) mentions why it is pivotal to drop music on a Friday. According to the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry, they realised that they needed to optimize the way labels released online content. 'They hoped that choosing a single day of release worldwide would help curb the piracy issue.' The choice was Friday. So, we chose to release 'Poisson' on Friday 13th December 2019. Not to mention other adequate reasons for releasing on Friday, typically consumers have more time and are more willing to purchase music on the weekend as well as digital figures equally physical numbers by 2014. Some would argue otherwise.

So, we have analysed, how, where and when to release music but it's also quite useful in anticipating how much it can cost to ensure you are on track to covering all aspects. It is not always about having a large budget either sometimes you must be creative or asks for favours.

Unless you're a signed artist with a huge budget, sometimes the financial aspect can be quite daunting especially if competing with major artists. Nevertheless, keeping on track of how much is spent is necessary; an exercise useful in any aspect of business *really!* For FLORE, we used a few of her peers, previous colleagues and family so this came in handy when curating media assets. Planning effectively and not going over budget are crucial to shoots, video sets etc as budgets can often get carried away. As you can see from the portfolio most of the costs went to marketing, vocal recording including the mixing and mastering of the single & remix and the rest on other areas.

Budget flow

Spend	Cost £	Contingency +10%	Other
Campaign Budget	200		
Studio Time	120	20	Tileyard/External
PR	50		Hannah
Video Shoot	55		Edits with UWL
Artwork	30		Props used
Copyright	25		
Music Streaming	16	10	
TOTAL:	496		

¹ Available from: <https://aristake.com/post/cd-baby-tunecore-ditto-mondotunes-zimbalam-or>

Digital technologies within popular music

New technologies in recent years have become an inevitable part of the music industry and has been a catalyst for discovering popular music across the globe. The way in which music is now made differs, we can see from a long history how the sound of music has changed, from the instruments used, composition, quality of sound, distribution and consumption. (Creeber & Martin, 2009) The advancement of technology has been instrumental for many of these changes, although the focal point of this section will remain on digital technologies. The subject matter of audience experience may also be relevant here, but this could be discussed later.

Digital technology has grown rapidly in the last few decades and can include a number of different things, from equipment, internet, TV, mobile, radio, social media and artificial intelligence but due to the limitations of this reflective essay I will only focus on a handful. According to Bhattacharjee *et al* (2007) the emergence of these technologies have caused a negative impact on the business and has meant the industry has had to adjust in the way it operates from every aspect as well as presenting other detrimental issues such as copyright infringement, streaming, block chain and this is prevalent in the music business today.

The main reference point in how digital technologies has promoted popular music has to come down to the study of social media particularly in recent years. This tool used by many creative professionals, from corporate to commercial businesses is utilised for promotion and almost certainly always incorporated in some type of campaign i.e. the 2012 US elections relied heavily on the usage of social media. A recent example which I think will turn into a case study in the latter years is the case of **Lil Nas X and his single 'Old Town Road'**. This particular song showed the music industry just how powerful social media can be alongside the audiences who interact with it which is reportedly 500 million TikTok monthly active users globally, as of June 2018. The song was released in December 2018 and by March 2019, cowboy related videos were becoming increasingly popular on the video app TIKTOK. Millions took part in the YeeHaw Challenge and "has since set a record for the longest-running song at the No. 1 spot on Billboard Hot 100" (Business Insider, 2019)

The success of social media has enabled companies to form newly identified teams in which work with the traditional teams to create strategies that will encompass all channels that would enable them to reach their whole audience. Moving on from this, the way in which music is created has changed significantly from genre to genre. Studios have also become a creative hub for musicians and their team to work in when it comes to creating music. Agarwal and Prasad (1998) make a very relevant point in that "innovativeness moderates technology adoption" just to elaborate on this, at each periodical instance there has been a significant development with technology and so this has been reflected in the industry. If we look back 50 years and listen to certain types of music, you would be able to point out that particular year in reference to culture and media.

Conclusion

The portfolio task was useful in coordinating a release campaign, an area I have a little bit of experience in but was applicable in working with a different type of artist. It was particularly useful to work with a team of like-minded professionals in taking the vision of an artist and with what was mentioned in meeting notes, actually having it come to fruition. With the elements involved with the task I am now sure that I could utilise the skills learnt here and apply it to a genuine project. It is also important to identify the relevance of digital technology that is widely used in the music industry. Although I would have preferred some more face-to-face meetings but due to the groups conflicting schedule this was not entirely possible. I think this may have enabled us to finalise tasks a lot quicker and cut down on the back and forth emails which was a little time-consuming.

Bibliography

AWAL, John Rigo. (2017) *10 Things to Think About Before Your Next Release* [online] Available at: <https://www.awal.com/blog/10-things-to-think-about-before-your-next-release>

AWAL (2018) *2018 ULTIMATE RELEASE GUIDE* [online] Available at: https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/4045246/pdf/AWAL_2018_ULTIMATE_RELEASE_GUIDE.pdf
[Accessed on 12 January 2020]

Bhattacharjee, S., Gopal, R.D., Lertwachara, K., Marsden, J.R. And Telang, R., 2007. The Effect of Digital Sharing Technologies on Music Markets: A Survival Analysis of Albums on Ranking Charts. *Management Science*, 53(9), pp. 1359-1374.

Business Insider, Paige Leskin. (2019) *The life and rise of Lil Nas X, the 'Old Town Road' singer who went viral on TikTok and just celebrated Amazon Prime Day with Jeff Bezos* [online] Available at: <https://www.businessinsider.com/lil-nas-x-old-town-road-tiktok-life-rise-bio-2019-8?r=US&IR=T>

Creeber, G. & Martin, R., 2009. *Digital cultures*, Maidenhead, Berkshire, England: McGraw Hill, Open University Press.

Digital Marketing Institute (2018) *5 SECRETS OF SUPER SUCCESSFUL VIDEO MARKETING* [online] Available at: <https://digitalmarketinginstitute.com/en-gb/blog/5-secrets-super-successful-video-marketing>

DIY MUSICIAN, Chris Robley. (2019) *Releasing a single song: The 10 best strategies for 2019* [online] Available at: <https://diymusician.cdbaby.com/music-promotion/it-all-starts-with-a-song-10-strategies-for-releasing-a-single/>

Medium, Sarah Broadman. (2016) *Why Music Videos Are Still So Important: Views from inside the industry* [online] Available at: <https://medium.com/@pulsefilms/why-music-videos-are-still-so-important-views-from-inside-the-industry-ebaa7d4758d2>

SONIC BIDS, Janelle Rogers. (2018) *The Best Time to Release Your Album in 2019* [online] Available at: <http://blog.sonicbids.com/the-best-time-to-release-your-album-in-2019>

The Balance: Small Business, Susan Ward. (2019) *How to Run a Successful Marketing Campaign*
[online] Available at: <https://www.thebalancesmb.com/how-to-run-a-successful-marketing-campaign-2948364>

Wired, Joseph Bien-Kahn. (2016) *Why Dropping Music on Friday Is Pivotal (Hint: It's Not Sales)*
[online] Available at: <https://www.wired.com/2016/08/new-music-fridays-why/>