

KYRIE MORRIS - 2010825
INTERNATIONAL MUSIC MARKETING
DEVELOPMENT ASSIGNMENT
ELEMENT 2 - ESSAY

*‘Explore and Analyse the Methodology Behind the Marketing Practices
Utilised Throughout the Plastic Glass Marketing Campaign.’*

WORD COUNT: 3,084

Explore and Analyse the Methodology Behind the Marketing Practices Utilised Throughout the Plastic Glass Marketing Campaign

This essay will critically analyse the marketing tools and principles utilised throughout the Plastic Glass Marketing Campaign. Drawing on the methodological frameworks of media experts such as Mike King (2009) and Bob Baker (2013), the academic piece will provide detailed insight into the various elements of the release campaign, providing sufficient explanation to support an array of executive decisions. The campaign will commence on Friday 4th June 2021 and run until Friday 29th October 2021, a total of 21 weeks to execute the marketing plan's objectives. Initially, the focus is to build Plastic Glass' brand identity, enhance their web assets and increase their audience throughout the UK, specifically in southern regions. The schedule will include a series of single releases, an EP release and a multitude of live events, each providing the opportunity for promotional exposure and prospective revenue return.

Plastic Glass is a four-piece indie rock and roll band from The North East of England. The emerging group consists of frontman Lewis Conlin, Dylan Abbott on guitar, Ben Richardson on bass and Frazer Graham on drums. Hailing from the city of Sunderland, the band have been described as, *'Determined, talented and raucous indie rockers from the North East.'* (Morris, 2019) Many would agree that such traits contribute to their ever-growing popularity and success in the northern regions of the UK. Their music can be compared to that of Sheffield four-piece, Arctic Monkeys, whose debut album, *'Whatever People Say I Am, That's What I'm Not'*, shares similar visual assets and themes, paralleling Plastic Glass' adolescent angst, lyrical quip and British, working-class narrative; a theme that will be captured throughout the campaign and its releases. Notably, the freedom that comes with being an unsigned artist combined with the band's authenticity, unfathomed potential and loyal, local fanbase make Plastic Glass the perfect artist to utilise in the marketing release campaign.

Before planning the campaign, extensive research was undertaken to define Plastic Glass' target audience. Determining an artist's audience is an imperative process in any music marketing campaign, for example, analysing a fanbase's demographics and psychographics. Such retrospective fan analysis presumes factors such as age, location, social habits, attitudes, class, financial status and level of education to name a few (King, 2009:9). Strategically identifying such characteristics helps to create a vivid persona of potential consumers, providing insight into how to engage and interact with them effectively and efficiently via a range of multimedia (Taylor, 2020). In this case, Plastic Glass' audience was defined as sociable, pub-loving, working-class gig-goers from the North East of England. Nevertheless, sufficient, hard data was needed to support such statements, therefore an array of industry tools, such as Soundcharts, were utilised to retrieve an abundance of detailed, audience-specific data.

Soundcharts provides users with actionable music data, monitoring social networks, music streaming platforms, playlists and radio airplay for more than 5 million artists, including many of Plastic Glass' competitors (Soundcharts, 2021). Comparing Plastic Glass' data with that of similar artists' provided a wealth of information regarding each of the band's specific audiences; the results revealed an underlying consistency in audience behaviour. As shown

in Appendix A of the Marketing Campaign Portfolio, the majority of similar artists' fans use Spotify's streaming services to listen to their music, whilst predominantly engaging with the bands via their Facebook, Instagram and Twitter platforms. Such analytical data provided crucial insight into the whereabouts of Plastic Glass' audience and how to disseminate their music and promotional content in an impactful manner. However, statistics at an increasingly granular level were necessary to plan and execute a successful, lucrative campaign.

Obtaining granular, quantitative data is of the utmost importance given that it further defines an audience's behaviours, opinions and attitudes whilst revealing patterns in research that influence the marketing plan (Allen, 2017). Such detailed audience data was retrieved via '*The Plastic Glass Marketing Survey for Fans*' (Survey Monkey, 2021). The survey (See Appendix B of the Marketing Portfolio) was shared across social media and sent directly to Plastic Glass' fanbase via Facebook and Instagram messages, providing further insight into the band's fanbase. Of the 35 respondents, 71.43% utilised Spotify as their main method of music consumption, therefore the music streaming platform was chosen as the primary form of digital distribution for the release campaign. Moreover, the responses divulged the broad age range of Plastic Glass' audience, which comprises mostly of Generation Z, Millennials and Boomers II. Nevertheless, the results revealed a distinct lack of fans in the under 18s category, therefore targeting this demographic via social media became a focus of the campaign.

In terms of social media, Plastic Glass can be found on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter. Notably, 40% of survey respondents chose Instagram as their leading platform, 37.4% favoured Facebook and 31.43% championed Twitter. However, TikTok carried a feeble 11.43% of votes, correlating directly with Plastic Glass' absence from the social platform. Given that 32.5% of users are aged between 10-19 (Omnicores, 2021), a Plastic Glass TikTok profile will be launched in an attempt to target fans in that specific demographic.

Relatably, a leading 31.43% of respondents discovered Plastic Glass on social media, reinstating the importance of utilising Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and TikTok to disseminate content and visually promote the campaign's impact points. Moreover, 74.29% of survey participants live in the North East, the campaign has the potential to expand Plastic Glass' ubiquitous audience, engaging with potential fans via revitalised web and social media pages. After determining which social platforms to use, it was imperative to ensure that Plastic Glass' web pages were consistent, accessible and engaging; enhancing the band's overall brand identity.

Plastic Glass' brand identity is defined by the values and characteristics associated with them and how they are perceived by their fanbase (Lusensky, 2011:30). Arguably, iconography and visual assets play a pivotal role in portraying an artists ethos and building their narrative (King, 2009:135). In June, Plastic Glass' main website and social media pages will be altered in accordance with the EP artwork and the adapted band logo, which will be changed to comprise of the colours burgundy and black (See Appendix F). In terms of colour psychology, black symbolises elegance and sophistication, on the other hand, it can evoke emotions of sadness and anger (Braam, 2020). Concurrently, burgundy is associated with power and ambition and is often linked with higher society; an ironic twist when considering the EP's working-class narrative (Arshpreet, 2019). After addressing the band's visual assets, the focus will shift to the text-based elements of their various web pages.

The text-based segments of Plastic Glass' web pages will be rewritten to advertise the record release and enhance search engine optimisation (SEO). As reiterated in Appendix G of the Marketing Portfolio, browsing 'Plastic Glass' via search engines results in a large array of tupperware and recycling websites. With this in mind, metadata keywords such as, '*indie*', '*band*' and '*North East*' will be inserted consistently across web straplines and social media bios. Practising such SEO techniques makes a website easier to locate, therefore increasing traffic, potential fans and prospective revenue (King, 2009:98). In addition to these alterations, Plastic Glass' main website will include a new, 'Merch' page, widgets linking visitors to the band's Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, TikTok and Spotify profiles and snippets of EP artwork.

The EP artwork consists of a range of vintage photographs taken by Doctor Marten's photographer, Gavin Watson circa 1979. As depicted in Appendix F of the Marketing Portfolio, the front cover of '*Rags to Redemption*' will feature two young, working-class boys sitting on the wall of a suburban town. They are wearing Harrington-style jackets with Doc Marten boots and emitting plenty of attitude. The photograph holds connotations of both optimism and strife, the working-class struggle of those lost to the suburban cities, complimenting the EP's lyrical narrative perfectly. Relatively, the artwork for each single will depict individuals in Doctor Marten's boots in scenario's relevant to the track theme. Markedly, the consistent use of Doctor Marten's imagery provides an opportunity for a brand partnership with the company.

A brand partnership is defined as a collaboration between two non-competitive brands, in this instance, Plastic Glass and Doctor Marten's (Acceleration Partners, 2020). As explained in Appendix I of the Marketing Portfolio, Dr Marten's shoestore in Newcastle City Centre will have an exclusive brand partnership with the band throughout the campaign window. Customers who buy a £6.00 Plastic Glass/Dr. Marten's EP artwork poster will receive a 15% discount on their shoes when purchased in-store. Such collaborations harbour mutual benefits for both the band and the company, whose audience's both share similar values and demographics (Anni, 2016).

The concept is to physically promote the EP release in a space that's likely to attract potential Plastic Glass fans, increasing audience and brand awareness (Anni, 2016). On the other hand, supporting and working with up-and-coming artists makes companies likeable and credible, exhibiting Doctor Marten's brand authenticity (Anni, 2016). Moreover, the brand has the opportunity to reinstate its cultural relevance through the narrative of the EP whilst simultaneously gaining free advertisement via social media, Spotify and the record's artwork as a whole.

As previously stated, Spotify will be utilised as the main form of digital distribution throughout the campaign. The EP, '*Rags to Redemption*', is due for release on Friday 15th October 2021, consisting of four tracks, '*Running Wild*', '*Lucky in Love*', '*Go and Get it*,' and '*Rags to Redemption*.' Commencing in July, one single will be dropped via Spotify each month leading up to the release. The concept is to build anticipation and promotional momentum, thus maximising audience engagement (Bakken, 2021). Furthermore, releasing material little and often helps the music become increasingly detectable to Spotify's algorithm (Spotify for

Artists, 2020). In addition to this, an abundance of influential Spotify playlist curators will be contacted in the initial stages of the campaign to increase Plastic Glass' playlist exposure (See Appendix I). Each release will be supported by the relevant press and promotional outlets and influential tastemakers.

Promotion is imperative in the music industry as a means of amplifying the marketing message via a network of established, respected relationships with press outlets and tastemakers (Ferrone, Pacifico & Davy, 2019:44). Plastic Glass will receive tastemaker support from three independent record stores based throughout the North East; Pop Recs Ltd. in Sunderland, Sound it Out Records in Stockton and Beyond Vinyl in Newcastle. *'The Vinyl Shop Sessions'* will see three, intimate gigs, each with exclusive live performances of recently released singles (See Appendix H). The concept is to work with owners and venues with relevant networks and credibility, strengthening brand awareness, generating revenue and promoting the ongoing release campaign in a live environment (Ferrone, Pacifico & Davy, 2019:44). Combined, the events have the potential to raise £2307.50 in revenue for Plastic Glass and will be promoted via social media teasers and physical flyers in pubs, music venues, colleges and universities. In addition to these tastemakers, the campaign will see support from a multitude of niche-defined press and promotional outlets.

As formerly discussed, targeting the correct audience is an extremely important process when promoting an artist, with this in mind, a range of credible blogs, magazines and radio outlets have been carefully selected to support the campaign's array of impact points (Ferrone, Pacifico & Davy, 2019:44). As demonstrated in Appendix I, northern publications such as North East Noize, Narc, NE Volume, Crack and Ride will produce an array of content in both digital and printed formats, comprising a range of promotional features, interviews, events listings and track and gig reviews. Moreover, London-centric press outlets, such as Clash Magazine, Rock Feedback and London in Stereo, will actively promote the southern-based aspects of the campaign, such as Plastic Glass' support slot with The Pale White in October. Aside from written promotion, the band will receive a wealth of support from national and regional radio stations.

Relatively, national radio throughout the UK stands at the forefront of the promotional realm when considering stations' colossal client base and potential to reach a wider audience. Nevertheless, if utilised correctly, regional radio can be just as effective given its ability to target localised, niche-specific demographics (Ferrone, Pacifico & Davy, 2019:44). Considering this, the campaign will be championed by Spark FM in Sunderland, NE Volume Radio in Stockton, BBC Tees, BBC Newcastle and BBC 6 Music in London, such support will encompass a series of live-on-air guest slots, performances and exclusive track airplay relevant to each aspect of the release campaign. The concept is to develop and deploy a constant array of promotional assaults; targeting Plastic Glass' varied demographic and increasing consumer's familiarity with the band's name, ethos, image and sound. Notably, this grass-roots marketing approach is free of cost, thus keeping in line with the band's low budget whilst simultaneously expanding their audience and boosting revenue generated via promoted events (Baker, 2013:143).

Several live events are scheduled throughout the 21 weeks of The Plastic Glass Marketing Campaign, commencing on Saturday 19th June at The Independent in Sunderland. As exhibited in Appendix J, the band will play a one-off charity gig in association with Men's

Health Month; all proceeds will be donated to the cause. Given that the initial stages of the campaign centre around aligning the band's affairs, the Men's Health Charity Gig provides the perfect opportunity to gain exposure early on, whilst enhancing the band's likeability and credibility through charitable acts (Southall, 2021). Furthermore, the event is the day before 'Father's Day,' intending to target additional individuals who are celebrating the occasion. In terms of promotion, the gig will be advertised physically with posters and customized beer mats targeting the band's working-class demographic. In addition to this, the evening will be promoted through social media, Narc Magazine, Ride and Spark FM, whose support will continue throughout the release campaign and upcoming, live tour dates.

Live touring has a profound impact when considering its ability to connect an artist with their live audience, both emotionally and physically. If executed correctly, a successful tour can rapidly build a devoted, loyal fanbase whilst simultaneously boosting the marketing plan's agenda and the band's potential revenue streams (King, 2009:171). Reflecting on Appendix A's survey responses, 54.29% of people have seen Plastic Glass perform live, leaving 45.71% who may be open to the experience. With this in mind, the band will embark upon a miniature tour of the North East, playing venues in Stockton, Middlesbrough, Newcastle and Sunderland throughout September 2021. The concept is to build their fanbase, showcase their new singles, promote the upcoming EP release and increase revenue generated by merchandise and ticket sales. Notably, the tour will be advertised on Plastic Glass' website and social media, with journalistic support from NE Volume, North East Noize, Narc and Ride.

In addition to the headline tour, Plastic Glass will play a handful of unique gig slots, each providing further opportunity for fanbase growth. In August, the band will play the BBC Music Introducing Stage at both Leeds and Reading Festival. The occasion will be marked with a wealth of promotional exposure broadcast across BBC TV and radio, as well as providing the opportunity for Plastic Glass to perform in front of a diverse crowd in the southern region of the country, thus targeting prospective fans ahead of their busy October schedule (Anara, 2021).

On Friday 15th October, Rags to Redemption is officially released on Spotify. As suggested in Appendix A's survey, a proportion of Plastic Glass' audience prefers traditional methods of media consumption. In response, a limited number of physical EP copies will be available from selected independent record stores and Dr Marten's shoe store in Newcastle, catering to those particular individuals. Throughout October, affordable sponsored advertisements will circulate online, targeting granular audience demographics and promoting the EP consistently across multiple platforms (Marthinusen, 2019). Amidst October's release publicity, social media will also play host to a multitude of imagery and video content teasing an announcement. This consistent, intriguing content dissemination will aim to create momentum, building a sense of anticipation and hype throughout Plastic Glass' fanbase (Nowicki, 2019). Subsequently, Plastic Glass will announce that they are supporting The Pale White at Scala in London on Friday 29th October 2021.

Plastic Glass will support the Newcastle three-piece on one night of their 'Infinite Pleasure Tour' in London, the occasion will also mark the last day of the marketing campaign. Appendix A's marketing survey derived that 51.43% of respondents would be willing to travel to London to see the band live. Combining their loyal, northern audience with new, southern

fans provides the opportunity for a sell-out occasion in which Plastic Glass can perform in front of The Pale White's audience and continue to promote themselves and their new music (King, 2009:172). Moreover, the gig presents the opportunity for exposure via southern-based press outlets whilst providing consumers with a unique, engaging experience.

Research suggests that Boomers II relish exciting experiences, whilst Generation Z and Millennials value experiences over possessions (Muliadi, 2021). Given that Plastic Glass' audience consists solely of these three generations, fans could be considered increasingly likely to attend gigs and purchase merchandise off the back of the event. Correspondingly, Appendix A's survey shows that 77.14% of respondents often purchase merchandise at live events. Ticket sales aside, merch has the potential to substantially increase grassroots artist's revenue streams, providing them with the vital cash necessary to continue with their musical feats (Baker, 2013:128). Considering this, t-shirts and jumpers produced by 'Merch Bitch' will be available at Plastic Glass' live events, as well as via their website at plasticglass.band/. Suitably, the website's newly-added 'Merch' page will see the attire readily available to all fans, encouraging simple purchases and increasing revenue streams (King, 2009:181).

In conclusion, the Plastic Glass Marketing Campaign has the potential to achieve its core objectives. The figures presented in Appendix P of the portfolio suggest that campaign costs will amount to an average of £6,425.00, meaning a budget of £10,000.00 will be sufficient to execute the various elements of the plan and cover any unanticipated fees. Through utilising an array of digital media and free press and promotional outlets, the low-cost campaign has the potential to drastically increase Plastic Glass' fanbase throughout the UK. Moreover, such exposure has the potential to increase the band's streaming rates, whilst simultaneously encouraging increased revenue return from ticket and merchandise sales. Ultimately, the Plastic Glass Marketing Campaign has the potential to generate a gross profit of £18,034.50 for the band.

Reference List

Acceleration Partners, (2020). *Brand to Brand Partnerships*. [online]. Available at: <https://www.accelerationpartners.com/uk/brand-to-brand-partnerships-101/#:~:text=By%20Acceleration%20Partners-,Brand%20to%20Brand%20Partnerships%20101,similar%20values%20or%20customer%20demographics>. [Accessed 9th July 2021].

Allen, M., (2017). *The Importance of Quantitative Research*. [online]. Sage. Available at: <https://methods.sagepub.com/reference/the-sage-encyclopedia-of-communication-research-methods/i11671.xml#:~:text=The%20results%20of%20quantitative%20research,phenomenon%20affects%20the%20sample%20population>. [Accessed 9th July 2021].

Anara, (2021). *Why Play at a Music Festival and How Can You Stand Out?*. [online]. Available at: <https://www.anarapublishing.com/why-play-at-a-music-festival-and-how-can-you-stand-out/>. [Accessed 12th July 2021].

Anni, (2016). *Four Ways Brands Can Benefit From Music Partnerships*. [online]. Audiodraft. Available at: <https://www.audiodraft.com/blog/brand-x-artist-4-ways-brands-can-benefit-from-music-partnerships/> [Accessed 12th July 2021].

Arshpreet., (2019). *Burgundy Colour Psychology and Personality Meaning*. [Online]. Newsshare. Available at: <http://www.newsshare.in/burgundy-color-psychology-personality-meaning-5654.html#:~:text=Psychology%20of%20Burgundy%20Color,tint%20are%20interpreted%20as%20sophistication.&text=Burgundy%20can%20be%20seen%20as,a%20feeling%20of%20high%20ambition>. [Accessed 11th June 2021].

Bakken, R., (2021). *Music Release: 4 Marketing Hacks to Keep Momentum After Launch*. [online]. Available at: <https://rebeccasmartbakken.com/2021/01/12/4-marketing-hacks-musicians-can-boost-their-music-release-momentum/> [Accessed 10th July 2021].

Baker, B.,(2013). *Guerrilla Music Marketing Handbook: 201 Self-Promotion Ideas for Songwriters, Musicians and Bands on a Budget*. St. Louis, Mo: Spotlight Pub. pp. 143, 128.

Braam, H. (2020). *Burgundy Colour*. [online]. Available at: <https://www.colorpsychology.org/burgundy/>. [Accessed 11th July].

Ferrone, T., Pacifico, P. and Davy, G., (2019). *AIM's Start-Up Guide to Music Business*. 1st ed. [ebook] London: Independent Music Ltd., p4. Available at: <http://file:///C:/Users/Student/Downloads/AIM%20Start%20Up%20Guide.pdf>. [Accessed 9th July 2021].

Hughes, A., (2021). *How to Promote Your Band - 60 Top Tips!*. [online]. How to Get Gigs. Available at: https://www.lastminutemusicians.com/how_to_get_gigs/a-guide-on-how-to-promote-your-band-60-top-tips/. [Accessed 12th July 2021].

King, M., (2009). *Music Marketing: Press, Promotion, Distribution and Retail*. Berklee Press, pp.9, 98, 135,171,172,181.

Marthinusen, L., (2019). *What are the Benefits of Paid Advertising?* [online]. MO. Available at: <https://www.mo.agency/blog/benefits-of-paid-advertising>. [Accessed 10th July 2021].

Morris, K., (2019). *REVIEW: Plastic Glass Release Their New Single, 'Come Clean'*. [online]. North East Noize. Available at: <https://kyriemorris.wixsite.com/northeastnoize>. [Accessed on 11th July 2021].

Muliadi, B., (2021). *What the Rise of TikTok Says About Generation Z*. [online]. Forbes. Available at: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbestechcouncil/2020/07/07/what-the-rise-of-tiktok-says-about-generation-z/?sh=17aa91266549>. [Accessed 9th July 2021].

Nowicki, C., (2019). *7 Creative Ways to Hype a New Product on Social Media*. [online]. Hootsuite. Available at: <https://blog.hootsuite.com/build-pre-launch-hype-social-media/>. [Accessed 13th July 2021].

Omnicores., (2021). *TikTok by the Numbers (2021): Stats, Demographics and Fun Facts*. [online]. Available at: <https://www.omnicoreagency.com/tiktok-statistics/>. [Accessed 10th July 2021].

Southall, A., (2021). *Hiring Musicians and Live Bands for Charity Events - A Short Guide*. [online]. Fix the Music. Available at: <https://www.fixthemusic.com/blog/hiring-musicians-live-bands-for-charity-events-guide>. [Accessed 10th July 2021].

Spotify For Artists., (2020). *What's The Right Amount of Time to Take Between Records?* Spotify. [Online]. Available at: <https://artists.spotify.com/blog/whats-the-right-amount-of-time-to-take-between-records>. [Accessed 10th July 2021].

Survey Monkey, (2021). *Plastic Glass Marketing Survey for Fans*. [Online Survey]. Available at: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/N7QZCWT> [Accessed 10th July 2021].

Taylor, M., (2020). *Target Audience: The Art & Science of Finding Your Ideal Buyers*. [online]. True North. Available at: <https://www.ventureharbour.com/target-audience/>. [Accessed 9th July 2021].

UCAYA., (2019). *Soundcharts | Market Intelligence for the Music Industry*. [Online] Soundcharts.com. Available at: <https://soundcharts.com/> [Accessed 9th July 2021].

Bibliography

Jakob Lusensky (2011). *Sounds like branding: using the power of music to turn customers into fans*. London: Bloomsbury.

Lathrop, T. and Pettigrew, J. (2003). *This Business of Music Marketing & Promotion*. New York: Billboard Books.

Meier, L.M. (2017). *Popular Music as Promotion: Music and Branding in the Digital Age*. Cambridge Polity Press.

Merch Bitch., (2021). *Custom Merchandising Service That Provides: Merch, Touring Staff, Design & Print*. [online]. Available at: <http://www.merch-bitch.com/>. [Accessed 24th June 2021].

Plastic Glass., (n.d.). *Plastic Glass | Indie Rock Band | North East, England*. [Online] Available at: <https://www.plasticglass.band/> [Accessed May - July 2021].