



joe unknown

Marketing Campaign - Proposal

IMM Creation M1L

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The following proposal details a three-year marketing campaign for the recording artist 'joe unknown'. joe is managed by the record label and management company Tileyard Music, which signed his first single, 'Ride' in 2021. joe unknown's current output comprises three singles, with the second single 'Silent' and its in-your-face remix from drum and bass duo Annix released by Darco Recordings in July of 2022.

joe unknown started his music career as a drum and bass MC before his touring plans were scuppered by the Covid-19 pandemic. (Skinner, 2021) It was during the first lockdown in 2020 that joe turned his hand to writing and producing music. What was intended to be hip hop soon became its own, engulfing entity. Now, sitting somewhere between indie rock and punk with an oppressive electronic undertow, joe unknown has crafted his own unmistakable hybrid of sounds; part sirens, part spoken word. British, DIY and anti-establishment are words that underpin all of joe's work, with joe believing there to be poetry in the daily mundanities of British life. (Skinner, 2021) While introspective, joe's music invites his audience to embrace their frustrations about modern UK life. Tying into joe's existing body of work, the overall concept of this campaign is to recognise unsung moments of Britishness, without relying on stereotypes or making light of the working classes. The latter is paramount, especially given the majority of joe unknown's audience is white, millennial middle-class males. (Chartmetric, 2022)

In an interview with joe's management, it was advised that he is heavily involved in the creative direction of his work. As written in NME (Skinner, 2021), joe is heavily influenced by film, "particularly the production details of early Tarantino." It will be essential, therefore, to ensure that joe is involved in any artistic decisions such as the selection of designers, photographers and videographers. Where possible, content creation will occur in-house but larger-scale commissions will need to be outsourced. Presently, I am reviewing the work of a photographer, Martin Parr, whose style and values achieve the campaign's desired aesthetic and angle. Either, his photographs will be licensed directly or an interpretation by joe unknown's frequent 'point 9' collaborator, Elle Nicolson will be undertaken.

'point 9' or '.9' is joe's overarching creative project, established earlier this year. In time, this brand will become a multi-disciplinary collective, akin to Kendrick Lamar's 'pgLang', the ethos of which is the desire to "speak the evolving language of this generation without fading into the white noise or pre-assigned market share." (pgLang, 2022) For now, point 9 is a prominent feature on joe unknown's social media content, but will soon be a name in its own right, producing clothing, films and other creative content that encompass a number of creatives. While this marketing plan does not detail these endeavours, it should be noted that the expansion of this project is running in tandem with this campaign.

1. Strategy

A challenge with the proposed campaign lies in creating a plan that has longevity but enough freedom to be adaptive to a changing market. One way to ensure that the plan remains relevant and on track is through the use of the Deming Cycle (*Figure 1*). The implementation of the Plan, Do, Check and Act framework allows the opportunity for reflection and enables re-focusing or changing tactics for each stage of the campaign - comparing projected and accrued data. As can be observed in the Gantt Chart (*Figure 2*), the Deming cycle is featured via the inclusion of a monthly review. These monthly reviews will track the artist's development against the KPIs (*Figure 2*) in order to make adjustments that deliver the campaign goals.

In order to maximise engagement of joe unknown's audience, a blend of experiential and digital marketing will form the basis of the campaign. From research into the artist's prospective fanbase and current social campaign, I suggest digital marketing efforts be centred around Instagram, TikTok, YouTube and Discord or Reddit. The latter have proven especially lucrative with the exclusivity-loving Generation Z, with 46% of the demographic having joined a subreddit or discord for their favourite creators in the last year. (Spotify, 2022) Maximising touchpoints and

diversifying social media platforms is essential if we are to see the substantial growth required for the campaign to be successful.

In terms of budget, Tileyard Music proposed a spend of £5000 per mixtape, with a view to attaining sponsorships where additional funding is required. To break this down, I used Amber Horsburgh's 'Fan First Budgeting Tool' (2017) for hip-hop artists. As per this framework, each mixtape will be backed by provisional advertising spend of £1050 (*Figure 2*). This will go towards teaser campaigns, and Instagram and Spotify advertising campaigns, complimented by a robust overarching social media campaign. This digital promotion will work in accordance with Tileyard Music Release Schedule (*Figure 3*). 20% of the budget has been allocated for content creation with an emphasis on video (music videos, teasers, and visualisers). Video content is a particularly important investment for joe, considering the close crossover between his music and future aspirations with point 9. Next, 22% has been allocated for remixes. As is detailed later on, collaborations with different artists form a large basis of this campaign's strategy. Our aim is to tap into new markets, explore different genres and widen the scope for fan discovery. Lastly, the media budget makes up 31%, with a 60:40 split on production (60%) and media costs (40%) - including press, digital and traditional advertising. The budget will be continually assessed as the project develops so any necessary adjustments can be made.

The success of the campaign will be measured by a number of KPIs including increased social media following and festival bookings, live ticket and merchandise sales, download and streaming figures, and the number of sync deals and brand partnerships attained. To calculate these targets (*Figure 2*), I carried out a YOY competitor analysis (*Figure 4*) comparing listening figures in joe unknown's cities and countries of interest: London (UK), Melbourne (Australia), Amsterdam (Netherlands) and Los Angeles (USA). As a result, I was able to ensure the growth projections are realistic.

1.1 Year One

The goal in Year One of the campaign is brand awareness. As joe has currently released two songs in 2022, releasing music needs to be prioritised. Following his pre-existing performances at 2000 Trees, Latitude, Reading/Leeds and Sundown festivals, joe unknown is scheduled to release his first mixtape in October 2022. I am proposing that this coincides with a London pop-up show - with the view of arranging some smaller scale events in his 'Top Listener Cities' during Spring 2023. Primarily, Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds, Dublin and another London date. (Chartmetric, 2022). These events will include pop-up shows at record stores, support slots and guest appearances and other relevant promotional opportunities. Further research into specific events will be undertaken in due course.

The initial London show will be joe unknown's first headline performance. He has previously supported Kennyhoopla in London (Underworld, Camden) and Nottingham (Rescue Rooms) earlier this year, but this pop-up concert will be his solo debut. In order to make the occasion notable and appeal to joe's primary audience, 18-34 year-olds (Chartmetric, 2022), there will be a real focus on experiential marketing. As such, I am proposing an outdoor party in Leake Street graffiti tunnel, like the one hosted by Diplo earlier this year. (Vennables, 2022) The event will be held on release day, with the location being announced on socials at midday. The pop-up show can be professionally filmed and streamed in real-time on Instagram Live in order to maximise exposure. Key industry contacts, friends and passersby will be invited to the event to achieve optimum brand awareness. Then, low-cost merch items such as joe unknown and point 9 branded Rizlas, temporary tattoos and bandanas will be distributed to attendees and QR codes will feature on the items to encourage conversion.

joe unknown's next single will be released in February 2023, with a remix to be released in May 2023. Initially, I considered a high-profile remix by the likes of Underworld or Orbital but this would be too expensive at this stage. Further research also revealed that Sleaford Mods collaborated with Orbital in 2021, which could be

perceived as a copycat move. A great alternative would be 'mid-level' drum and bass artist Nia Archives, boasting 788k Spotify Monthly Listeners. (Chartmetric, 2022) Nia has upcoming appearances at Notting Hill Carnival, The Warehouse Project and ADE, and an Australian and US tour in the pipeline. (Resident Advisor, 2022) As joe's manager expressed a need to gain more of a following with a younger demographic (18-24-year-olds) and more females, this would be an ideal collaboration and cross-pollination of fanbases. 39% of Nia Archive's audience is aged 18-24 compared to just 29% of joe unknown's audience. (Chartmetric, 2022) A multi-genre track with a different perspective to joe's previous collaboration with Annix also diversifies joe's dance music network, especially with Nia being a member of the collective Brighter Days Family, there could be the opportunity for further collaborations and live shows.

PR and radio will be utilised for all of joe unknown's releases. For joe's solo tracks, Radio 1, Kerrang! and BBC Introducing and BBC 6 Music will be the primary targets, with the addition of Rinse FM for the remixes. Using Tileyard Music's network, tracks will also be submitted for consideration in official Spotify playlists such as 'Sticky Floors', 'Post Punk 2K' and 'The Mosh Pit' as well as retail playlists (e.g. H&M Group and Urban Outfitters). In regards to Press, independent publications will be prioritised as this feels most congruent to joe unknown's image - examples include NME, DUMMY, Crack and Licks. Success in the Press and Radio spheres can be leveraged to increase festival bookings. By mapping competitors' appearances, I have identified the following festivals and events to target in Year One.

- 2000 Trees
- Boardmasters
- Doune The Rabbit Hole
- Y Not
- Standon Calling
- Glastonbury
- Reading/Leeds
- Sundown
- All Points East

- Slam Dunk
- Wireless
- Bestival
- Notting Hill Carnival

1.2 Year Two and Year Three

In Year Two and Year Three of the campaign, the focuses are audience development, live and sync. We will target key 'Top Listener' cities in Europe and make headway in the Australian and the US markets respectively. joe's manager informed me that one of the artist's goals in 2023 is to sell out Brixton Academy. However, as joe unknown's current UK listenership is 8.4k (Chartmetric, 2022) and the venue's capacity is 4.9k (AMG, 2022), even with a 1.7% increase in listeners in a YOY comparison, this isn't recommendable at this stage. To contextualise this decision, I conducted a comparison of competing artists who have played at Brixton Academy - Sleaford Mods, IDLES and Viagra Boys - comparing venue capacity to listenership. (*Figure 4*) Albeit this is a tiny sample of artists, the maximum audience percentage that would be required to sell out Brixton Academy today is 25% (*Sleaford Mods, Figure 4*). In contrast, joe unknown would require 123% audience attendance. Consequently, I am suggesting joe unknown's first 'official' headline show (*November 2023, Figure 2*) before touring the UK's Top Listener Cities, take place at Egg, a 900-capacity nightclub near Tileyard. Proximity to joe's management company makes for a good story as well ensures the show is accessible to industry contacts. Furthermore, this venue would require a more reasonable 22% of joe's current audience to be in attendance. While I am of the belief that a larger venue could be used, I want to air on the side of caution, and maximise the chance for a memorable sell-out show, ensuring those who missed out are the first in line when tickets next go on sale.

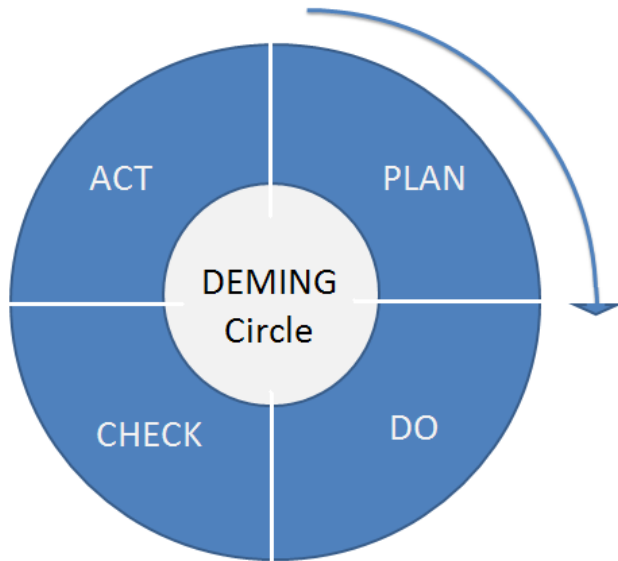
Another 2023 goal that transpired during a conversation with joe unknown's team was a US tour. Originally, it was my intention to make this the basis of my

strategy for Year Two. However, upon analysing the artist's listener data, I discovered that only two US cities featured towards the tail-end of joe's 'Top 50 Cities by Listeners' (Los Angeles and New York). In fact, the total US listenership at the time of review is only 701 strong, having decreased by 70% in a YOY comparison. (Chartmetric, 2022) *(Figure 4)* Granted this data is Spotify-exclusive, but the downward trend is significant given the size of joe unknown's total audience. These stats strongly suggest that the cost would outweigh the benefit of a US tour at this stage of his career. As such, a solo US tour will not feature in this marketing campaign and I am reluctant to include a US support tour unless an unprecedented level of growth is observed. In an attempt to grow the American listenership, I am proposing a remix of the next single (scheduled for release in August 2023) for delivery in October 2023. A producer like Hudson Mohawke, with 401k Monthly Spotify Listeners in the US alone (Chartmetric, 2022), would give joe the best opportunity for immediate, dramatic growth.

Conversely, joe unknown has seen a 212% increase in listenership across Australia in the last year. (Chartmetric, 2022) *(Figure 4)* It is my recommendation therefore that Year One and Year Two of this campaign centre around audience development and live within the UK and Europe (festival and solo work) primarily and audience development within Australia and the US secondarily, with a view to attaining an Australian support tour for Year Three of the campaign. This targeting will largely be achieved through adverts and replicating competing artists' strategies. Again, if a sizeable increase in US listenership is observed a US support tour can be considered, as denoted in the Gantt Chart. *(Figure 2)*

In addition to targeting key cities, we will actively pursue sync and brand partnerships that are harmonious for the artist and audience development. Not only must the brand's motivations align with joe unknown, but the target audience must be relevant so the relationship is mutually beneficial, creating maximum impact. Although more investigation into the viability of certain brand partnerships needs to be undertaken, I was inspired by a collaboration between Dr Martens and The Streets' Mike Skinner. In this "Spirit of '69" campaign, Mike Skinner gives an oral

history of the skinhead movement over a film. (Muller, 2014) Joe Unknown could feature in a similar campaign adapted for the drum and bass scene. If he were to work with a trainer brand, for example, the musical genre could be a good connection for both him and the brand to explore. Joe could reflect upon the movement's original fashion trends and how these have translated into the present day. Previous work with Annix and Nia Archives would serve to legitimise this marketing decision and they could even cameo in the project, depending on scope and cost.

Appendix:**Figure 1** Deming Cycle (Deming, 1993)**Figure 2** Gantt Chart, KPIs and Budget

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1pHtKjHk4cTwAllROmjWnBCWbC3Q_xzWXm4ALWo8nS8k/edit#gid=1421110044

Figure 3 Tileyard Music Release Plan

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1ZKw4ETbBWF5W1dwmquMFDg-rIBt1BLw3bE9HngXCChw/edit?usp=sharing>

Figure 4 Competitor Analysis

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1VlIO6ZVCR7Yg9SYIpORbMUDikihO5p4sBV0FMuQsR78/edit?usp=sharing>

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