

MA Commercial Music Producer

CREATION ELEMENT C1 WRITTEN PROPOSAL

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PREFACE

In my artistic career, I aspire to incorporate video games as a unique platform for sharing my music. While live concerts provide an immersive experience, they often limit the artist's and individual fans' interactions. By creating playable experiences centred around my music, I intend to bridge the divide between artist and fan. The fusion of music and gaming offers an exciting opportunity to engage fans in a way that extends beyond traditional means, as players will be able to experience my music dynamically and interactively, actively participating in creating unique soundscapes. By allowing players to manipulate audio elements, apply effects, and explore different genres, the game can become a canvas for self-expression and musical exploration.

As evidenced by my development assignment, where I crafted a rhythm game from scratch, I discovered a genuine enjoyment in combining music and interactive gameplay. This project presents an exciting opportunity to further explore and expand upon this newfound passion, taking my artistic expression to a new level.

Beyond the realm of music, I am captivated by the idea of utilizing game engines to build an entire world around my music. This project allows me to embrace the role of not just a musician but also a world creator, crafting environments and narratives that complement and enhance the musical experience. It opens up endless possibilities to engage my audience in a way that extends beyond traditional music consumption.

The amalgamation of music and gameplay offers a powerful means of connecting with listeners on a deeply personal and interactive level. I aim to forge a stronger bond between my music and the audience by enabling players to shape the musical journey through their decisions and actions. This project is a testament to my commitment to exploring innovative avenues for music consumption and providing my fans with a truly memorable and immersive experience.

THE PROJECT

In this final project, I am creating an immersive and interactive first-person view experience that revolutionizes the relationship between music and gameplay. The game will feature dynamic choices in dialogues and actions that directly impact the music played, offering a unique and personalized musical journey for each player. This innovative experience will serve as the foundation for my future music releases and pave the way for a new medium of music consumption by my fans.

The main objective is to build a virtual environment that bridges the gap between me as an artist and the listener, enabling my music to come alive around the player and fostering a deeper, more personal connection with the audience. As the player, their decisions and interactions within the game will be intricately woven into the evolving musical composition, making the music more memorable and distinct for each listener.

At the culmination of the experience, the player will be rewarded with an entirely personalized song crafted based on their unique choices throughout the game. This personalized song will differ from others in instrumentation, lyrics and arrangement, providing a unique musical creation that resonates with the player on a deeply individual level.

Looking forward, I envision a seamless integration with the music industry, where players can share their personalized songs directly with me, creating a direct and intimate connection between the audience and the artist. Furthermore, I aim to explore ways to monetize these personalized music creations, allowing players to earn revenue from my music releases based on their experiences and contributions.

By merging interactive gameplay, dynamic music composition, and personalized song creation, this project seeks to redefine the boundaries of music entertainment and create an innovative platform for the audience to actively participate in the artistic process, forging a unique and lasting bond between my music and my listeners.

ARTISTIC VISION

This project is not only a realization of my dream to venture into game design and create fully immersive experiences, but it is also a personal challenge to push the boundaries of my creative self. As an artist, I yearn to explore the full extent of my capabilities and bring everything I have learned to fruition throughout this course and my life.

This project is driven by my long-standing dream of venturing into game design and creating fully immersive experiences. Through my last assignment, where I explored game design, I realized the immense potential of using interactive gameplay to complement music in conveying a message. As technology advances, combining music with interactive elements has created exciting possibilities to create captivating and memorable experiences.

The small playable demo I developed for the assignment was a valuable warm-up, showing me what can be achieved with the current tools and technology. It has further fueled my desire to delve deeper into game development and explore the limitless opportunities in this creative realm.

Innovation is crucial, especially in a market saturated with various forms of entertainment. I aim to stand out and establish a unique niche by incorporating interactive elements into my music releases. Releasing each new single as a playable experience may increase the time between releases. However, scarcity can drive demand and anticipation, making the final product even more impactful and rewarding for my fans.

I thoroughly enjoy being a jack of all trades, handling various aspects of the project. The more facets I have to consider and evaluate, the more fulfilled I feel as an artist. However, this approach may become detrimental in the long run as the project grows in complexity and scope. Thus, my ultimate aspiration is to form a small team of creatives who can collaborate effectively, reducing development time between each release while maintaining the high level of artistic quality and innovation that sets this project apart.

By combining my passion for music, game design, and innovation, I am excited to embark on this project, creating fully immersive experiences that challenge the traditional boundaries of music and offer a fresh and engaging way for my audience to connect with my art. Through continuous improvement and the potential to build a dedicated creative team, I envision this project becoming a trailblazing endeavour, paving the way for new possibilities in the music and gaming industry.

METHOD

To ensure the creation of a truly compelling and immersive experience, my approach will revolve around a focused study and research in critical areas. First, storytelling and personal involvement take centre stage. To master the art of crafting engaging narratives, I will delve into the world of movie and game scriptwriting, seeking insights from reputable sources like *"Video Game Storytelling"* by Evan Skolnick and conducting thorough research on video game narratives. To add a personal touch, I will utilize the Metahuman program (Unreal Engine) to create a 3D character representing me as a mentor within the game. Using facial expressions and voice recordings, I will lend authenticity to the character, acting as a guiding presence to the player during their journey.

By crafting a narrative that introduces difficult decisions with impactful consequences, players will be engrossed in a thought-provoking experience.

The iterative design process will be essential to refine the story and decision-making aspects, ensuring the game achieves its goal of engaging players on a profound level. Playtesting and feedback will aid in fine-tuning the narrative and enhancing its effectiveness.

By embracing emotional impact and presenting choices that challenge beliefs, the game will create moments of tension, empathy, and introspection. As the player's decisions shape the evolving music composition, the narrative and personalized song will leave a lasting impression at the end.

The game's narrative will unfold across various chapters or acts, each set in a distinct and visually captivating 3D environment. Players will encounter unique story beats and challenges within each act that resonate with the environment's theme.

As players progress through the acts, they will face major decisions, each carrying significant consequences. These pivotal choices will serve as key turning points in the narrative and will dynamically alter the musical composition of the evolving song as gameplay unfolds.

Each environment will also contain some interactive elements, allowing players to engage with smaller beats. While not mandatory for progression, these interactions will contribute to the overall experience by subtly shaping the music and enhancing immersion in the world.

In music production, I will focus on creating a modular track that seamlessly functions as a standalone piece and as the dynamic soundtrack for the video game. The extensive project file will incorporate various song iterations with different instruments and arrangements, forming a cohesive musical puzzle.

Considerable time and effort will be devoted to arranging the track's pieces, ensuring every instrument and segment harmoniously blend. Research into catalogue music production will be instrumental in this process, as it will provide insights into how producers create packs where all the loops complement each other harmoniously.

Furthermore, I will research video game and film music composition, drawing inspiration and knowledge from resources such as the book *"Composing Music for Games"* by Chance Thomas. Studying such materials will aid in honing my skills in crafting immersive and impactful music that enhances the gaming experience.

Making a carefully considered choice of which game engine to use is crucial for the success of this project. Given my aspiration to introduce myself as a virtual artist and connect this persona with my social media campaign to strengthen my artist brand, I have carefully evaluated my options.

Unreal Engine is the most suitable choice for this project for several reasons. First and foremost, Unreal Engine offers the highly beneficial Metahuman program, which aligns seamlessly with my vision of utilizing my virtual representation as a mentor character within the game. This program enables me to create a 3D character with facial expressions and voice recordings, providing a personal and authentic touch to the gaming experience.

While Unity also offers a similar program, its cost is beyond my budget, making it a less feasible option for this project. By choosing Unreal Engine, I can keep the budget to a minimum without compromising the core elements of the game's vision.

Using Unreal Engine also ensures access to a robust and versatile game development platform, enabling me to create visually stunning environments, integrate dynamic music, and implement engaging gameplay mechanics.

MEASURING SUCCESS

To ensure a realistic assessment of success within the project's time frame, I will establish two tiers of achievement. The first tier represents the minimum expectations for the project to succeed, while the second tier outlines additional extracurricular goals.

1st Tier: Minimum Project Success

- A playable experience will be the core achievement of this tier, allowing players to interact with the game and create a modular song based on their decisions. Each iteration of the song must exhibit critical differences, providing players with a sense of creativity and replayability.
- The playable experience should be polished and meet high-quality standards to ensure a satisfying and immersive gaming experience.
- The success of the first tier will be assessed through questionnaires distributed to tutors, peers, and beta testers. Their feedback will gauge consumer perspectives and provide a final project achievement score.

2nd Tier: Extracurricular Success

- During the project's development, I will actively work on building a following on social media. Through engaging content, I will introduce the concept of collaborative music-making, encouraging fans to become a significant part of the creative process.
- The social media efforts will act as a preparation and promotion phase for the project's release to the general public. This tier aims to maximize its impact and reach by building anticipation and interest in the project.
- Success in the second tier will depend on effective time management, ensuring the project's development progresses alongside social media engagement and content creation.

By dividing success into these two tiers, I can realistically gauge the project's achievements while aiming to build excitement and anticipation among potential players and fans. This approach ensures that the game's core goals and broader impact are accounted for in assessing the project's success.

RESEARCH

Research has shown that artists, like world-famous DJ and music producer Avicii, have utilized gaming mechanics to increase revenue and engage their followers on social media platforms. In 2015, Avicii employed the image-based social app Instagram as part of his marketing campaign for his new album "Stories".

Avicii's innovative approach involved the creation of an interactive game within Instagram, which had never been seen before at the time. The game featured Avicii as the protagonist, battling the evil Dr. Hush. Players could click through various adventure levels through image tagging and connected accounts.

By leveraging gaming mechanics on a social media platform, Avicii successfully generated hype for his album "Stories" and captured the attention of his followers. The interactive game provided a unique and engaging experience, setting him apart from traditional promotional methods and demonstrating the effectiveness of thinking outside the box in marketing strategies.

This research highlights the potential of incorporating gaming elements into music marketing campaigns to enhance revenue generation and audience engagement in the digital age, where capturing and maintaining followers' attention on social media is increasingly challenging. (Adele Robinson, 2015) The "game" was a success in engagement, amounting to over 200K likes on Instagram.

Another example is when

The band Bring Me the Horizon adopted an innovative fan engagement strategy to increase revenue for their album "That's the Spirit." Before the album's official release, they released tracks on Spotify, but with a twist – the tracks were heavily distorted, making them challenging to decipher and thoroughly enjoy.

To access the clear versions of these distorted tracks, fans had to engage with an interactive jukebox on the band's website homepage. This interactive experience allowed fans to unlock the full, high-quality versions of the songs by solving puzzles or completing specific tasks.

By implementing this interactive jukebox approach, Bring Me the Horizon effectively boosted fan engagement and anticipation for their album's official release. As a result of Bring Me the Horizon's creative fan engagement strategy, the band experienced a significant boost in their playlist following on music streaming platforms. This innovative approach led to an impressive increase of 116% in their playlist following. (Tim Ferrone, 2023).

These marketing stunts showcase the effectiveness of taking music and presenting it engagingly and interactively to increase revenue as an artist. These artists achieved remarkable audience engagement, brand exposure, and revenue generation results by incorporating gaming mechanics and interactive elements into their music promotion strategies.

In the ever-evolving music industry landscape, virtual artists' emergence has stirred controversy and remarkable financial success. Virtual artists are essentially personas of manufactured singers or groups, often represented visually. Managed by teams behind the scenes, they interact with audiences directly, captivating the masses through unique and interactive experiences.

Notable examples of virtual artists include Hatsune Miku, who performs live events as a hologram in Japan, and Polar, a virtual artist who swiftly gained over a million TikTok followers and 300,000 YouTube subscribers in under five months. While human musicians typically produce the music for virtual artists, advancements in AI technology suggest future collaborations with AI as music producers.

The concept of virtual artists is familiar, with Gorillaz, a virtual band formed in 1998 by musician Damon Albarn and artist Jamie Hewlett, serving as an early case study. These virtual pioneers broke ground with creative virtual universes, brand partnerships, and unique challenges in presenting a virtual artist to live audiences.

Recent years have seen explosive growth in virtual artist popularity, with major record labels eagerly signing them. The booming popularity of virtual concerts and festivals in the metaverse drives this trend, providing record labels with lucrative opportunities to capitalize on audience engagement. (AudioHype, 2022).

In conclusion, my final project aims to push the boundaries of interactive game experiences by seamlessly blending music and gameplay. I seek to create a fully immersive journey for players, allowing them to make impactful choices that dynamically shape the musical composition of the game. Drawing inspiration from successful marketing stunts of virtual artists, I aim to engage my audience innovatively and interactively, enhancing revenue opportunities while fostering a unique and personal connection with my artistry. By embracing storytelling, personal involvement, music production, and the power of game engines, I seek to create an unforgettable and immersive game experience that resonates deeply with players.

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APPENDIX

Project Timeline

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