

Jordan Lazarus
1706407

Marketing Report for PALE WAVES

Entertainment Marketing
SBTY7003

Tutor: Richard Small

This report intends to outline the marketing strategy for the band Pale Waves' new release. Over the course of the campaign we hope to achieve a 100% increase in following of the band and see this reflected in a doubling of the band's social media figures. In addition we are aiming for 5000 album sales across all formats plus 1600 equivalent album streams on digital streaming platforms. We hope that this campaign will give us better insight through social into the demographics of the band's engaged fans so that future campaigns can be more effective.

The Artist

Pale Waves are a four-piece indie pop band formed in Manchester in 2014. They are currently signed to Dirty Hit records and, after the release a number well received singles, have recently put out an EP called, 'All The Things I Never Said'. Label mates, the 1975 produced some of the bands early tracks and helped them on their way to critical acclaim. The band placed 5th in the BBC's 'Sound of 2018' and are now touring heavily and having completed putting the finishing touches on their upcoming album release.

Market Analysis

Pale Waves have already made somewhat of an impact across social media channels. They have tens of thousands of followers across the major social media platforms as well as over 400,000 monthly listeners on Spotify (Spotify, 2018). Over 80,000 subscribers on the band's YouTube channel (YouTube, 2018) and nearly 50,000 followers on Facebook and 76,000 on Instagram (Instagram, 2018).

In order to help market the upcoming album to the right audience, it is imperative that we look at the data attributed to Pale Wave's social media fans. Unfortunately, for reasons unbeknown to me, data isn't yet available for Pale Wave's page using Facebook's Audience Insights capability. In order to make use of available data we have taken a look at similar artists and artists whose audience also listen to Pale Waves according to Spotify to gain insight into target age, gender, education level, geographical location, relationship status and other interests. This will allow us to target certain demographics very specifically when creating and publishing sponsored adverts on social media. And, not only will this data be invaluable for online advertising, but the information gained will also be helpful in developing meaningful brand partnerships, planning shows in the right places and selecting promotion channels outside of social media. In this case, we selected the bands Swim Deep, Circa Waves and Wolf Alice. They are all listed as related artists to Pale Waves on Spotify and Wolf Alice is also signed to Dirty Hit which is a fairly small label. The data showed that fans' gender is generally balanced on average across the 3 artists and the bands are all most popular with 18-25s. In all cases at least 50% of the audience is listed as single and over 70% of the audience are educated to degree level or higher. The data also showed that fans of these artists pages also liked other artists pages, Festivals and Gigs, Record Labels, Radio Stations and streaming services.

So we used this information to develop a target group for the campaign. The majority of fans fall mostly into the age bracket of 18-25 (although Facebook doesn't provide data on users under 18 so we should assume that the bracket may have a lower age boundary of less than 18). We are not targeting a specific gender group for the time being as similar bands are equally popular across males and females. The majority of fans in the UK are largely located in Manchester and London, and information from Spotify has indicated a high listenership in some American cities such as LA, Chicago and NYC. They are festival goers, being fans of Reading and Leeds, readers of NME and listeners of Radio 1 and Radio X, which indicated they are fans/consumers of new music and enjoy discovering new artists.

Currently, the designs and imagery for the band are very coherent and cohesive across posters, photography, merchandise and online. The frontwoman, Heather, portrays a very strong image, and is put at the forefront of most of the media, followed by Ciara, the drummer while the male members in the group have a slightly more background role. Heather's heavy makeup, dark clothes and quirky stage presence give the band a unique image and this brand image contributes heavily to the band's unique selling point. The imagery could be described as dark, gothic and edgy.

Interestingly, the band's sound doesn't have a heavy, rocky and grungy feel - it is more poppy and accessible, with clean female vocals, catchy choruses and a tight feel. Their sound could be compared to the 1975, Circa Waves, The Japanese House and Wolf Alice. The band would not be out of place being played on Radio 1 and Radio X. According to the Metro, the band sound like "how you might expect goths to [sound] when they fully accept the ray of 1980s' pop sunshine into their lives (Dhillon, 2017)"

The new album follows on from the 'coming of age' themes explored in the EP of young love and heartbreak, as well as the existentialist themes of life and death. But it also introduces new themes and darker issues including personal insecurities and mental health issues, also being described by the band as, "songs that will make people cry". The overarching themes of 'coming of age' and 'adolescence' will tend to resonate with younger people. People that are still trying to work out who they are as a person and are maybe going through the motions of being a little different.

Heather's look is clearly very alternative and may add some sort of appeal to these types of young people who may feel they align with her and thus share a connection to her in this way. This, I think could have the added benefit of providing a positive image on girls in the target group to express themselves how they like and feel empowered to do so.

By having a strong female lead, the band is helping to break gender stereotypes and is adding to the growing number of mixed gender rock groups with a front woman. Again we hope this is reinforcing positivity and in turn popularity among young women. It could also be the case that as a secondary consequence, Heather could also be providing an alternative sex symbol amongst the target group across all genders and sexualities, although there is no intention to exploit this in any gratuitous way in this or any future campaign as it can come off as distasteful and ultimately destroy the positive image we are trying to convey with the artist.

Pricing and Distribution

According to the IFPI, 54% of all revenue in the music industry last year came from digital. In the UK and US however these numbers are higher as physical formats are less widely purchased now compared to places like Japan and Germany (IFPI, 2017).

The album will be distributed by the label across all major digital streaming platforms - namely Spotify, Apple Music, Amazon and YouTube plus all the other smaller services. Streaming is a vital output channel for pop music and so we will ensure that engagement with the band on platforms such as Spotify and Apple Music are as high as possible. Playlisting is a really important aspect of music discovery on these platforms and so we will reach out to playlist creators and plug singles from the album in order to get spots on key playlists such as 'New Music Friday' and 'Hottest Record in the World' on Spotify.

The album will also be made available on iTunes, Amazon and 7 Digital and eMusic for digital download priced at £7.99, and, the deluxe edition for £9.99 when it becomes available later. Fans will be able to pre-order the album on iTunes, and, as each single is released, the tracks will be automatically be downloaded into the users library. We may offer some sort of bonus track which is released to the consumer when the album is pre-ordered, and obviously the entire album will be downloaded automatically into their library as soon as it is released. Exclusive content will also be featured on paid versions of the album and not on streaming services.

Given the increasing popularity of vinyl records dubbed the 'vinyl revival' (Wikipedia contributors, 2018) physical copies of the album in CD and Heavyweight Vinyl format will be available from the artists web-store and from selected retailers including Amazon, as well as from merchandise stands at the bands headline live shows as they can serve as a nice memento of the gig. We also hope to produce a limited edition vinyl of an unreleased single from the album as well as a B-Side track to be made available on Record Store Day in 2019. Anyone who purchases a physical copy of the album will be able to download a digital copy via the band's website using a unique code, and will receive the same exclusive content as iTunes.

In the run up to the release of the album, associated merchandise featuring new artwork from the campaign will also be made available. Posters, t-shirts and hoodies priced at £10, £20 and £30 respectively will be available for purchase via the band's website and on merchandise stands at live shows. We also intend to bundle merchandise and/or with copies of the album for a slight discount. We hope this will incentivise purchases of the album over streaming, especially to fans of the band.

Asset Deliverables

The band will have new photography and artwork produced to be used across the campaign. They will shoot videos for each of the singles to be released as well as some exclusive content, live videos, and other social media content such as interviews and behind-the-scenes material. The website and social media pages will be updated in the run up to the release with teaser snippets being put out on channels on an incremental basis in alignment with the campaign timeline.

We aim to produce large-format billboards to be placed in strategic points in the most popular cities - London and Manchester, and aim for areas within the city popular with our target demographic - Camden and Shoreditch in London for example. Smaller format posters will be distributed more widely across the country and be used in public transport stations and bus stops etc.

Promotion

We plan to promote the album across various media channels. With previous and ongoing support from the BBC, we aim to get both national and regional radio cover on their stations, as well as commercial stations, targeting regions in line with dates on the album tour. Spots on BBC Radio can also come with the added benefit of being featured on BBC Spotify playlists as well TV appearances on the BBC for example Jools Holland, and BBC social media included heavily subscribed YouTube channels.

In advance of the record's release, we will be sending copies to be reviewed by press media. We have has previous support from publications such as NME, DIY, Q Magazine and the Metro and will push for features in these publications both online and in print. We will also be running ads for the album and the tour in these magazines. Wolf Alice recently released a collectors limited edition cover of their feature in Q Magazine bundled with a 7" vinyl single for purchase from their website only which I think would be a good idea provided we can secure a cover feature like this (Dirty Hit, 2018).

We will be publishing targeted advertisements ahead of the release of the album on all major social networks. Adverts featuring snippets of the new track accompanied by video content will run on Facebook, on Instagram (both in the feed and stories), on related YouTube content and within Snapchat. Audio snippets will be created into audio spots for Radio and Streaming services (for those users eligible to receive ads). Before the release date, links on ads will click through to iTunes for pre-orders or to the web-store for merchandise purchases and live show tickets when available based on users locations. We aim to improve our conversion rates by avoiding linking to streaming services via paid ads. We also intend to reach out to fans via mailing list and direct messaging on Facebook.

We also hope to get features in online versions of music magazines such as NME, DIY, Q and Pitchfork as well as more traditional publications.

The live tour will be invaluable in promoting the band and the album. The band has also been successful in the UK selling out shows up and down the country and is currently booked for 30 shows and festivals in the UK and Internationally. We hope the large number of festivals will expose the band to a much wider and untapped audience. The campaign will also rely heavily on financial income from the tour to see a profit from the campaign.

The band will introduce their new material into their sets ahead of the release of new singles from the album which will begin to happen towards the end of the summer. The band will host an album release event in Manchester, playing songs from the album. It will be an invite only event for selected fans which will also provide opportunity for fans to meet the band. The band will headline a UK and European tour coinciding with the release of the album, as well as visiting some other key strategic international locations and utilising the international travel to gain access to foreign media and social channels such as NPR Tiny Desk Concerts and late night TV interviews and performances in the US and radio opportunities across Europe. We hope to provide live video content to selected media channels and these may be offered exclusively. We also aim to get support or guest slots for the band with other artists where possible, such as the 1975.

We believe that the bands image would appeal to a number of brands across a range of industries. By partnering with these brands we hope to make use of the brands following to gain access to new audiences, in return providing music and the bands image to be used in advertising and other promotional material. The bands iconic look lends itself well to fashion and health and beauty brands such as Dr Martens, Vans and Ray-Ban, as well as other industries often associated with music such as alcohol (Bulmers Cider/Jack Daniels/Red Bull/Pepsi) and technology brands (Apple/Samsung). The band are also endorsers of a number of musical equipment brands and will appear in promotions for these brands as well as using equipment on TV and in live performances such as Vox and Fender amplifiers and guitars and Pearl drums.

Timeline and Budget

The timeline of the campaign covers 6 months beginning in August 2018. At this point the band will be working through their busy festival season. The three singles from the album will be released ahead of the album in mid/late November. We have chosen this release date to take advantage of the festive season both in the US for Thanksgiving and for Christmas internationally. It is a time of year where people are giving gifts and may be advantageous for sales of physical copies. In the run up to this release date, singles will be released on streaming platforms beginning in early August, with subsequent singles following in 5 week increments, the second week in September and third week of October. This gives enough time for each single to gain traction after release for a couple of weeks before we prepare to push the next single and finally the album. This activity will be running parallel to the bands touring and will launch a headline tour following the album's release.

The total budget for the campaign is £50,000 to be spent on advertising and content creation along with other costs. Plus a tour budget of £200,000. We aim, upon the completion of the campaign to have sold 5000 physical albums and 1600 equivalent album streams. Revenue in excess of £50,000. Plus £2,000,000 from ticket sales and merchandise across the campaign based on a 25 date tour in 3,000 capacity venues, with tickets priced at £25. We hope to have secured a number of brand endorsements and in turn increase the bands exposure. We aim to have increased our social media numbers by 100% and hope this will give us further insight into our audience which will enable us to be more effective in future campaigns.

Jordan Lazarus, 2018

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