

BUZZARD BUZZARD BUZZARD

MA INTERNATIONAL MUSIC
MARKETING

TERM 2: DEVELOPMENT ESSAY

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DIY describe Buzzard Buzzard Buzzard (BBB), a four piece indie/alt glam rock band hailing from Cardiff as “maximalist, retro-minded, old fashioned rock’n’roll lovers..glam-rock types, booted unceremoniously into the 21st Century.” (DIY, 2020) Their blend of infectious indie glam-rock sound, steeped in nostalgia for the rock icons of the 1970s such as T-Rex and Thin Lizzy, has marked BBB as newcomers to the scene. Their previous releases have hit a sweet spot between a new younger audience, combined with an older demographic that are defiant in their pursuit of hearing the sound of their youth but performed by new, up-and-coming bands. BBB will release a new single ‘Rock ‘N’ Roll Town’, which is deeply rooted in this idea of nostalgia, whilst also forging their own sound and continuing to develop the band narrative of infectious, humorous 70s rock but with a modern twist.

The structure of this essay shall firstly focus on BBB’s current marketing strategy, branding, iconography and social strategy. The subsequent analysis will focus on the release strategy, offering justifications and commentary for each selected asset in relation to the SMART objectives outlined in element 1.

The first point to note is the decision to release a single as opposed to an album. This decision is based upon all previous releases of BBB (9 singles, 1 EP). The decision to release a string of singles is based on the idea of “keeping things flowing so artists almost never go away. Fans want to be engaged constantly with artists that they like” (Leight, 2018).

Two clear audiences have been defined for the next single release. Firstly, the younger audience (14-30) will largely be based within the student population alongside ‘YUPPIes’. This audience will be a mixture of Gen Z or Millennials. The psychographics of said audiences would be extroverted and predominantly within the ‘experience economy’, namely that they “prioritize experiences over products” (Morgan, 2019). This lends itself to organising events and experiences for the audience to capture their attention and increased brand awareness, and subsequently convert to sales of both tickets and the single.

The alternative audience that must be considered is the older demographic. This audience will have lived through the era of rock during the 1970s, or else have sentimental attachment or nostalgia for said era. This audience will be between 40-65 years old, middle-class, and typically of a more senior position in white collar jobs. Although BBB may not be as visible to this audience at first, their sound is largely universal to rock fans and the bolstered support of two large audiences may project them towards mainstream audiences. Typically, this older audience will also encompass the ‘uber fan’ and will have a large amount of disposable income.

The decision to base the entire campaigns colour scheme and to use colloquial language across socials was decided because of twofold; firstly, the colours represent a traditional and cliched 1970s colour scheme. The decision to use a variety of browns, yellows, oranges, and reds was inspired upon 'A. S Creation wallpaper' that was popular during the 1970s (AS Creation, 2021). This decision was made to further emphasise the 1970s narrative BBB have already created with their roots in 1970s rock music and create an air of authenticity.; Secondly, the decision to use colloquial language online was to appeal to younger audiences and further cement the idea of authenticity, thus re-enforcing the band narrative.

All four objectives have been developed into SMART objectives. SMART objectives were originally created by Doran in 1981 and are "a form of objective setting which allows managers and employees to create, track and accomplish goals" (Clearview, 2020) targeted towards the aforementioned demographics. Each objective has been selected to maximise the brand awareness and sales of the single amongst the audience. The decision to use SMART objectives was based upon the presumptions that "those who understand goal planning and completion have better success rates" (TandemHR, 2019).

BBB's online presence is poor and has a huge scope for improvement. Their following across and engagement online is close to zero across all platforms. The comparative artists mentioned in the portfolio should be considered where BBB should be a year or two down the line. Growth through social media should be a major focus of this campaign so that they continue to emphasise the band narrative and grow their popularity amongst the target audience. Considering that "two out of three users agree that they discover new artists on social media" (Crupnick, 2018), it is imperative that BBB create engaging and innovative content on socials and remain 'always on', meaning they offer "consistent audience engagement and messaging that signals your availability." (Barnhart, 2019)¹ For example, the 'recent wins', such as placement on the Pro Evolution Soccer soundtrack, highlights the strong potential BBB have in moving towards a more mainstream audience, and a strong social media focused campaign can greatly contribute towards this objective.

The three targeted playlists highlighted in the portfolio were chosen as they are a clear representation of playlists popular with younger audiences. Gaining a placement on prominent DSP curated playlists is an integral part of any music marketing campaign. Considering that the average listener in Europe spends 99 minutes a day on Spotify and "a third of Spotify listening time is spent listening to Spotify-curated playlists"² (Mansoor, 2021) gaining placement on a prominent playlist can be massively beneficial in aiming to break into a mainstream audience. Moreover, gaining

¹ <http://blog.hellosocial.com.au/blog/what-is-always-on-marketing-benefits>

² <https://www.businessofapps.com/data/spotify-statistics/>

placement on any of the three playlists highlighted in the portfolio will also aid the campaign in achieving its objective of growing the number of followers, and plays on Spotify itself. Also included are radio targets, and these should be pursued using Hart Media, a national radio plugger. Being championed by a prominent radio station, and subsequently gaining placement on their radio playlist, exposes bands to both target demographics and furthermore to wider exposure with a mainstream audience. Steve Lamacq, for example, has been dubbed “Britain's rock music taste-maker for the past two decade” (Bignell, 2013) and frequently champions up-and-coming artists. Therefore, gaining support of prominent tastemakers such as himself, Jack Saunders and John Kennedy would contribute massively towards the campaign objectives. Distinct similarities can be made towards gaining prominent features in the publications also mentioned in element 1.

The release strategy of the new single shall feature numerous impact points to emphasise the release of the new single. Considering “we are spending more on doing stuff”(Usborne, 2017), it is integral that there are also physical experiences in order garner attention from the younger target audience. This shall include a pop-up shop that feature in competitions alongside a UK Club tour in 2022. The entirety of the campaign should be integrated with one another and follow brand guidelines in terms of language, iconography and colour scheme.

The first impact point of the campaign shall be social media release strategy. A strong social media strategy gains a wider exposure to both current fans and potential to gain further following from those that catch it on social media. The importance of having a strong and integrated social media campaign is highlighted in the fact that “9/10 regular social media users partake in some music related activity” (Oanh, 2019). To gain popularity with the younger target demographic, BBB should focus their attention across four platforms: Instagram, Facebook, TikTok and YouTube. These four platforms have been proven to be most popular amongst the younger audiences. For example, “86% of people ages 18-29 using Facebook” (Khoros, 2021) contrary to the popular belief that younger audiences no longer use it.

However, it is not as simple as posting to social media and expecting results immediately. Curated content must also be considered, with examples being shown on the portfolio that cater to demographics. To fully capture the attention of the target younger audience it is integral that carousel and reel content is the predominant means of posting to Instagram. This is because “4% of Instagram content consisted of carousel posts in 2017, compared to 19% in July 2020..and the engagement rate of carousel posts is 1.92%, compared to an engagement rate of 1.74% for images³ (SearchEngine Journal, 2021). These types of posts offer a higher chance of converting fans to purchasing a ticket or piece of merch from BBB. Therefore, having a strong social media presence

³ <https://www.searchenginejournal.com/instagram-carousels/379311/#close>

amongst younger audiences will contribute massively towards achieving the campaign objective of increasing brand awareness amongst a younger target audience.

Facebook and Twitter would be the most suitable for target older demographics, with “over-55s the second-biggest demographic of Facebook” (The Guardian, 2018). Furthermore, informative videos are the most engaging type of content to post to socials with “42% (of people) viewing video posts featuring artists or band” (Crupnick, 2018) on social media. The timing of the social media campaign must also be considered. The days leading up to release day are the most critical, and the notion of the ‘tease’ alongside promoting the release of pre-save are both crucial elements. Ditto emphasise the importance of “building up this notion of the ‘pre-tease’ whilst also encouraging pre-save is of paramount importance to the campaign” (Ditto, 2020).

A key element of the social media campaign would also include targeted ads. This would be especially applicable to Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. According to Hootsuite more and more people are seeing ads every day, and targeted ads are especially effective at “attracting impressions and engagement.” (Hootsuite, 2021). The inclusion of targeted ads based on interests, geographical location and lookalike ads is an integral part of any digital marketing campaign and for this campaign. Targeted ads have a plethora of benefits including reaching “people who are interested in your products and services..(to) controlling costs and allowing real time updates on how successful each ad has been doing.” (Google, 2021). Therefore, targeting the older demographic on platforms such as Facebook, and the younger demographic on TikTok will directly contribute towards achieving the campaign objectives of increasing brand awareness amongst both target audiences. This, in turn, will further contribute towards growing the number of followers, plays and playlist placements on Spotify, another key objective of the campaign.

The second impact point for the campaign will be the BBB x UniDays brand partnership. Brand partnerships are a very easy way for both parties to “achieve more for less” (The Drum, 2020) with the added benefit of “enabling you to harness of natural credibility with a new audience” which in this case is the targeted demographic of students alongside giving an air of authenticity and legitimacy to both parties involved. The UniDays brand partnership will not only encourage more ticket sales for the UK Club tour, but also will give BBB access to a far wider audience than their typical fans. UniDays has frequently created partnerships with well established brands before and so achieving a brand partnership with them will not be a difficult prospect (UniDays, 2021). Students will pick up on the authenticity of a band being attached to a well-known and respected student friendly app and will be enticed to buy further tickets and merch. Furthermore, the brand partnership fits in with the narrative of the young, student friendly and ‘new kids on the block’ esque idea of the band. Therefore, the brand partnership with UniDays will contribute significantly into achieving the

objective of the campaign to reach younger audiences, alongside further contributing to the objective of gaining a more mainstream audience.

In a similar fashion to the BBB x UniDays brand partnership, the Fightback and Music Venue Trust brand partnership also contributes significantly towards achieving the campaign objective of growing the awareness and band fanbase amongst older demographics. The 'Buzzard Buzzard Beer' offers fans the ability to both support music venues and the band whilst attending one of their shows. The older demographics have a far larger disposable income than their younger counterparts (Clarke, 2021) and so will be more likely to buy a beer whilst attending a gig. The idea of the Buzzard Buzzard Beer also fits in with the band narrative by presenting themselves as a band that wants to save a suffering industry.

The release of a 'Fortnite Skin' on games consoles follows a steadily increasing trend of "monetisation strategy and promotional opportunities for artists within video games." (MusicWeek, 2020). The ability for players to feature as a member of the band on the game has been replicated by bigger artists (such as Lil Nas X and Dua Lipa (Coulson, 2020)) previously, however smaller Indie artists such as Easy Life are now also finding their way into the video game market (Easy Life, 2021). As Sebastian Simone said "there's an appetite for gaming platforms to partner with music, which is certainly increasing" (MusicWeek, 2020). This highlights two points; Firstly, it exemplifies how lucrative the video game market currently can be for artists; Secondly, the inclusion of Easy Life's live gig on the platforms demonstrates that smaller artists can be incorporated into the game with ease and still produce a large audience. Therefore, getting a BBB skin on Fortnite would not only satisfy Jurgen Wolff's idea of 'Doing something different' (Wolff, 2005) it would also present BBB as early trendsetters. These are huge marketing points and would likely satisfy numerous elements of the campaign. Firstly, the objective to reach a younger audience is a given considering that "over 60% of players are in the 18-24 age bracket" (Iqbal 2021). Secondly, Fortnite is a hugely popular mainstream game and an inclusion of a popular skin to play with will greatly aid BBB in achieving mainstream success, another key objective of the campaign.

The penultimate impact point in the campaign will be the release of the music video and its tagalong limited edition graphic novel. The decision to make a music video that features the band playing on a stage in many different outfits and backgrounds is based upon the success of similar music videos from bands in the past, such as Blink 182's 'All The Small Things' and Red Hot Chili Peppers 'Dani California'. Both videos highlighted the comedic nature of said bands and the same can be said about BBB and their new music video. Typically, music videos that are feature "storylines, kooky characters or hilarious costumes" (Serra, 2021) tend to perform well amongst audiences and stick in fans memories. In the day and age of 'meme culture' where satirical comedy

seems to penetrate nearly every facet of society, it seems a lost opportunity to not capitalise on creating something original and with comedic value. Furthermore, the music video will also be useful assets for targeting both the younger and older demographic. Younger demographics, as a rule of thumb, typically respond well to video content with Vevo claiming in 2017 that “61% of teens say that they are watching more online video than they were last year” (Lindsay, 2017). The decision to have BBB take a satirical swipe at 1970s rock icons also engages the older demographic, with the content playing upon this idea of nostalgia. Overall, this music video satisfies two of the objectives of the campaign, whilst also staying on brand and fitting in with the band narrative.

A tie along graphic novel shall also be released that features a very similar storyline and timeline to that of the music video. This shall be a collector’s item with only a limited amount of copies being introduced. The justification for the release of this item is to directly appeal to the ‘uber fan’, who typically have a far higher level of disposable income than most and are more likely to buy product if it is in limited edition. This concept plays upon the idea of scarcity marketing, the notion of having “unfulfilled demand in the marketplace”(Steenkamp, 2017), thus allowing you to charge a premium price for the item. Graphic novels in particular also appeal to the targeted older demographics due to their popularity and prominence during the 1970s. It is important to highlight the crossover that exists between rock fans and graphic novel fans. Rock music typically has been for ‘misfits’ and fan of the alternative, something which also can be said for fans of graphic novels. The notion of nostalgia also comes into play here, with older fans of BBB being more likely to purchase an expensive item that is supporting an up-and-coming band and incorporating elements of their youth. Therefore, the graphic novel tie-along also contributes towards achieving a key objective of the campaign.

The final element of the release strategy shall be the physical promotion of the single. This element of the campaign would be considered what Malcolm Gladwell referred to as ‘the tipping point’, or “that magic moment when an idea, trend, or social behaviour crosses a threshold, tips, and spreads like wildfire” (Gladwell, 2000). The tour shall take place around the UK, yet specifically in cities that have a high student population (Clarke, 2020). This tour will work conjunction with the UniDays collaboration and is an attempt to engage with the younger target audience. The medium sized venues will allow a near full capacity and the inclusion of a discount for students alongside previously mentioned promotional activity should bolster the crowd numbers to nearly full capacity. Furthermore, the shows will also feature a pop-up tent hidden around each city for a day or two before the show. This is a piece of promotional activity that once again plays upon the notion of the ‘experience economy’ and is directly aimed at targeting younger demographic to feel like they are involved in the tour. The competition element of the promotional activity “gaining new customers and

re-engaging with old customers..(competitions) can also help drive awareness about a brand and its products and services.” (Perry, 2021). Additionally, they also greatly “improve customer engagement” (Perry, 2021) which means that fans will be far more likely to purchase merchandise and tickets, and be pushed further down the marketing funnel, thus creating brand loyalty. The key benefit of this is that “satisfied customers tend not only to return to purchase once again but also to recommend to their friends and family” (Richardson, 2019). Furthermore, a string of live festival dates will only further bolster BBB prominence within a mainstream culture. Festival dates allows entirely new audiences to witness the electric live BBB show, with the string of UK Club tour dates acting as a promotional pieces of content leading upto the bigger festival dates. Therefore, the live element of the campaign combined with the pop-up shop will satisfy the objectives of engaging both younger and older audiences, whilst also presenting BBB to a more mainstream audience. This, in turn, will also greatly boost the numbers BBB receive on DSP’s like Spotify.

Overall, BBB currently have a firm basis with which to launch their new campaign off. Their socials are somewhat lacking in content and engagement but have huge scope for potential. A clear audience has been defined which includes both younger and older demographics. The SMART objectives of the campaign have been clearly defined and laid out, with the release strategy featuring many impact points to bolster the campaign and contribute towards achieving the objectives. The brand partnership with UniDays (including the discounted ticket prices), the Fortnite skin and the music video are all impact points that satisfy the objective of appealing to younger audiences, whilst also aiding in projecting BBB to a more mainstream audience. The Fightback brand partnership, alongside the graphic novel and a nostalgic music video also satisfy the objective of the campaign in appealing to older demographics. The promotional tour is universal across all demographics, whilst also satisfying the objective of appealing to a more mainstream audience. Finally, the entirety of the campaign will massively contribute towards the third objective of gaining a higher number of plays, playlist positions and generally increasing the level of popularity of Buzzard Buzzard Buzzard.

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