

ENTERTAINMENT MARKETING REPORT

ASAKAA BOYS: KUMASI DRILL (VOL 1)

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In this report, I present an extensive and comprehensive marketing strategy for a forthcoming Ghainain drill compilation entitled *Asakaa Boys: Kumasi Drill (Vol 1)*. This digital compilation will feature 10 - 12 tracks from key artists in the burgeoning Ghanaian drill movement, covering the scene's most prominent players and new acts.

This report is comprised of a marketing budget, release timeline, and a tailored national and international marketing project plan informed by meticulous research, with insights from various music data platforms. The report will outline a promotional strategy for 2 lead singles with accompanying music videos, culminating in a short run of promotional shows. The marketing strategy presented not only aims to promote the release of the *Asakaa Boys: Kumasi Drill (Vol 1)* compilation, but will also consider innovative ways in which to enhance the Asakaa Boys overall brand image, further expanding the group's audience both domestically and internationally.

Artist Overview

The Asakaa boys are a collective of young rappers who are taking the exciting new Ghanaian drill sound of Asakaa to international heights, and in the process have become the unlikely creative ambassadors to the city of Kumasi, commonly recognised as Ghana's second city after the thriving musical hot spot capital Accra. (Osei, 2021) Since its inception, the collective has filtered the entirety of their creative output through their in-house record label Living Life Records, captivating Ghana's youth with their sound. In the Akan local language Twi - which the collective mix with English in their lyrics - 'Asakaa' loosely translates to the word drill, paying homage to the viral genre that originated on the south side of Chicago via rappers like Chief Keef, (Ellingham, 2021) consequently migrating to and embedded itself within the fabric of popular U.K. Drill has now been adopted in some form by most major cities across the world like New York, Paris, Amsterdam, Atlanta, South Korea and Johannesburg. (Soundfield, 2023) The Asakaa Boy's afro-drill fusion sets itself apart by its seamless incorporation of local musical elements, energetic beats and thought provoking lyricism. All at a time when contemporary and distinctly African music is experiencing unprecedented scope across the global music industry, which may be attributed in part to viral genres like Afrobeats, Afropop and Amapiano.

The music of Asakaa boys and more generally, Kumasi drill, has achieved a level of cross cultural pollination uncommon in most African rap subgenres, reflected in the term “Kumerica” - an amalgam of the words Kumasi and America,(Ellingham, 2021) - that has become a colloquial nickname for the scene, highlighting common threads between the narratives of aspiration, hardship and brotherhood that feature in both American and Kumasi drill. The collective has become the face of street culture in Ghana, representing a distinct style, fashion and lifestyle that has been incorporated into national youth culture, and embraced by the diaspora and wider international rap audiences. In September 2020, the then 18 year old Yaw Tog, one of Asakaa Boys key players dropped his anthemic debut single *Sore*, which went viral (Kazandjian, 2021), resulting in a collaborative remix with U.K rap royalty Stormzy and Kwesi Aurthur, alongside early cosigns from Headie One, OFB and NSG. Perhaps their most notable support came in the form of mentorship from the late Louis Vuitton artistic director Virgil Abloh, who gifted the artists with clothes from his own brand Off White and promoted their music on his own Televised_Radio platform before his untimely passing, (Reed, 2021) providing visibility to the Asakaa movement in U.K, Europe and United States.

Social Media Statistics (via Chart Metric and Soundcharts)

The Asakaa Boys collective is made up of 9 members, O’Kenneth, Jay Bahd, Kawabanga, Cedi City Boy, Kwaku DMC, Yaw Tog and Sean Lifer Braa Benk and Sean Lifer, who will all contribute music to the compilation. Overtime, Asakaa Boys have effectively optimised their social media channels, cultivating healthy and engaged networks with an active presence across Instagram, Youtube and Tik Tok, which will prove to be beneficial when promoting the compilation in the digital sphere. In an attention economy where appeasing the algorithm is key, it is vital that artists avoid periods of absence or inconsistent activity. (Soundfield, 2023)

Below is a brief collation of statistics for 5 artists who will be foregrounded across the campaign.

Yaw Tog

Spotify: 122,314 monthly listens

Track: Sore Remix, ft Stormzy, 6.9 million streams

Instagram: 650 K

Youtube Subs: 189 K

Jay Bahd

Spotify: 48,432 monthly listens

Track: Y3 Y3 DOM, 1.4 million streams

Instagram: 432 K

Youtube Subs: 120K

O’Kenneth

Spotify: 44,530 monthly listeners
Track: Sinner, 1.8 million streams
Instagram: 219 K
Youtube Subs: 9.08K

Kwaku DMC

Spotify: 21,571 monthly listeners
Track: Sika Aba Fie, 468110 streams
Instagram: 170 K
Youtube Subs: 38.6K

Sean Lifer

Spotify: 7688 monthly listens
Track: Ma Drip, 456584 streams
Instagram: 26 K
Youtube Subs: 14.2K

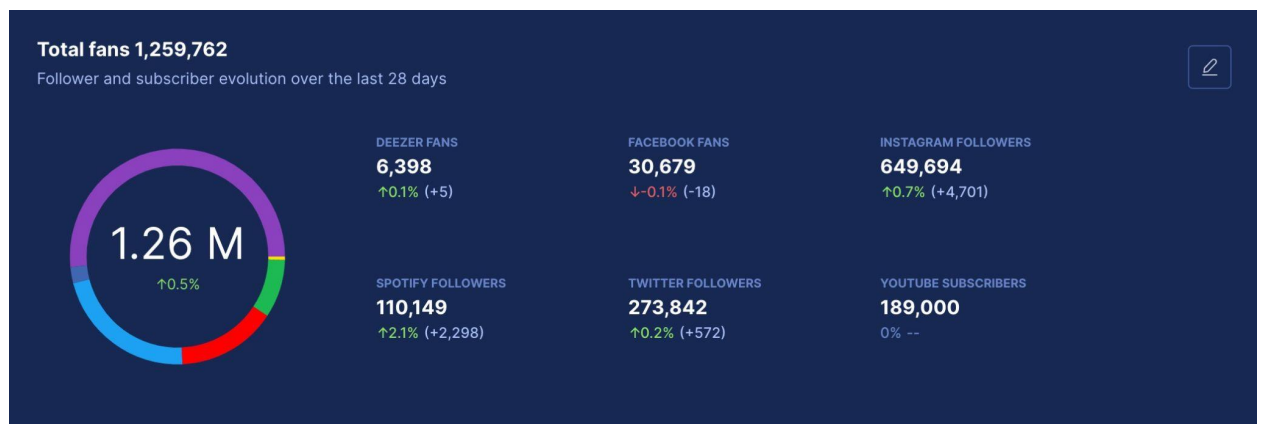
These specific data points have been collected via music data aggregator Chart Metric, to give insight on how best to optimize the reach of the compilation and identify which platforms will produce the lucrative results. This will also inform how much budget is allocated to ad spend and sponsored posts on each platform. These 5 artists have been highlighted as they have the largest and most engaged fan base. Notable announcements regarding the release will be most effectively shared via their artist channels, as a pose to the featured artists with more limited reach. There will be specific focus on cross capturing and leveraging their audience to achieve optimum visibility to drive streams across the compilation. With consent from the artists, insights from their platform specific, proprietary analytics tools will be utilised in order to track performance across the promotional campaign, and make adjustments accordingly. In instances where ad spend is employed, i.e, the announcement of the compilation, single drops, music videos and tour dates, the above 5 accounts will be priority channels for cost efficiency.

Through analysis of the statistics provided by Chart Metric, it is evident that the two artists within the Asakaa Boys collective with the highest fan conversion rates are Yaw Tog and Jay Bahd. For this reason, they have the two lead tracks on the compilation with music videos to increase the likelihood of curatorial playlist placements on major DSPs like Spotify and Apple Music.

Chart Metric shows that Yaw Tog's most engaged audience is on Instagram with stable follower growth between April22nd, 2023 and May 19th, 2023. Chart Metrics "Milestones" feature shows that Yaw Tog's highest performing track *Sore* Remix ft Stormzy amassed significant engagement in Singapore, where it ranked 5 on the Spotify hip hop and rap chart, with further international placements in Belgium, Norway, The Netherlands and Germany, (where there are notable Ghanaian and West African communities) alongside consistent placements across the

African continent, specifically in West African countries. This offers insight into which geographical territories may be most responsive to promotional content, and will later be drawn upon when mapping out the tour schedule. Similarly, Jay Bahd's chart metric ranking shows a stable and steady monotonic rise between April 22nd, 2023 and May 19th, 2023. His milestone's page shows that Jay Bahd's Youtube channel amassed 10 million views on June 8th 2023, consolidating it as one of the platforms where he receives the most active engagement, alongside Instagram, Tik Tok, Spotify and Twitter. These will be the target platforms for promotional materials and announcements.

Although data analytics are highly informative when developing marketing strategies, it is important to note that multiple factors can lead to flawed data collection, for example instances where an artist changes their social media handles, has inconsistent artist activity, fake followers and bots. Utilising flawed data can result in ill informed strategy and loss of revenue and momentum. (Buli, 2023) It is essential to cross check data analytics across aggregators to ensure the insights are accurate. Below are the statistics for both (image A) Yaw Tog and (image B) Jay Bad collated by Soundcharts.



A.

(Yaw Tog artist stats provided by Soundcharts)



B.

(Jay Bahd stats provided by Soundcharts)

Following analysis, the statistical insights from both Chart Metric and Soundcharts correlate, therefore it is acceptable to treat these statistics as accurate.

Ghana's top 3 music genres are listed on Chart Metric as "African", "Christian", and "Hip Hop / Rap", indicating that there is fertile grounds to build audience for the compilation. Whilst the official members of Asakaa Boys don't fall within the top 10 streaming artists, their close collaborator and affiliate Black Sheriff ranks at number 10. Using this data as a guide, the potential for a feature on one of the lead tracks, alongside other avenues for collaboration, i.e social media and tour appearances will be explored in order to maximise potential reach and potentially capture some of Black Sheriff's audience. Furthermore, as Black Sheriff is a comparable artist to Asakaa Boys, a specific focus will be placed on his most engaged markets outside of Ghana, which include the U.K, due to collaborations with artists popular local artists like AAR Dee, the U.S, due to collaborations with 50 cent, Nigeria, where his collaboration with Burna Boy was highly successful and the Netherlands, where his tracks have ranked well in rap streaming charts. These are regions that will be included in both tour and promotional strategies.

Target Market

Asakaa Boys are associated with a larger street culture and movement known as "Asakaa" in Ghana. This movement represents a distinct style, fashion, and lifestyle embraced by the youth, particularly in Kumasi. Their demographic is predominantly:

- Aged between 16 & 30
- Live in cities
- Engaged in hip hop and rap

- Majority male identifying
- Identify with underground subcultural movements
- Appeals to, but not at all limited to Ghanain and West African diasporas
- Interested in street wear and hype beast culture
- Social media savvy, users of tik tok, youtube, instagram and twitter
- Taste makers, early adopters and influencers

Target DSPS

According to data collated on similarweb in 2023, the top music streaming platforms in Ghana are as follows:

Boomplay
Audio Mack
Youtube
Spotify
Apple Music
Pandora
Deezer
MTN's Musictime

In order to propose deliverable outcomes, it is important to understand user behaviours and the technological landscape within home territories. Whilst the goal is to achieve new and international audiences, it is vital to maintain the support already garnered by the collective in Ghana and neighboring territories.

Key characteristics to consider when marketing music in West Africa include local streaming platforms that cater specifically to local markets, and hold market share that deviated from western markets. Examples specific to Ghana include Boomplay, Aftown, and Play Africa. These platforms showcase Ghanaian music and offer opportunities for local artists to distribute their music to a broader audience. Boomplay (alongside Audio Mack) is one of the leading music streaming and download services in Africa, with over 90 million songs, videos and entertainment news features. (Marx, 2020) The service, which is particularly popular in Ghana, is controlled by Chinese companies NetEase, a streaming/mobile gaming competitor to Tencent, and Transsion, Africa's largest seller of smartphones. Today, around 86% of Boomplay's 75 million global users are in sub-Saharan Africa. It also offers comprehensive marketing plans for artists to reach their target audiences (Marx, 2020) It must be acknowledged that Boomplay's success can largely be attributed to the growth correlation between music consumption and smartphone access on the continent. It is worth noting that in 2015, Boomplay was launched as a preinstalled music player on low-cost Transsion handsets, which proved advantageous in achieving significant early market share in west African territories.

Blog marketing is still a primary method of music discovery, and therefore must be incorporated into the promotional strategy in Ghana. Furthermore, music piracy still is still rife on the continent due to high data and smartphone prices in countries with comparatively low disposable incomes and a lack of reliable online payment options for streaming service providers that employ subscription based models. (Marx, 2020) However some streaming platforms have integrated mobile money payment options via services like MTN Money Mobile and Vodaphone cash (widely used in Ghana) making it easier for users to subscribe and pay for premium services.

Playlist Strategy in Ghana and Neighbouring Territories

Upon analysis of the above research, the target editorial playlists to pitch track placements in the African markets - listed in order of priority - are:

Boomplay: Top New Music, 44.8 million streams
Boomplay: Hot Picks of The Week, 30.1 million streams
Boomplay: Midweek Music, 15.3 million streams
Boomplay: Africa's Best, 10.1 million streams
Boomplay: Ghana's Best, 3.5 million streams

Additionally, the compilation's lead tracks from both Yaw Tog or Jay Bahd will be pitched for the Boomplay 'Focus' feature, which platforms new artists and releases on the service. In the instance that a collaboration with Black Sheriff is confirmed, this track will take precedence due to Boomplay's consistent coverage and support of Black Sheriff's output, increasing the possibility for placements across the rest of the compilation.

Target editorial playlists on Audio Mack are as follows:

Audio Mack Africa: New Music Friday Releases, 3.60 million streams
Audio Mack: GRM Rated Playlist, 1.33 million streams
Audio Mack: Road Men Drill Playlist, 1.80 million streams
Audio Mack: Weekly 100 Geo Charts: United Kingdom, 1.89 million streams
(also covering respective Geo Charts playlists in Belgium, France and the Netherlands as they are territories where the artists have achieved listenership.)

Whilst Audio Mack is less popular outside of the African continent, securing placements will improve access to diaspora audiences in other territories that may be engaging with the service to stay connected to African music trends.

Playlist Strategy in Rest of World

Editorial playlists in rest of world territories that are relevant to the campaign include:

Spotify: New Music Friday, 4,123,002 likes
Spotify: African Heat, 1,381,042 likes
Spotify: New Music Friday UK, 833,269 likes
Spotify: Hip Hop Favourites, 438464 likes
Spotify: Hypebeast Sounds, 20,261 likes
Spotify: OkayAfrica, Ghana Wave, 1500 likes

Youtube / Music Video Strategy

This same reasoning can be applied to the question of why African, and other 'global south' artists achieve such phenomenal streaming rates on Youtube. Diaspora communities play a significant role in driving the success of African artists on YouTube. African music has strong ties to diaspora communities in countries like the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Belgium, the Netherlands etc. These communities actively engage with African music on YouTube, supporting and sharing the music with their networks, which further amplifies its reach. It is essential that the two music videos produced for the compilation showcase vibrant aesthetics, colorful imagery and maximal energy. Presenting distinct cultural references, whilst portraying an authentic snapshot of the artist's raw and real life stories are essential in order to connect with the diaspora, as well as global rap and drill fans, as these demographics will be essential in circulating the release.



Above is an example of the aesthetic direction of the music videos, shot on the ground in Kumasi, presenting an authentic insight into the lives of the collective, spotlighting the notion of brotherhood. Landscape shots of Kumasi will set the videos apart from western drill videos, with the adoption of lyric captions so that new, global audiences can engage with the messages in the lyrics. The videos will be placed on both Jay Bahd and Yaw Tog's profiles respectively, due

to their substantial reach. The first video will be released on announcing the compilation, serving as a useful asset when pitching to press outlets like Native Magazine, Pitchfork, Crack Magazine, Complex Mag, GRM Daily and Okay Africa.

On social media, all visual assets from the campaign will be cross promoted to include: YouTube Shorts, Instagram (reels), Facebook, twitch and discord. As Asakaa Boys Target audience are aged between 20 - 30 years old, these are the platforms on which we will reach that demographic. This a proven method of growing an artist's following, thus expanding the reach of the compilation. Throughout the campaign, the hashtags 'Asakaa Boys' and 'Kumerica' will be employed. Hashtags make it easy for fans to locate collections of content that peak their interest. On platforms like TikTok, in order to grow audience, a combination of branded hashtags, general hashtags and trending hashtags will be used across the artists channels.

Audience, Brand Affinity

Asakaa Boys have amassed a number of high profile co-signs, that must be referenced in the press release and present across all comms. Co-signs are incredibly effective in Hip Hop and Rap culture, and the promotional strategy will incorporate this. Notable co-signs of Asakaa Boys include:

Wildly popular, late New York drill artist Pop Smoke.

Virgil Abloh and his company Off White who gifted the artists clothing for their music videos and social media.

Stormzy

Headie One

NSG

Daily Paper (Clothing brand)

Co-signs from these artists and brands are extremely valuable, as they have highly engaged fans within the compilation's target market. In order to elevate the artist's presence in fashion sectors, we will pitch partnerships between the key artists and daily paper, who have a strong track record for supporting emerging African artists. Daily Paper specialises in 'Street Couture', casual wear that's influenced by the concept of identity and Unique African heritage'. (Tondur, 2023) There is a significant and authentic cross over between both Daily Paper and Asakaa Boys.

As fashion is an important part of the Asakaa Culture a series of merchandise and paraphernalia (T-shirts, hoodies, caps, lighters, cups, socks and many more) will be made available to purchase alongside the compilation in order to establish "Asakaa" as a brand and diversify revenue streams. This will be done with Printfall on a print to order basis to reduce costs.

To enhance cross audience capture, we will attempt to reignite the continuation of support Virgil Abloh offered the collective before his untimely passing, and reach out to his company Off White

to explore partnership avenues. If this is not possible, we will pitch the lead artists for brand ambassador roles for the brand. This will be mutually beneficial as Off White will establish itself as an early supporter of an emerging African music genre that has strong visibility with young, underground and creative audiences.

Influencer Marketing

In order to achieve growth amongst new audiences in Western markets, a week before the release drops in full, we aim to achieve an interview on the popular youtube show Chicken Shop Dates. The show's host, Amelia Dimoldenberg has 1.9 million youtube subscribers with 765.1K monthly views, with an average of 943.1K views per video. (HypeAuditor, 2023) The show's format consists of interviews with rappers and celebrities that take place in a chicken shop, and has garnered a cult presence amongst rap audiences in the U.K and U.S. Due to the shows increased popularity, and the high caliber guests who feature (Central Cee, Digga Dee Santan Dave), it has established itself as a right of passage for up coming and established artists in rap culture, and it's reach has extended into mainstream markets. Chicken Shop Dates' audience demographic is largely made up of gen z's and millennials who are highly engaged with popular culture, street wear and music. Furthermore, it attracts viewers of all genders. Dimoldenberg also cross posts on her highly popular social media accounts, which will drive new exposure for the artists and the compilation, strengthening both brands. Furthermore, the show drives user generated content with multiple youtube content creators reviewing each episode.



Promotional Mini - Tour

The artists expressed a desire to execute a short run of promotional gigs around the compilation release, in Accra and Kumasi in Ghana, as well as London due to its large Ghanaian diaspora and drill community.

The Ghana shows need to have an authentic, hometown hero feel. The collective will organise block parties to ensure the access is free and the attendance is high. They will partner with their close collaborator and popular local promoter Block Party Ghana to orchestrate the show. The assets will be afro-centric and low key to generate an organic vibe where everyone feels welcome. The parties will be recorded by the collective's in-house videographer for promotional material.

Asset design will be similar to the image below. Continuity across all promotional materials regarding the tour will be maintained to ensure brand recognition.



The events and promotional run will generate content for the artists social media channels, which will be used to increase anticipation and also shine light on other creative avenues the collective are involved in. The promotional run in the U.K will include interviews and/or podcasts with relevant hip hop and rap tastemakers like DJ Semtex, Charlie Sloth and Benji B who have

influential and direct relationships with the target market. The interviewers will be briefed to host candid, honest conversations about the collective's experience with social issues like race, poverty and colonialism, in order to present a more complete picture of who the artists are.

The London date of the tour will be in collaboration with Boiler Room, who have agreed to cover the artists travel and accommodation, as the show is part of their editorial series. The collective will curate a line up consisting of their high profile U.K drill allies, in a 500 capacity venue (hire fee covered by Boiler Room) to create an intimate experience for their die hard fans. The event will be marketed to African diaspora audiences via social media platforms that document music scenes in Africa and function as a public sphere for diaspora communities to congregate and engage with their culture. We will also engage traditional promotional marketing like flyers and posters, strategically placed in areas where Ghainain and other West African communities reside. As Boiler Room have a significant presence in rap fan demographics, due to their shows with hallmark U.K drill acts like Unknown Tee and Skepta, this will be sufficient in marketing to those audiences.

The format of the broadcast will be similar to the recent Unknown Tee and Friends show, and the self-curated Skepta broadcast.

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we're not always able to.

IN 3 DAYS

BOILER ROOM RAP FANTASY: UNKNOWN T & FRIENDS

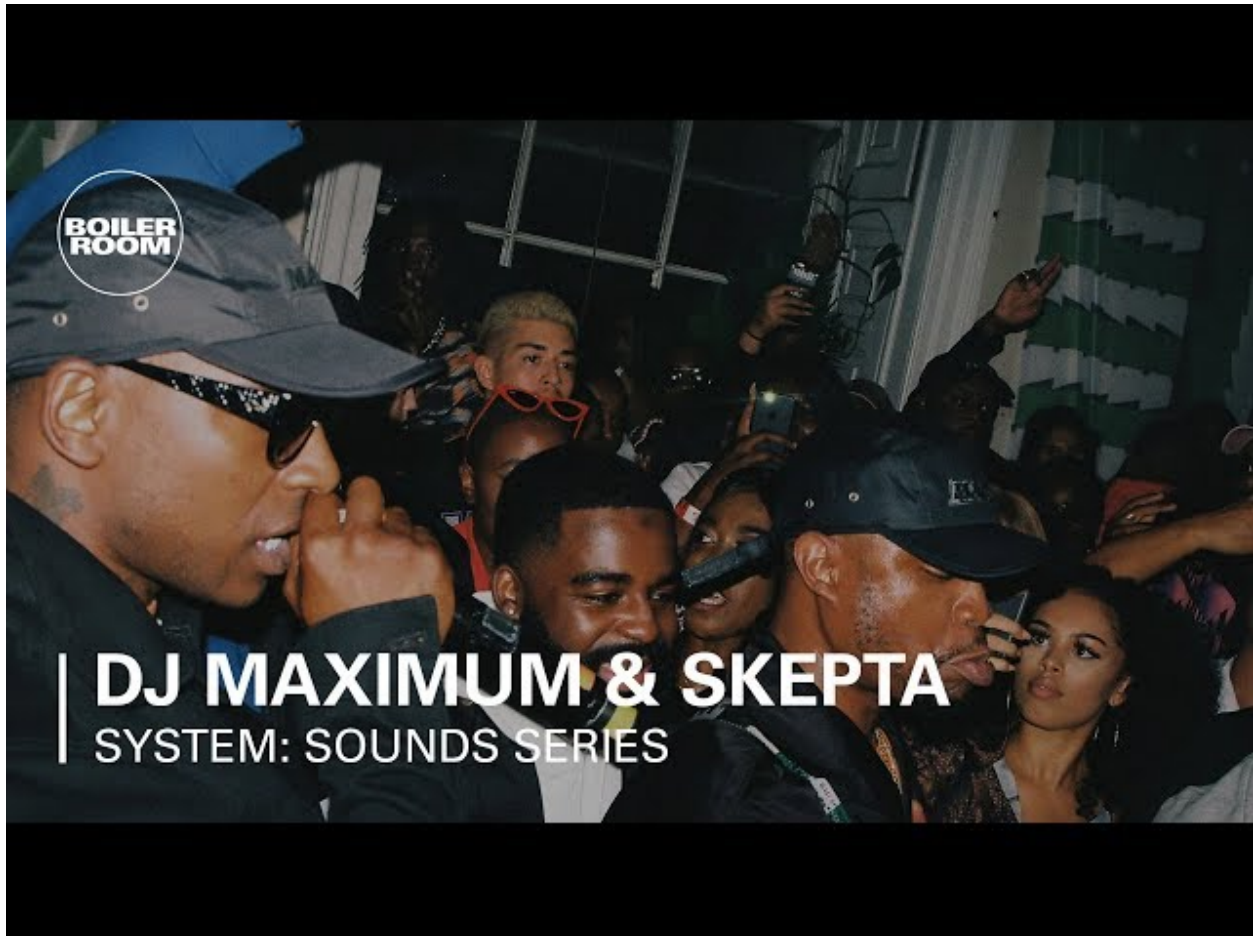
London | 04 May 2023 | 19:00 - 00:00 BST

Boiler Room's Rap Fantasy links up with Unknown T for a proper family get-together. Expect some very, very special guests.

Entry is free, RSVP required.

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Campaign Timeline, Using Waterfall Release Strategy

Date + Action Points

Release Date: Premiere Track + Music Video: Friday 24th September 2023

Second Track + Music Video and Full Compilation: October 13th

August 1st: Upon the completion of the compilation, shoot music video for lead track with Yaw Tog

August 15th: Pitch compilation to DSPS like Spotify for playlisting 28 working days before the scheduled 1st release date on 22nd September 2023. Pitch to relevant media outlets and selected radio producers.

August 25th: First draft of music video submitted for review.

August 29th: Final Edit of 1st music video delivered with relevant teaser and BTS assets.

August 30th: Shoot Video for 2nd lead track with Jay Bahd.

September 1st: First draft of 2nd Music Video submitted for review.

September 6th: Final edit of 2nd music video submitted.

September 13th - All artwork, graphics, merch and relevant assets to be submitted in full. EPK for release completed. Watermarked lead tracks and 1st music video to be sent out to trusted and relevant media outlets and influencers in West Africa, Europe and the U.S including Dazed, Resident Advisor, Native Magazine, Okay Africa etc for initial listening via Fat Drop. Upload to ever-green pre save, seed snippet track for artists instagram / tik tok channels.

September 21st: Release behind the scenes assets to tease 1st music video on instagram, tik tok and twitter with caption "Yaw Tog: 'Track Title' with brief audio clip of the track. Provide a countdown link to the Youtube Premier ahead of launch the following day.

September 22nd: Premiere music video on youtube via artists channels, with coverage from selected press. Announce full compilation with music video as an asset to ensure press are inclined to cover. Pre save link goes live, with full tracklist.

October 4th: Chicken Shop Dates Appearance ft Yaw Tog

October 13th: Launch second and final music video with Jay Bahd, release compilation in full. Make merch available to purchase. Block party in Kumasi to celebrate release day.

October 14th: Block Party in Accra to promote release.

October 17th: Key artists arrive in London. Boiler room announce party with free sign up link across their channels 3 days in advance to create hype.

October 19th: Podcast and radio appearances on London platforms.

October 20th: Boiler Room event.

£30 000 Budget Breakdown

The distribution company has offered a £30 000 budget for marketing spend. This is detailed below.

1. Digital Advertising (40% of the budget - £12,000):

- Social Media Advertising: Allocate funds for targeted ads on platforms like Tik Tok Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to reach the desired audience.
- YouTube Advertising: Invest in pre-roll ads and YouTube channel placements to promote the compilation and the 2 music videos.
- Display Advertising: Utilize banner ads on relevant websites and blogs frequented by drill music enthusiasts.

2. Influencer Marketing (10% of the budget - £3,000):

- Identify popular influencers and content creators within the drill music genre and negotiate partnerships for sponsored content, shoutouts, or collaborations.
- Focus on influencers with a significant following and engagement from the target audience to maximize the impact of the campaign.

3. Music Video Production (25% of the budget - £7,500):

- Allocate a portion of the budget for the production and post-production costs of two high-quality music videos.
- Budget for professional director, videographer, and editor to ensure the videos meet industry standards and effectively convey the desired aesthetic.

4. Public Relations and Press (10% of the budget - £3,000):

- Work with radio pluggers and playlist pitchers
- Contingency for distribution services to ensure maximum exposure and coverage.

5. Streaming Platforms Promotion (10% of the budget - £3,000):

- Allocate funds to promote the mixtape and music videos on popular streaming platforms like Spotify, Apple Music, and SoundCloud.
- Invest in playlist placements, targeted ads within the platforms, and collaborations with curators to increase visibility and generate streams.

6. Artwork and digital assets (5% of the budget - £1,500):

- Artwork for compilation, tour flyers. (Merchandise made on a pay to print basis to reduce costs)

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