

Chloe Bacon
2013880

Foundation
Element 2 - Essay

Deviate Digital is a digital media company founded in 2017 by Sammy Andrews. It aims to provide a wide range of digital services from social marketing campaigns to streaming strategies and asset creation. The company was founded after Andrews noticed, during her time at Entertainment Intelligence, that

“.....people had no real idea of what to do with any data they were accessing or being able to find creative or innovative agencies that aren't just your standard campaign management and advisories.”

(Andrews, 2017)

In the four years since Deviate Digital was founded, it has worked with numerous high profile clients, the most notable of which is Annie Lennox who has worked with Deviate Digital since it began. Other notable clients include Apple Music, Island Records, Warchild and Universal.

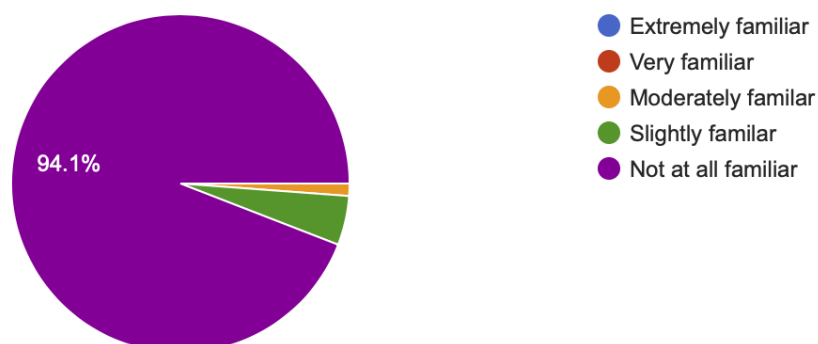
I chose to rebrand Deviate Digital because whilst they are a digital media company that has and continues to work with high profile clients, there is little information available about what the company does. However, for Andrews, the digital footprint seems to be of little importance. In a tweet she stated, “Word of mouth recommendations are everything” (Sammy Andrews, 2019). This belief that word of mouth means more than promotion and brand awareness has underpinned my decision to develop a strategic approach for this rebrand.

Whilst word of mouth is important, it is also important that those just entering the music industry know and understand what Deviate Digital as a company can provide for them.

Through a survey I conducted using Google Forms, it became clear that this currently isn't the case. 76.5% of the respondents were from those in the 21-30 age bracket, of which, only 6% have heard of Deviate Digital and what they do. (Bacon, 2021)

How familiar are you with Deviate Digital

85 responses



So how can Deviate Digital change this? What can they do? What do they need to change? To understand this we first need to look at what the company does currently, their branding and strategy, what works and what doesn't.

Deviate Digital's main purpose is to provide a '360 creative digital agency' to their clients within the music industry. They pride themselves in providing industry-leading advice and being able to create an innovative and unconventional strategy for their clients. Stef Pascual, Deviate Digital's first Strategy Director, describes the company as "a forward-thinking company with incredible potential in the wider entertainment realm." (Pascual, 2021) In a 2017 interview with Music Week, Andrews discussed how innovation is key within the whole music industry, and that the rate of innovation is fast. She explains that this is why Deviate Digital was created, it's a way for those in the industry, whether that's artists, managers and labels alike, to be told how best to use the latest digital innovations to their advantage. Andrews explains that innovation "...is what we breathe and sleep and we know it inside out. And we generally know what's coming as well as what's happening" (Andrews, 2017, page 3)

So how does a company that prides itself on innovation and providing industry-leading work earn an income? Well, the answer is clear, Deviate Digital's clients pay for their services for however long they're needed, more than likely for the length of a campaign. And although there are no official prices linked to Deviate Digital, it is safe to assume that a company with the breadth of services and talent that the company has to offer, is likely to be in the region of £1000 per month. It's also safe to assume that this price will increase depending on the services that the client requires. For example, if paid advertising is recommended by Deviate Digital then that will be an added cost that the client will have to consider.

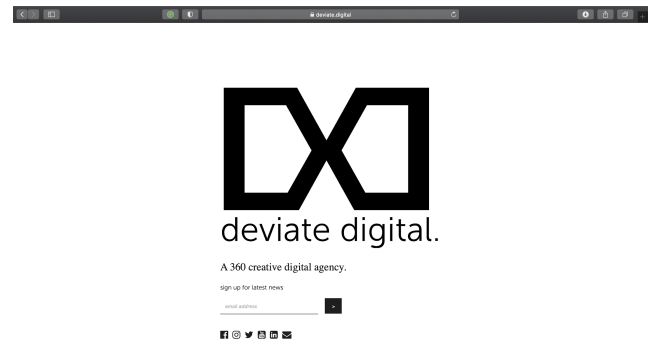
Deviate Digital's branding is quite simple. A black and white logo constructed of two geometric D's, one of which is inverted so that they can both connect. The name of the company is underneath in a small, lowercase font. This less is more approach works perfectly with the way Deviate Digital has branded itself since its inception. It shows thoughtful simplicity while also showing the innovation, or deviation if you will, of the company through having inverted just one single D. Others may feel that black and white logos such as this one aren't as impactful or memorable as colour logos would be. But I believe that this opinion is wrong, some of the most well-known companies both outside and inside the music industry are monochromatic. For example, outside the industry Nike and Apple whilst within the industry we have Columbia Records and Tidal.



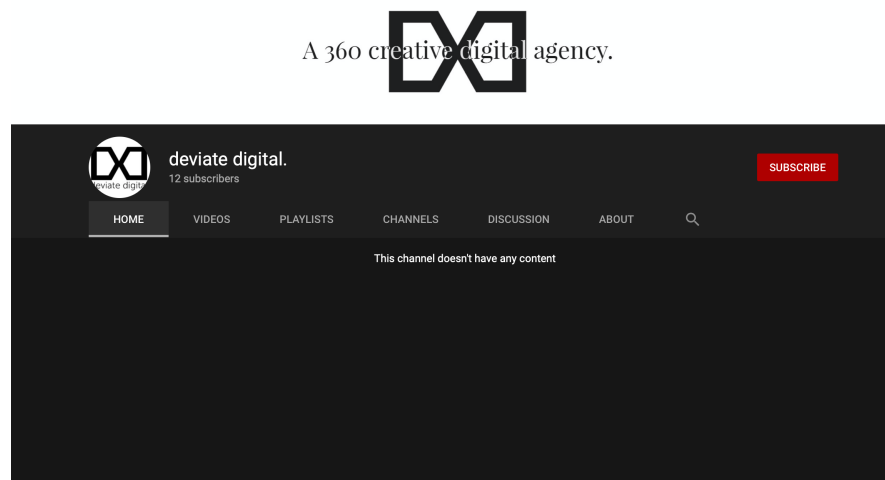
Following on from the simple logo, we go to a very basic (in my opinion) website. Deviate Digital's website is just a single landing page with no information, only the logo with the company slogan 'A 360 creative digital agency' underneath it. There are also links to various social media platforms as well as a sign up for a mailing list.

Andrews, in a tweet, explains the reasoning behind having a landing page only,

"We've built a thriving agency without ever having a website. Landing page only since the day I opened the Deviate doors...You don't need a fancy site to get clients, let your work speak for itself."
(Andrews, 2020)



Upon looking into the website further you soon find that the links to the various social media platforms are out of date or take you to accounts that seem to be rarely used. For example, the YouTube link takes you to an empty YouTube channel page with no content.



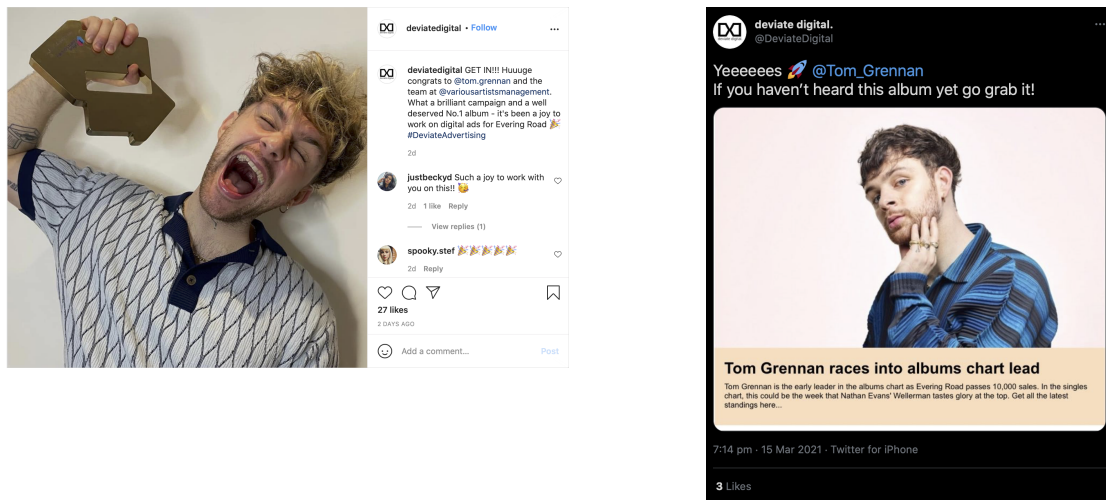
This leads me to my next point, which is how Deviate Digital uses its social media platforms. Despite having Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube links on their landing page, only two of the five are used regularly, Twitter and Instagram, Twitter being used more regularly. The company's LinkedIn page hasn't had any activity since May 2020 and the Facebook page has also not seen activity since June 2020.

With the social media platforms that are used, you get a sense of no cohesion, almost as if both pages are being run by someone different.

In my research, it became clear that there's no unity between what Deviate Digital shares on their Twitter and Instagram accounts. Their Twitter account is mainly retweets from those that they've worked with as well as some from their CEO and other music news accounts,

such as Music Week. Whilst their Instagram account is more of their own content, meaning no reposting of others posts more than likely because it is harder to do on Instagram, but not impossible. It also became clear in my research that Deviate Digital only uses Instagram to share posts rather than make the most of the story and highlights features of Instagram.

I also noticed that Instagram, even though it's the account with fewer followers than Twitter, gets more interaction. For example, their post for Tom Grennan getting a number 1 album on Instagram received 27 likes and 2 comments, whereas their tweet discussing how Tom was close to getting the number 1 only received 3 likes.



Through my own experience of Deviate Digital's website and viewing what they share across all their social media platforms it became clear to me that the company doesn't seem to care about how they are portrayed in the digital world. This is an area of concern because how can you expect to get new clients and more work if there is no regular engagement on social media.

The lack of website and poor use of social media could also imply to those looking at using Deviate Digital in the future that they aren't as good at digital advice as they claim to be. To me, if it wasn't for the power of word of mouth, recommendation and the renown that Sammy Andrews (CEO) has, then Deviate Digital as a company would be struggling to find work. I know that if I was looking to hire someone to work on my digital strategy I'd want a company that can prove they can do it and do it well, something that's not shown through Deviate Digital's own spaces.

Having looked at what Deviate Digital is currently doing well, the next step was to develop a strategy to help them improve their brand and social media presence. For me, this strategy needed to focus less on the branding and iconography of the company and more on how they can increase their presence and improve what they've already started.

It was decided that instead of creating a brand new logo I would instead change the font to something that has a little more impact. Typography impacts the user experience and 'the attitude, history and culture of a company are conveyed with the letterforms of the logo' (Adams, Morioka and Stone, 2006). So I felt that having a strong font within the logo was

key. In a study done in association with The British Journal of Psychology, it was shown that uppercase text is “more etymologically recognisable than lowercase” (Ward, 2014) So with this in mind, it was decided that a sans-serif font, much like the current Deviate Digital font, all in uppercase, would be the best way forward. Lemon Milk was the typeface I chose as it's a clean, modern type that's a change from the font used currently but not a drastic change that steers you away from the company.

The next step in the strategy was to improve the company website. I felt that the site needs to offer more information whilst still keeping its original sense of mystery . Knowing that Andrews is most proud that the majority of the company's previous work has come from word of mouth recommendations, it was decided that the website would tease visitors just enough to entice them into further investigations or even contact the company. Knowing that you lose viewers with every click, it made sense to go with a design that has limited clicks. A single page site allows for better navigation and works well with the plan to not bombard the viewer with information. Studies have also shown that a single page site leads to more conversions (37.5%) than multi-page sites (Adiseshiah, 2018) Having chosen to stick with the monochromatic colour scheme for the company iconography, it was carried through onto the colour scheme for the site design. The site switches between black and white accent pages to signify a new section of information. This makes it easier for the user to then scroll to the section that they require removing the need for a navigation bar. The overall design of the site is simple. Perhaps not something a company that wants to be seen as innovative would like, but I feel it works best. It's a way of showing prospective clients that Deviate Digital is also capable of doing the more traditional aspects of digital advice as well as the more innovative, unconventional aspects.

The site design doesn't include many sections, instead, only the basic need to know information will be shared with those browsing the site. This should include an 'about' section that offers a snapshot into what Deviate Digital stands for, aimed especially at those who may know of the company but don't know what they do exactly. A 'who we've worked with' section that shows a small cross-section of the music companies/artists that Deviate Digital have worked with. An 'our work' section that shares a headlining piece of work, in the example I've used the Annie Lennox Global Feminism film. This section should be kept up to date with current work. The next section should be 'what we can do for you'. This section is used to highlight what Deviate Digital can do for you and the services that they can provide.

Website design can be expensive, especially when you want that design to be of a high standard. However, given the fact that Deviate Digital is a digital company with staff that can do website design, this cost could be reduced by bringing the site design inhouse. This would also make keeping the site updated and current more cost effective. If the company decides to outsource the design and creation of the site then expected costs could be as much as £5000. This cost could increase or reduce because of several factors like complexity or aesthetic.

The next step of the strategy is to improve the company's use of social media. The approach at the moment is not cohesive across all platforms with some platforms being updated and others not. 'More than 98% of the users of any given social media platform also use at least one other social platform' (Hootsuite, 2021) and it's for this reason that I would suggest that Deviate Digital delete their YouTube and Facebook accounts and focus on Twitter, Instagram

and LinkedIn. Deviate Digital doesn't need the multichannel strategy that they currently have and instead focus on having a larger reach on a few key platforms in order to get the same reach.

Taking into consideration the fact that the CEO doesn't like sharing everything that the company does, it would make sense to focus on fewer social media platforms. This would enable a more cohesive approach and streamline the updating process. Therefore, the content stays fresh and current.

The creation of an office song of the week hashtag, shared across Twitter and Instagram would encourage more people to follow and engage with the company. This feature becomes a subtle way of showcasing projects and highlighting previous work. The hashtag office song of the week could enable the creation of playlists across all streaming platforms publicly available as another way of presenting the company's portfolio of work.

Not only does the creation of this feature allow more people to interact with Deviate Digital, it can also be used to highlight the company's values, a provider of a more personable and less corporate approach.

This feature would also mean that Deviate Digital could make the most of the story and highlight features on Instagram, by sharing and then saving the new song every week.

As briefly mentioned earlier, another way of creating greater brand awareness and also another way for Deviate Digital to generate income is through the introduction of new services. In the UK in 2019 it was estimated that there were 142,000 music creators working equivalent to full-time. According to the Office for National Statistics, the annual salary for musicians in a typical year is £23,059, £6773 under that of the national average at the time, which was £29,832. (UK Music, 2020)

Deviate Digital's current offerings are on the expensive end of the spectrum, at around £1000 a month, which is around 4.3% of the average musicians' wage. This makes it hard for those smaller, lesser-known artists to take advantage of the services that Deviate Digital offer.

By offering smaller-scale services, those lesser-known artists and companies would be able to make use of just some of the industry-leading advice that Deviate Digital is proud of. It could also mean that these artists could come back to the company for the full-scale package at a later point in their career when it's more financially viable for them.

My first suggestion would be to offer up an initial service called 'Digital Checkup'. This would entail the team at Deviate Digital researching the current offerings of the client to then provide a report detailing strategies that the client can use to develop their online presence. This service could be a one off charge or based on online exposure increases the client receives from the advice they're given e.g. based on the increase in followers or increase in YouTube views.

Another possible source of income could come from running virtual training courses. Not only would this provide a new revenue stream but it would also increase company awareness. This would entail a lot of market research, development and set up costs. This could open up a possible new source of client base. However a successful training course would prove Deviate Digital's worth to prospective clients better than any other marketing tool could.

A client loyalty scheme could be linked to the number of courses purchased leading to reduced costs of other Deviate Digital services. A training subscription service could also be created so that as the industry or online platforms evolve the training course evolves with it. Therefore, keeping clients loyal alongside keeping them up to date and informed.

My final suggestion is to create an internship program at Deviate Digital. Following on from Sammy Andrews 'Let's Be The Change' campaign, the internship would be aimed at getting more women and BAME individuals into the industry. 'Internships are an essential part of the career ladder in many professions' (CIPD, 2015) and whilst internships are mainly there to benefit the intern there are many positives for the company too. Namely gaining a new, more motivated staff member who can bring new skills and perspectives to the company as well as a possible increase in productivity. The secondary benefit of this internship, through clever use of social media platforms, would also increase Deviate Digital's company awareness within the music industry.

I feel that an internship would be very beneficial to Deviate Digital as I know that it's a very busy company with lots of clients wanting to work with them and so by having an internship more work could be taken on due to the larger team size.

I believe, by implementing the steps laid out in the above strategy Deviate Digital could increase their public awareness of who they are and what they do. On top of this by introducing some of the possible new services Deviate Digital could see an increase in revenue, client base and online presence.

Appendix

Articles

Gumble, D (2017) 'Data Digest: Sammy Andrews' new agency to help biz 'get to grips' with digital data' *Music Week*, 27 February, page 3

Books

Adams, S. and Morioka, N. and Stone, T.L (2006) *Logo Design Workbook* Massachusettes: Rockport Publishers

Legal Publications

Employment Rights and Pay for Interns Available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/employment-rights-for-interns> (Accessed: 16 March 2021)

National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage Rates Available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates> (Accessed: 16 March 2021)

Reports

CIPD (2015) Internships That Work Available at:

https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/internships-work_tcm18-10899.pdf (Accessed: 10 March 2021)

Hootsuite (2021) Digital 2021: Executive Summary Report Available at:

<https://www.hootsuite.com/pages/digital-trends-2021> (Accessed: 12 March 2021)

UK Music (2020) Music By Numbers 2020 Available at:

<https://www.ukmusic.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Music-by-Numbers-2020.pdf>
(Accessed: 12 March 2021)

Social Media

Deviante Digital (2021) [Instagram] 20 March Available at

https://www.instagram.com/p/CMnB6lpHG2h/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link (Accessed 22 March 2021)

Deviante Digital (2021) [Twitter] 15 March Available at

<https://twitter.com/DevianteDigital/status/1371540294882230283?s=20> (Accessed 22 March 2021)

Deviante Digital [LinkedIn] <https://www.linkedin.com/company/deviate-digital/about>

(Accessed 23 February 2021)

Sammy Andrews (2019) [Twitter] 29 July Available at

<https://twitter.com/sammyandrews/status/1155876245953032194?s=20> (Accessed 23 February 2021)

Sammy Andrews (2020) [Twitter] 25 July Available at

<https://twitter.com/sammyandrews/status/1286954267702681600> (Accessed 18 March 2021)

Websites

Adiseshiah, E (2018) 'Single page vs multi-page design: which is better?' Available at: <https://www.justinmind.com/blog/single-page-vs-multi-page-websites-design-battle/> (Accessed 2 March 2021)

Designbox How Much Does A Website Cost UK Available at: <https://designbox.co.uk/how-much-does-a-website-cost-uk/> (Accessed 22 March 2021)

Gumble, D (2017) Sammy Andrews launches new digital insights agency Deviate Digital. Available at: <https://www.musicweek.com/digital/read/sammy-andrews-launches-new-digital-insights-agency-deviate-digital/067646> (Accessed: 23 February 2021)

Jones, R (2017) Sammy Andrews launches Deviate Digital Available at: <https://www.musicbusinessworldwide.com/sammy-andrews-launches-deviate-digital/> (Accessed: 23 February 2021)

Newbury, C (2021) 47 Facebook Stats That Matter to Marketers in 2021 Available at: <https://blog.hootsuite.com/facebook-statistics/> (Accessed: 17 March 2021)

Record of the Day (2017) Music industry thought-leader Sammy Andrews launches new insight-based agency - Deviate Digital <https://www.recordoftheday.com/news-and-press/music-industry-thought-leader-sammy-andrews-launches-new-insight-based-agency--deviate-digital> (Accessed: 23 February 2021)

Stassen, M (2021) Deviate Digital makes a series of hires and promotions as part of UK expansion. Available at <https://www.musicbusinessworldwide.com/deviate-digital-makes-series-of-hires-and-promotions-as-part-of-ongoing-uk-expansion/> (Accessed 23 February 2021)

Townsend, B (2021) You Me At Six Land Suckapunch On Top Spot <https://www.townsendmusic.blog/post/you-me-at-six-land-suckapunch-on-top-spot> (Accessed 26 February 2021)

Ward, C (2014) 'Psychologist reveals capital letters work better for brand names' Available at: <https://www.mycustomer.com/marketing/strategy/psychologist-reveals-capital-letters-work-better-for-brand-names> (Accessed 22 March 2021)

Messages Between Chloe Bacon and Stef Pascaul of Deviate Digital via LinkedIn - February 2021

Chloe Bacon:

Hi Stef, I'm a MA International Music Marketing student at Tileyard and our assignment this term is to rebrand a company that's on the Tileyard site. I've chosen to do Deviate Digital and I was wondering if it would be possible to ask you some questions about the company. I understand you've only just joined the company and so may not have all the answers, but I think that you would be a great person to ask because you've only just joined and so have a fresh perspective. Please let me know if you would be available for this, whether it's via zoom or email is fine with me. Kind regards, Chloe Bacon

Stef Pascaul:

Hello Chloe, thanks for reaching out but that would definitely be something for Sammy Andrews, our CEO x

Chloe Bacon:

Hi Stef, thanks so much for getting back to me! I have contacted Sammy but I know she is very busy so I know she may not be able to respond. Thanks again x

Message from Chloe Bacon to Sammy Andrews via LinkedIn - February 2021

Chloe Bacon:

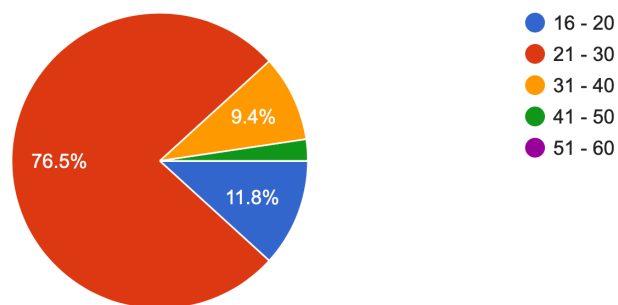
Hi Sammy, I'm a MA International Music Marketing student at Tileyard and our assignment this term is to rebrand a company that's on the Tileyard site. I've chosen to do Deviate Digital, as I'm especially interested in digital marketing and the role new technologies will have to play within the industry. I understand you're a very busy person, however, if you have the time I'd love to discuss why you started this company and what it means to you as well as what it means for the industry as a whole. Please let me know if you would be available for this. Kind regards, Chloe Bacon

Survey created by Chloe Bacon via Google Forms
'Assignment Market Research'

Received 85 responses from around the world

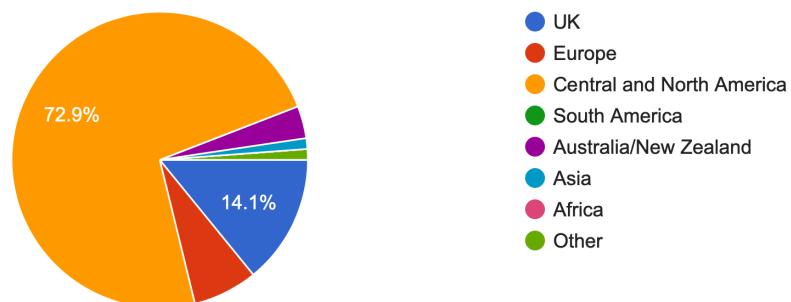
What Age Bracket are you in

85 responses



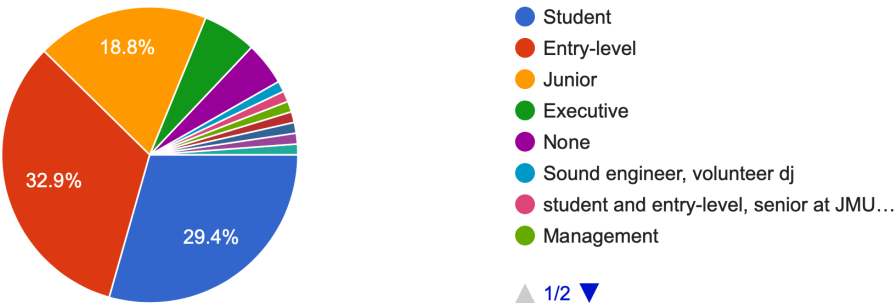
Where are you based?

85 responses



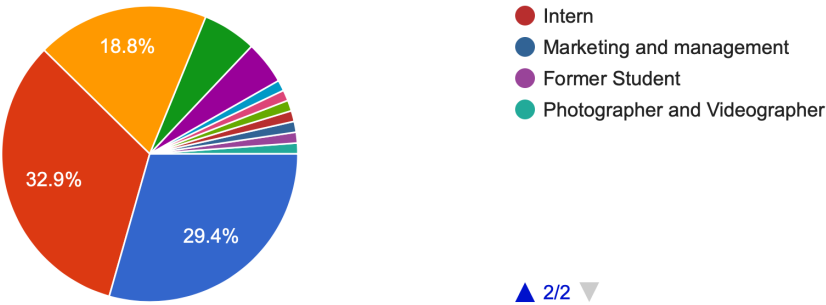
What involvement in the music industry do you have

85 responses



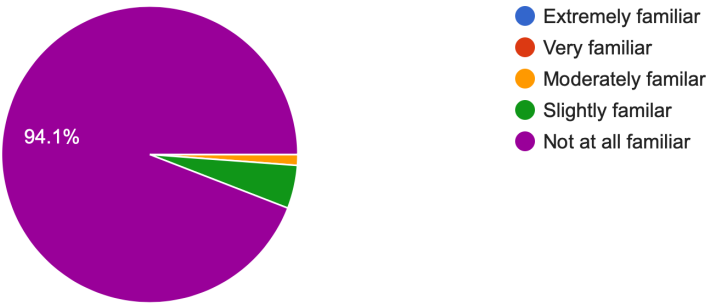
What involvement in the music industry do you have

85 responses



How familiar are you with Deviate Digital

85 responses



If yes, What do you know about their work?

5 responses

Digital agency

Digital marketing agency - I looked into them for TikTok marketing.

Creative digital agency. They create content / assets and also have a podcast department.

None

I've heard the name before but that's it

If yes, Have you worked with Deviate Digital before?

59 responses

