



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

MA Music Business (Level 7)
Creative Music Management
BMTY7000
Discipline Tutor: Harry Leckstein

Reflective Summary

Assignment Task: Write a 2500 word reflective summary which explains: a) Your involvement in the group portfolio and presentation task to create a single, remix and associated media assets, and b) Your reflections on the impact of all types of digital technologies with reference to the creation and promotion of original popular music and team development on creative industry projects.

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For my Creative Music Management Project, I was a member of the H.E.F.T.D group. Working with my colleagues, Flore Barbay, Tracey Kasongo, Hannah Edwards and Daniel Arieleno. Our given assignment, to develop an original artist campaign which included the recording, planning for digital release and promotion of a single and its relevant media with a budget of £500. We decided to work on the artist campaign of one of our team members Flore Barbay in the upcoming release of her single 'Poisson'. My role in the campaign was the Project Manager.

Project and Artist Overview

The Artist

Flore Barbay, going by the artist stage name mononym FLORE is Alternative Pop independent artist that is based in the UK and Belgium; alternating between singing in French and English in her musical release to accommodate this. Her music takes influence from music artists such as Lorde & Billie Eilish with their ethereal, dark but light in texture sounds to their voices which can be heard in her past releases such as 'Queen of Hearts', 'Moon' and 'Marble'. In the process of working with FLORE it was important to consider her artistic vision for the outcome of the campaign. The song was written and performed in French so our first group meeting included her translating the song into English for the team to begin to brainstorm, build and actualise on her vision. In development, we also analysed FLORE's digital presence prior to the songs release; identifying some of her social media patterns such as she tends to use Facebook to engage with her audience demographic more for music promotion, compared to her use of Instagram where her posts were intermittent and more for personal uses. While Twitter she used every day of a commentary of her thoughts on social and cultural issues.

The Single

Poisson is a French Pop single about the exploration of 'fish' and how that can be reflected in the genre of Alternative Pop

To be released on all streaming platforms using Distrokid distribution platform, which was used by FLORE prior to this project so has proved to be a trusted organisation.

The track premiering in Belgium and France, which helps to express some of the marketing strategies towards french-speaking countries, Europe and Canada in the target audience demographic. Utilising digital streaming services such as Spotify by getting the song on French playlists such as POP Francaise 2020 and Verse Honing.

Cross-media branding is becoming increasingly important. It has been shown that consumers are spending more time online, reading and researching as well as being entertained. The branding strategy must engage online users. The artist's official digital platforms such as their website, social media page etc. should be dynamic and regularly

updated. Some labels use links to well-known artist brand with a website hosted by the label to solidify their relationship with the artist and share revenues from products bought on the website such as concert tickets, with the record label picking up a percentage of the ticket price (Harrison, 2017 p214).

Project Management

My role on the campaign was as the Project Manager, where in which I was responsible for conducting and planning of administrative events and activities within the group. Managing FLORE's day-to-day affairs and liaising with necessary associates involved in the project. As Project Manager I managed the on-time delivery of projects, marketing initiatives and ideas across the team departments. Assisting in the campaign elements including brainstorming digital marketing, publicity, email marketing, social media, lifestyle marketing and interactive tools with relevant department heads. Drawing up project overviews, maintaining the project schedule, coordinating team members contributions in an organised and easily understood manner working in conjunction with the minute keeper within the team; managing project requirements, assisting the Marketing Officer and other team members to come to a consensus as to the best approach in conceptualizing and implementing marketing ideas.

Liaising with artists in order to ensure that all her artistic ideas have been adequately discussed and work rate within the team remains consistent and keeping up with the plans. Working with the minute keeper, meeting coordinator to ensure that deadlines are adhered to.

In regards to the H.E.F.T.D group portfolio, we met for two face-to-face meetings. The first meeting was held on the 28th November 2019, while the second 6th December 2019. We set a deadline for the music video of FLORE's single Poisson to be released on 17th December 2019, video teaser to be released 11th December 2019 and the remix track to be released on the 18th January. In terms of the deadlines set, we were able to meet up with majority of the deadlines set. However some adjustments had to be made to the deadline set for the release of the remixed track. As the producer that we arranged to do it was unable to do so and communicated this to us at the last moment, alternative arrangements had to be made in order for the remixed track to be completed, an 2-day extension was given in order for arrangements to be completed. From the meetings we concluded on the distribution company we would be using to promote the tracks as well as how the budget would be spread out between essential requirements for the projects such as production expenses, filming the music video, promotional tools, the editing of the music video and the mixing and mastering of remixed track.

The song Poisson had already been released prior to the commencing of this project. As a marketing strategy the topic of purchases places in relevant Spotify and iTunes playlists were discussed. With streaming services being the predominant way in which music listeners access their music, it was extremely important for us to capitalise on that; designating a set amount of the project budget to invest into this area.

In terms of the marketing strategy, our goal was to gain as much traction from the song, the artist, and enabling fan engagement through social media platforms for the utmost amount of exposure in the lead of releasing her E.P. Increase presence and brand portfolio to industry

peers; possible future collaborations. Planning and organising artists branding, ensuring there is cohesion with the music video. We decided to set up a promotion plan of around 8 weeks in advance relative to availability, additionally setting up a second promotional plan to attain PR reviews and industry feedback.

With the marketing director and other team members, we constructed a timeline for the single, projects and E.P for the next 6-12 months. Content January to April, Promotion as well as gigs May to August and the final project, the release of the EP September to December.

FLORE has been able to maintain her interactions with her fans and musical connections via social media, hence another marketing strategy we utilized is audience, associates participating. We posted a question asking which distribution company to go for between Distrokid and Ditto, viewers voted and assisted in the decision making. Studies have shown that when audiences are involved in the development process of a project, they are more likely to buy into the project release..

Creative firms recognize project management as a method to achieve an adequate system flexibility and the desired business results. The boundaries and contents of creative firms are changing in character. This is reflected, on the one hand, in constant changes in the number and size of projects, in the engagement of temporary or permanent resources and the use of virtual teams for the tasks of coordination and management. On the other hand, relations are established with various strategic partners, so that the projects and programmes are realized in the conditions of different social environments to which the firms have to adapt (Todorovic et al., 2015)**

The £500 budget was distributed between essential expenditure. Designating £200 to the Campaign Budget , £120 to Studio Time, £50 to PR, £55 to Video, £30 to Artwork, £25 to Copyright and Legal Affairs, £16 to Music Streaming adverts; total expenses coming to £496 with £4 leftover. It is understandable to say that we as H.E.F.T.D group were able to make the budget provided to us work within the given circumstances. However in a regular artists campaign I personally think that £500 would not be sufficient in order to get all required elements completed and to a standard that would ensure the creative and promotion process of the track runs smoothly.

The Impact of Digital Technologies

When preparing the artist campaign for this project, it was extremely important to consider the digital platforms available in order to promote and maximise revenue and profits that come from the chosen single and the remixed track. One key digital platform is social media H.E.F.T.D group considered creating behind the scenes video vlogs via social media platform TikTok, snippet video footage concept videos for single and remix released that help to reach the music demographic goal; as well as get fans & users to create parody video in response to further promote the singles. Scheduling of the video snippet posts leading up to the release of the single. Additionally launching a social media competition where fans would have the opportunity to enter their video singing or dance choreography cover using 'poisson' single and the best top 3 winning, fans must use the single in their video and hashtags #FLORE and #POISSON. Considering the release of the remix track,

promotional devices utilised should subtly contrast the visual devices used in the original track. The creation and promotion of original popular music is an area that is significant in the current age, in the planning of the project that was something that we considered. It was crucial that we found a unique selling point in order to encourage consumers to buy into the projects, with a limited budget of £500. It's imperative that we managed expenditure and expenses.

It is apparent that digital technologies have altered the music experience. Digital music seeing the decline in the physical models such as the CD, MP3 and music downloads; and an increase in the streaming, access models, the types of devices or platforms music could be played from. The technological advance and its impact on music moving at a rate that could not have been anticipated, giving the listener more autonomy to create, listen and be involved in their music experience. The introduction to the MP3 and the iPod saw files being able to be compressed into digital files making music to be commercially applicable through the internet. The launch of Apple iTunes store in 2003 was the beginning of a business model where digital delivery was maximised, through the purchase and download of albums and individual tracks (Morten Hviid et al, 2018). This area H.E.F.T.D group also wanted to utilize this, as we created strategies to pitch the single for the digital streaming platforms via playlists to further promote FLORE's single. The rise in online music distribution had a domino effect on the way that music labels are value for success today. Present music climates seeing an increase in thriving artist that have chosen to release and promote their music independently with the likes of Chance the Rapper, Jane Weaver and Frank Ocean (Indepreneur, 2019); with the leverage of this campaign, FLORE could follow suit.

Team Development

I believe that as H.E.F.T.D group we worked very well in fulfilling the assignment brief and collating required information to create a strong campaign for FLORE. Working well independently and being able to feedback adequate in our face-to-face group meeting. For future team development strategies as a group, speaking objectively as a Project Manager, I think I could have enforced a few accountability or follow-up structures to fully ensure that set deadlines are met and every one in the group is fully aware of the agreed final plan of action. As due to lack of communication the collation of majority of the different aspects of the project were left to the very last moment. Which meant that there was less time to fine tune and refine before releasing of the tracks. However FLORE the artist was happy with the final result of the project and played an instrumental role in H.E.F.T.D group, with her production assisting in the making of the remix track.

I found that in the initial stage of H.E.F.T.D groups launch we as a group were a little bit tentative and unsure. As we began to get more comfortable working with each other, we began taking up our roles and responsibilities with more professionalism, More motivation and more creative thinking skills.

The skillset of the team was appointed to aid the artist in developing her brand image to operate in the artwork for both the release of the track music video and the remixed track. Staying true to the artistic vision of the artist. Keeping the theme of the undertone of dark, strong, Humorous, Colourful, Simple and Light some aspects of the theme juxtaposing to represent the contrast in the final outcomes of the projects. These themes were reflected in the final edits of visuals developed for the remix track, as well as the quirkiness as an extra theme implemented within the music video.

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