

CAROL ADES: CAMPAIGN PROPOSAL

Carol Ades is an emerging singer-songwriter who is building a safe space for fans to connect over shared struggles through both her music and on social media. Although she has just released her debut single, the New Jersey-native is no stranger to the music industry. Currently based in Los Angeles, Carol is an established songwriter credited with penning hits for the likes of Selena Gomez, Demi Lovato and Zara Larsson, to name a few. Some of her biggest influences include Phoebe Bridgers and The Japanese House, whose organic sound permeates Carol's music. Indeed, her songs are lived-in stories that feature intimate vocals, acoustic guitars and gut-wrenchingly vulnerable lyrics, all wrapped up in an undoubtedly indie-pop sound. Additionally, her 2021 debut is highly anticipated by the near one-hundred-thousand followers she has amassed across social platforms since competing on *The Voice USA* in 2013. Although she performed as Caroline Pennell on the talent show, her current debut opts out her birth name for the pseudonym Carol Ades. She explains changing her name to distance herself from the persona the public met in 2013, and because she loves how "grandma-ish" Carol sounds, admitting she feels "like a 60-year-old in a 25-year-old's body" (Kent, 2021). Her self-deprecating humour and self-aware lyrics are precisely what is so refreshing to fans, especially at a time when social media gurus favour showcasing successes to showing imperfections. Indeed, Carol is changing the game by being vocal about personal struggles with body-image, self-doubt and mental health; revealing the *real* behind highlight *reels*. And because there is a growing market demand for anti-aspirational brands that advocate for self-acceptance and unfiltered content, we believe this to be precisely where the power of this marketing campaign lies. Thus, following theories from Godin's ground-breaking books *Permission Marketing* (2006) and *Tribes* (2008), along with Chris Anderson's *The Longer Long Tail* (2009), we plan on growing and engaging Carol's fan base within the next three years to position her as the leading indie-pop artist in English-speaking countries.

STRATEGY

To successfully break Carol as an artist, our marketing strategy comprises building brand awareness, nurturing relationships and producing revenue (Baker, 2013, p. 17). Additionally, since the campaign takes place over an extended period, it will be split into three phases. Following Anderson (2009), during the first year we will focus on *identifying* Carol's target niche; then, we will *engage* and *expand* her fan base; and in the final year we will focus on *positioning* Carol as the leading indie-pop artist in English-speaking countries (Godin, 2008). To achieve our goal, we plan on targeting audiences through strategic brand partnerships, press and radio, playlisting, digital advertising, touring, as well as collaborations with successful musicians, videographers and designers. Additionally, we aim to grow Carol's social media following tenfold on Instagram, TikTok and Twitter, since these are the platforms which

flaunt her highest level of fan engagement. Hence, our goal is to reach 200k followers on Instagram, 20k on TikTok, and 500k on Twitter. Finally, we expect our budget to be roughly around £200k, considering that Carol is an emerging artist who is already represented and well-connected within the Industry because of her songwriting career (Horsburgh, 2019).

YEAR 1: IDENTIFYING

As we previously mentioned, the first year of our campaign will focus on *identifying* Carol's target niche, in addition to increasing brand awareness and cohesiveness across social platforms, and improving SEO. Because her music centers around vulnerable lyrics performed in English, we expect her target audience to be from English-speaking countries like the US, the UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Additionally, since Carol sings about feelings often experienced by girls and women in their late teens to late twenties, we figure her target market to be emotionally intelligent, open-minded, self-aware females between the ages of 16 and 29.

During the first quarter of year 1, we will work with designers like Anya Salmen to identify Carol's logo, font and symbol. The designer will also create a website for Carol since she currently lacks one, so that all of her work can be easily accessible to fans and businesses who wish to learn more about her (Baker, 2013, p. 57). We also plan on creating a Wikipedia page for Carol, as it tends to be among the first search results to appear on Google. It is imperative that we curate her page before launching her career, so that she can be in control of her narrative and assure that the information is accurate and up-to-date. Once her brand is visually cohesive and ready to launch, we will run a social media campaign to introduce audiences to the artist on a more personal level. We will do this through a TikTok and IGTV series called "Who the F*** is Carol Ades?" – a title which plays on the artist's witty, self-deprecating humour.

During the second quarter, we will begin contacting influencers, press and radio. Baker (2013, p. 83) reminds us to contact them with plenty of time ahead of releases to build meaningful relationships before asking for favours. For this reason, we will reach out to them three months before publishing the first single off of Carol's debut EP. Additionally, to continue honing in on her target niche, we will invest 5% of our total budget into digital advertising on platforms like Instagram and TikTok, to identify Carol's top consumers and investigate their behavior and buying habits (Anderson, 2009).

Then, the third quarter will center around the release and promotion of the first single off of Carol's anticipated EP. The song will be promoted on both college and adult radio stations like BBC Radio 4 Extra and Soho Radio, as well as online publications like Marie Claire and NME Magazine. Following the single release, we will also share an original music video to engage fans old and new, since videos are the most consumed form of online media (Morgan, 2020). Since Carol is LA-based, she will play a gig at the legendary Hotel Café, where other successful artists like Katy Perry began their careers. Ades' performance will be recorded and distributed via her socials, and will reveal an Easter egg about the release date for her next single. Additionally, we will place Carol's song on popular Spotify playlists like New Music Friday, Indie Pop, and Pop Rising, to continue exposing her to potential audiences and expanding her reach (Eamonn, 2020).

In the final three months of year 1, Carol will publish the second single off of her EP, which will feature a similar, more established artist, ultimately exposing her to their dedicated fan base. The song will mainly be promoted via a TikTok duet challenge,

which will increase the song's chances of going viral (Eamonn, 2020). Two weeks after it goes live, Carol will hand-pick her favourite duet and announce the winner on her socials, who will receive a signed EP tracklist, making them the first member of the public to know this exclusive information. Then, the winner will be instructed to post a video on their TikTok page using a strategic hashtag to officially reveal the tracklist, making them feel engaged, empowered and part of Carol's exciting debut.

YEAR 2: ENGAGING AND EXPANDING

The second year of the campaign will focus on *engaging* and *expanding* Carol's fan base, starting with the release of her highly anticipated debut EP. We will promote it using targeted digital advertising on popular DSPs, social media platforms and sites used by young creatives within Ades' niche, like WeTransfer, for example. Because we want to drastically increase Carol's TikTok following by the end of the three-year campaign, we will invest 3% of our total budget toward influencer marketing and tastemaker support at this stage, getting viral TikTok stars like Charli D'Amelio and Addison Rae to use Carol's songs in the background of their videos. Additionally, we will begin capitalizing on retail by releasing a merchandise line, which Carol will create in collaboration with a successful designer like Sonia Marten from Everlane. Then, two months after the release of her EP, Ades will embark on a US college and radio tour, where she will get the chance to perform for fans old and new for the first time. Meeting them in person at shows and through meet-and-greets will help her engage with her target audience, solidifying relationships and building new ones (Godin, 2008).

During the second quarter, Carol will perform as the opening act for a successful indie-pop artist on the US leg of their tour. This will expose her to their larger audience, allowing Carol to continue growing her own. While on tour, she will also release a remixed version of a song from her EP to keep fans engaged while she is writing and recording new music. Then, the remix will be synced to a popular TV show among her target market, like HBO's *Euphoria*, for instance, which mirrors Carol's music in depicting teen angst and coming-of-age.

At the beginning of the third quarter, Carol will release a new single, which will be drawn from her upcoming debut album. The song will be supported by a partnership with a body-positive, anti-aspirational beauty brand like Starface or Squish Beauty, exposing Carol to their trusted clients and increasing trustworthiness with her current following (Godin, 2008). Carol will further support this partnership by hosting a month-long series of Instagram Live meetings with defining figures like Larissa May, who is raising awareness about mental health and body positivity. This will once again help prove Carol's stance on these issues, while also exposing her to new audiences that align with her values. Finally, Ades will top off the quarter by performing at the renowned Troubadour in Los Angeles, where she will be able to connect with LA-based fans, industry figures and influencers who will be posting about the event on their socials, helping increase her exposure.

The final three months of year 2 will focus on promoting Carol overseas in the UK, which we believe will be her largest market outside of the US, since her genre is among the most popular there (Kword, 2021). Here, she will open for a successful artist on tour, which will expose her to fresh audiences and giving UK fans the chance to see her perform live for the first time. Her tour as a supporting act will be titled "Can't wait to be British Tour", playing on the name of her debut single "Can't Wait to be British". Giving Carol the chance to connect with UK fans in person will increase engagement,

allowing her to grow her market ahead of the world tour we plan on organizing following her debut album (Baker, 2013).

YEAR 3: POSITIONING

The third year of the campaign will focus on *positioning* Carol as the leading indie-pop artist in English-speaking countries through the release of her long-awaited debut album. A week before the release, Carol will host a private listening party at her home in Los Angeles to create hype and generate momentum. Inspired by Taylor Swift's successful "Secret Sessions", we will hand-pick 30 of Carol's top Spotify listeners to attend the event, organizing and paying for their travel expenses (Sagar, 2019). The listening party will resemble a sleepover, providing Carol and fans with enough time and space to establish meaningful connections. The event will start in the evening and feature intimate, acoustic performances of each song on the album, along with photo-ops, free pizza and party favours (merchandise, signed CDs, Polaroids taken during the party, etc.), which each fan will receive upon their departure the next morning. Once the album is released, along with a routine press and radio campaign, Carol will be featured on the New York Times YouTube series "The Making of a Song", where she will reveal the process behind writing the bestselling single off her album. Additionally, we will hire a designer to create an Instagram filter to accompany Carol's album release, as well as an interactive Spotify Canvas video for one of the album tracks, which will feature a collage of fan videos, increasing fans engagement (Baker 2013; Godin, 2008).

During the second quarter, Carol will guest-star on NPR's Tiny Desk, exposing her to their large following of music-lovers, while also nurturing her current fan base. Additionally, Ades will support an established indie-pop artist on their world tour, exposing her to new audiences and confirming her position as an international superstar. During this time, we will also publish an unreleased bonus track from the album, which will be synced to a major motion picture to continue increasing brand awareness on an international scale.

Following her three-month world tour, Carol will return to the US to perform on the Kelly Clarkson show, whose values and audience resonate with Ades'. During this time, Carol will also partner with Beats by Dre. Ades will sport a pair of Beats headphones in a new music video for one of the songs off her album, providing her with increased Industry and fan exposure, as partnerships with Dr Dre's Beats often do (Greenberg, 2018).

During the final quarter of our campaign, Carol will guest-star on the prominent songwriting podcast "...And the writer is" to discuss her songwriting approach and the process behind writing her first album. This will engage a new audience of songwriting fanatics and help position Carol as one of the leading songwriters in the Business. Just as musician Amy Allen was featured on Forbes' 30 Under 30 list following her successes songwriting for others and for herself (Forbes, 2019), Carol's similar journey could potentially lead her to being featured on the list as well, which would cement her status as a game-changing artist. Then, the songstress will debut on the infamous late-night TV show SNL, which is known for featuring respected artists and propelling them into stardom. Finally, we will conclude the campaign with a world tour, which will see Carol performing at major festivals including Glastonbury (UK), Coachella (US) and Splendour in the Grass (AUS), allowing her to engage with current fans and establish her status as the most popular indie-pop artist in English-speaking countries.

CONCLUSION

Through the marketing strategies and tactics outlined above, we look forward to *identifying* Carol's target niche, *engaging* and *expanding* her fan base, and *positioning* her as the biggest indie-pop artist in English-speaking countries by the end of this three-year campaign. Thanks to strategic partnerships, TV appearances and live performances, Carol will be able to reach large audiences and create an impactful community which normalizes conversations surrounding mental health struggles, body-image issues, and personal insecurities. Additionally, by partnering her with world-renowned agencies, promoters, directors and designers, Carol will be able to rapidly engage and grow an organic fan base. Hence, by honing in on a niche market as Anderson (2009) suggests, interacting with fans through permission marketing tactics (Godin, 2006) and providing them with regular online content, live shows and private listening parties to keep them engaged and excited (Godin, 2008), we aim to propel Carol Ades into indie-pop stardom.

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YEAR/PHASE	PLAN OUTLINE	START	END	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12
Year 1: IDENTIFY															
	Re-brand, reposition socials + campaign to get to know Carol	16/11/2021	16/1/2022												
	Contact press, radio, influencers + digital advertising	16/2/2022	16/4/22												
	Release 1st single from EP + radio & press + playlisting	16/5/2022	16/7/2022												
	Release 2nd single from EP + TikTok viral campaign & contest	16/8/2022	16/10/2022												
Year 2: ENGAGE AND EXPAND															
	Release EP + influencer marketing + US college & radio tour	16/11/2022	16/1/2023												
	Supporting act on tour + release remix + sync	16/2/2023	16/4/2023												
	Release new single + brand partnership + Troubadour	16/5/2023	16/7/2023												
	UK supporting act tour	16/8/2023	16/10/2023												
Year 3: POSITION															
	Album listening party & release + NY Times + Spotify Canvas contest	16/11/2023	16/1/2024												
	NPR Tiny Desk + supporting act on world tour + bonus track release	16/2/2024	16/4/2024												
	Kelly Clarkson Show + Beats by Dre collab	16/5/2024	16/7/2024												
	"...And the writer is" podcast + SNL + festival tour	16/8/2024	16/10/2024												

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