

MA International Music Marketing

Assignment 3: Creation

Written Proposal

Samuel John Roux

Student Number: 2015726

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Introduction

The purpose of the following writing is to outline the strategy, project management techniques, third party commissions and budgeting associated with the three-year marketing strategy for “Artist X”. It has not been fully decided which artist will be chosen to formulate the campaign around, however a base genre has been defined which has allowed for ample planning. For the purposes of this writing, the artist will be referred to as: “Artist X”.

Campaign Inclusive of:

- The aim
- Objectives
- Outputs
- Outcomes
- Impact
- Evaluation of methodologies

Furthermore, a Gantt chart will be included detailing a brief overview of the intended activity taking place around each release to give an enhanced idea of project management against a timeline.

Campaign aims and objectives

Aims

The core aim of this project is to launch a successful three-year marketing campaign for “Artist X”. Artist X are an indie-pop artist/band age(d/s) 24-27.

The campaign itself will comprise of the following assets:

Year One	Year Two	Year Three
• Single 1 • Single 2	• Single 3 • Extended Play (E.P)	• Single 4 • Single 5 • Album Release

Surrounding each release, a multitude of promotional activity will be undertaken, detailed later in the ‘Outputs’ section of this writing, I intend to expand upon precisely what these activities will include and why they are relevant to the project, supported by external research.

Objectives & Strategy

Following the SMART goals framework, I have established several objectives which must be completed during this three-year project. They are as follows:

Year one (2022-2023)

- Establish and create a brand for “Artist X”.
- Create a Logo for “Artist X.”
- Create a functional website for “Artist X’.
- Create a social media presence and YouTube channel for “Artist X”.
- Define the “Artist X”’s target market.

- Establish merchandising surrounding the first and second releases.
- Strategise and execute two single release campaigns in the first year.
- Release music video for the second single.
- Define touring activity for year one.
- Define advertising for the first two single releases.
- Define PR, radio, digital, agent, promoters, press support, social media strategy, lives, D2F offerings, remixes and videographer activity surrounding singles 1 & 2 in the first year.
- Define and acquire playlist positions on major DSP's.
- Define budget for the first year.
- Hit 10,000+ followers across all social media platforms.

Year two (2023-2024)

- Refresh branding for year two, ensuring cohesion.
- Revisit merchandise and expand in relation to the year two campaign.
- Strategise and execute a third single release campaign.
- Shoot, edit and release a music video for the third single release.
- Strategise and execute an Extended Play release campaign.
- Develop merchandising to correlate with year two branding.
- Define touring activity for year two.
- Define advertising for the two releases in year two.
- Expand on the defining of PR, radio, digital, agent, promoters, press support, social media strategy, lives, D2F offerings, remixes, videography, and include synchronisation and television appearances.
- Define and acquire playlist positions on major DSP's.
- Define revised budget for the year two.
- Exceed 50,000+ and above followers across all social media platforms.

Year three (2024-2025)

- Refresh branding for year three, ensuring cohesion.
- Revisit merchandise and expand on stock.
- Strategise and execute the fourth & fifth single release campaigns.
- Strategise and execute an album release campaign.
- Shoot, edit and release a music video for the fourth & fifth single releases.
- Strategise and execute an album release campaign.
- Define touring activity for year three.
- Define advertising for the two releases in year three.
- Expand on the defining of PR, radio, digital, agent, promoters, press support, social media strategy & lives, D2F offerings, remixes, videography, synchronisation, and television appearances.
- Define and acquire playlist positions on major DSP's.
- Define a revised budget for year three.
- Exceed 250,000+ followers and above across all social media platforms.

As the budget increases through revenue generation each year, additional finance will be committed to each promotional element allowing for broader reach, deeper scope, and increased return on investment (ROI).

It is crucially important that each of the mentioned areas are expanded upon thoroughly to create a cohesive and impactful campaign propelling Artist X's career to great success.

Creation

Outputs

Multiple artefacts will be defined and created surrounding release. This campaign will assume that "Artist X" has all tools at their disposal following the first year including all key elements, such as: having a publishing company for sync, agent for live and PR agent etc.

Branding

Firstly, it will be of paramount importance to define a brand for the "Artist X". To paraphrase Hillman (2019): This could be considered as *"a logo, along with a name," typography, a "tagline, design, symbol"* or anything visual that fans can engage with. A brand is a *"visual representation of identity"* that potential fans can be enticed by; it offers something to relate to and show a form of *"allegiance to a cause"*. He goes on to explain that *"Artist branding is about taking that music and channelling its energy through a consistent visual style and identity"* this in turn will lead to a brand that inspires *"tribal loyalty"* amongst fans. Most importantly in this instance, a logo will be created to represent "Artist X".

Merchandising

Along with traditional branding, merchandising will be created to serve as a form of visual advertising amongst fans. Merchandising serves as *"a great source of income for you, as well as an excellent branding/advertising opportunity"* King, M. (2009, p. 25). Merchandising will create a large-scale effort to promote "Artist X" further physically, the use of t-shirts, vinyl sales, tote bags and other merchandise will appeal to the target market and serve as walking advertising. The types of merchandise offered will undoubtedly evolve as the campaign progresses. As merchandise will need to be created externally from the marketing campaign a third party will be commissioned to create merchandise following design.

Social Media Presence

Creating social media pages for "Artist X" is going to be of paramount importance. They are an ever-evolving platform in which to promote and present key material associated with each campaign. *"An optimized social presence can signal your status as a professional. In an industry where competition is so cutthroat, having pristine profiles out there lets people know that you're anything but an amateur."* Barnhart, B. (2018). As branding changes between each release to keep the image fresh, social media will act not only as a promotional tool, but a means of advertising and engaging fans with upcoming content whilst exuding professionalism, further cementing the brand. Social media campaigns will be supported by paid advertising to further enhance "Artist X's" outreach.

Music videos & Videography

Video content reigns supreme in modern marketing, algorithms across most social media platforms are prioritising video above still images; this includes videos, reels, and full-length pieces between two and five minutes in length. *"Having a music video boosts the artist's visibility and exposure exponentially."* With social media platforms prioritising video

content, marketers can use music videos to “*promote the sale of an artist’s work*” in turn, this will lead to “*a memorable visual experience*” Haf, F. (2020) greatly increasing a release’s chance of success. It is intended for a total of four music videos to be created over the course of this campaign, greatly improving “Artist X’s” reach and generate engagement across all digital platforms. A videographer will be considered as a third-party commission when shooting the music video. Likely included will be a detailed brief for each music video release discussing narrative and concept.

Release Artwork

Album artwork is as crucial as it has been historically: “*seeing will always be part of hearing.*” Artwork will be created corresponding with each of the seven assets due for release. “*Album art represents you*” it is a means in which fans can relate to the product, it entices them, it is not merely the image associated with the music, “*it’s part of your online brand.*” Seydrel, R. (2016). Although the traditional model for album releases has changed drastically in recent history, streaming platforms will still present artwork associated with any release, it is a small portion of digital real-estate in can be claimed to showcase a brand, getting this right will be of paramount importance. It is likely that a graphics designer will be commissioned to create the release artwork for the project.

Website & E-mail Marketing

Furthering the digital output of this project, a website will be created. Social media platforms in themselves are an excellent platform to advertise and generate engagement with a brand however, “*they lack the creativity and customization ability that your own site can provide*”. Creating a website for “Artist X” will allow for a fully on-brand platform to operate within online. The frequency of updates on the website will be critical as to ensure maximum engagement: “*outdated news is a sure sign that nothing is happening you’re your band*”.

Usability is equally as important as the aesthetic of a website, it is essential to provide a simplistic platform which will “*make it as easy as possible for your fans to interact with you*” King, M (2009, pp. 89-91). Allowing for fans to navigate to e-mail subscription with ease leads onto the next prominent point for discussion, e-mail marketing.

Compiling a large mailing-list will be a very high priority. E-mail marketing is still one of the most effective means of affirming engagement with a fan-base it “*is also the most effective way to get your fans to take action!*” It is key for any artist to “*connect with their fans regularly*” whilst offering a platform to “*promote your brand, announce new releases, your dates, merch, music videos*” Rory, PQ. (2019) amongst additional information of importance. It will also allow us to re-target engaged fans to continually attempt to generate engagement and ultimately: revenue.

PR Agent & Photoshoot Brief

It will be imperative to research and contact multiple PR agencies to aid the marketing campaign of “Artist X”. PR agents will enhance a musician’s profile in the media through “*bypassing the gatekeepers and bringing their clients to the attention of relevant, receptive broadcasters and journalists*” Musicians’ Union (No Date). Additionally, PR agents can help craft a narrative surrounding any releases an artist might be approaching, along with

discussing and developing artist image and in some rare cases arranging photoshoots to further cement an aesthetic surrounding the narrative for each release. The portfolio element of this assignment intends to communicate the type of publications due for approach and their relevance in marketing “Artist X”.

Agent Brief/Promoters

Owing to the pool of resources available to “Artist X”, an agent will need to be acquired to help schedule and book tours on behalf of the artist surrounding each release. An accomplished agent *“with well-placed connections can get a band in front of the right audience and increase their profile.”* Agents themselves often have an excellent rapport with record labels and promoters which can ensure *“the bands on their books get the proper exposure.”* McDonald, H. (2019). Since there will be seven releases in conjunction with this campaign it will be essential to ensure touring and live activity takes place, inclusive of support concerts/tours, headline concerts/tours and festival slot acquisition.

Plugger Brief (DSPs & Radio)

Tying in further with the promotional push surrounding each release, it will be equally crucial to ensure we are working with a plugger to push for radio and DSP playlist spots. A radio plugger will be an invaluable tool for “Artist X”: *“they can guarantee that the musician will get radio airplay”* which in turn will generate additional ROI via a *“PRS pay out...this rewards the musician, paying them royalties for their song receiving airplay.”* Woodcock, M. (2015). Furthermore, radio is still an excellent means of promotion for any modern recording artist as it still boasts an extremely strong listenership. Alongside just radio, pluggers can have a good insight into acquiring DSP playlist positions – working with a PR agent it will be possible to acquire these as well.

Music Publishing (Sync)

Additionally, to radio and DSP playlists, synchronisation can be extremely valuable to any artists career particularly when they are writing the songs themselves, which is the case with “Artist X”. *“A music publisher functions much like a record label does for a band or performer.”* In some cases, they will attempt to acquire placement on prominent television programs, or have songs used in films and other visual media, *“A good one can do wonders for your career, while a bad one can actually stand in the way of progress.”* – McDonald, H (2020). Music publishing can serve as an excellent source of revenue generation in the forms of PRS royalties, this will undoubtedly affect the budget positively and aid in the overall promotion of “Artist X”.

Measurable Statistics

Outcomes

This project sets out to achieve a multitude of promotional wins, exponentially growing the fanbase and engagement of “Artist X’s” fanbase and perceived profile. *“The best thing you could possibly do stems from making sure that your demographics matter and that they shine through in everything you do”* - Stop the Breaks (2017). As an Indie pop artist, we will be predominantly looking to market to target audience comprising of mixed sex 16–25-year-olds. It will be essential to ensure all the promotional platforms used target said demographic when approaching tastemakers.

Each of the predetermined outputs will create an overall aesthetic for “Artist X”, cement a position within the market, establish long-standing relationships with third party collaborators and execute a considered and modern approach to music marketing within the indie-pop genre.

Measuring success

This project will establish SMART goals at offset of this project, *“they are bound to set you up for success.”* They serve as *“tangible targets that you purpose to attain over a certain duration.”* Seyb, P. (No Date.) By setting smart goals, it will be possible to measure each of the project’s objectives against a timeline, thus making it easier to make a critical path analysis and ultimately a project management timeline.

To further measure success around each SMART goal, it will be important to attach a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) to each. *“KPIs are more than numbers you report out weekly”* they serve as means of understanding the *“performance and health”* of a project. As such you will be able to *“make critical adjustments in your execution to achieve your strategic goals”* Wishart, J. (2021). This will enable us to measure success at each quarter and adjust strategy accordingly to maximise the potential of each goal.

Output evaluation

Knowing how effective each element of the output is will be extremely importantly in further understanding how to develop each strategy as we work through the years. The website will provide countless data in the form of statistics detailing the number of visitors, subscriptions to the mailing list and merchandise purchases etc. This will affirm that our promotional techniques are working.

Additionally, when employing the use of social media, we will be given strong analytical data detailing the impressions, engagement, clicks, and conversion rates on each of the posts. Should the strategy prove to be effective, we can continue in such a fashion. This in turn, makes it very easy to see if the strategy is not working; ensuring a malleable deployment of tactics allows us to keep the project moving and on target.

By measuring the growth in following for each online platform, we can ascertain if our promotional efforts are working to full effect. Combining this with the previously mentioned KPI’s, it will be possible to ensure our goals are achieved.

Budget

Year one predicted budget.

Asset	Cost
Logo Creation	£250
Website Design	£1,500
Market Research	£1,000
Music Video Shoot Cost	£4,000
Live Agent Fees	£2,500
Advertising Budget	£3,000
Merchandising Costs	£1,000
PR Budget	£2,000
Photoshoot Budgets	£2,000
Plugger Fees	£800
Touring Costs	£4,000
<i>Total Cost:</i>	<i>£22,050</i>

Year two predicted budget

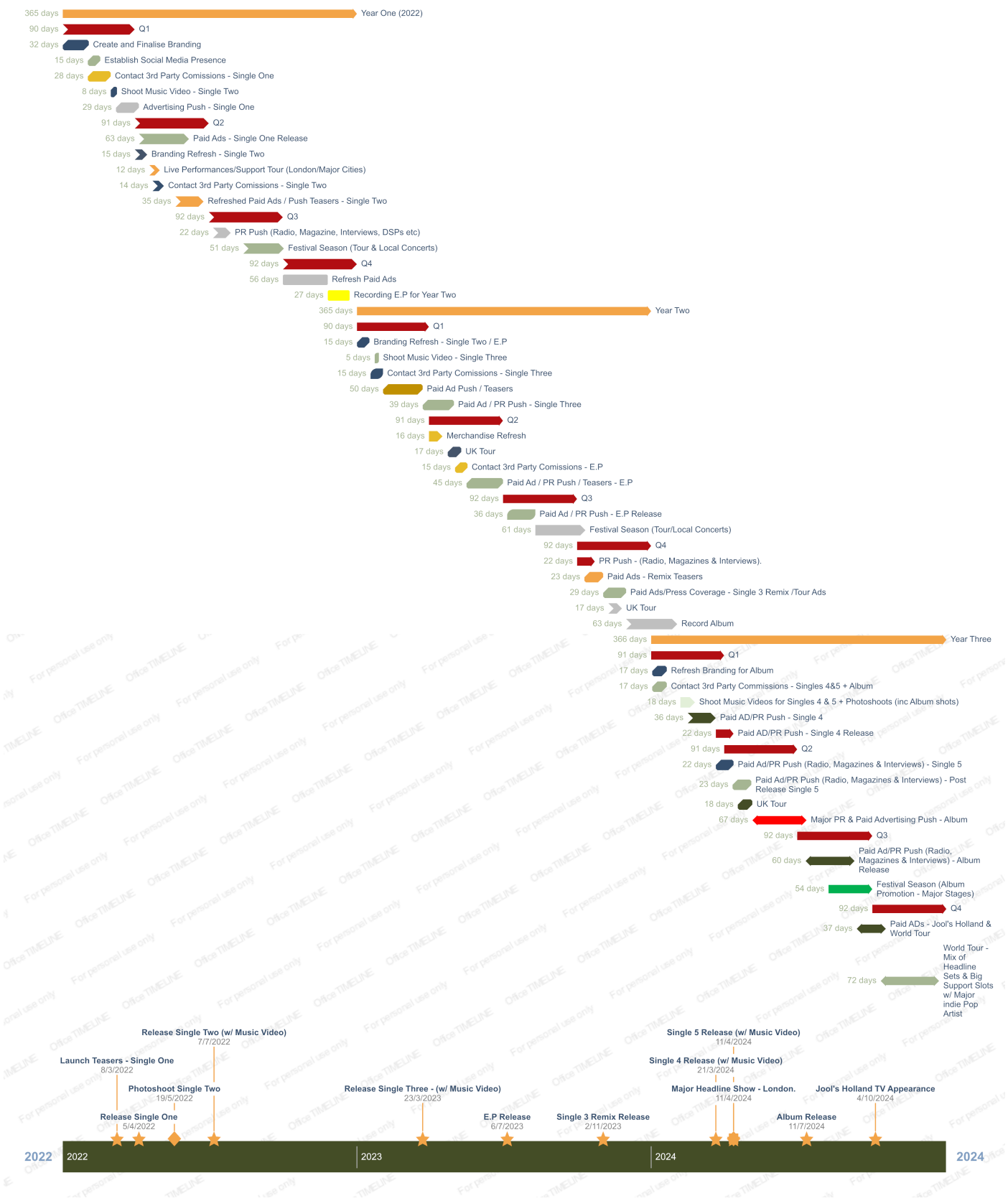
Asset	Cost
Branding Refresh	£6,500
Merchandising Costs	£3,000
Music Video Costs	£8,000
Live Agent Fees	£4,000
Advertising Budget	£7,500
PR Budget	£5,000
Photoshoot budgets	£4,000
Plugger Fees	£3,000
Advertising Budget	£7,000
Touring Costs	£12,500
<i>Total Cost:</i>	<i>£60,500</i>

Year three predicted budget

Asset	Cost
Branding Refresh	£15,000
Merchandising Costs	£12,500
Music Video Costs	£25,000
Live Agent Fees	£14,250
Advertising Budget	£50,000
PR Budget	£35,000
Photoshoot budgets	£12,500
Plugger Fees	£10,000
Advertising Budget	£15,000
Touring Costs	£50,000
<i>Total Cost:</i>	<i>£239,250</i>

Total cost for the three years: £321,800

"Artist X" Campaign Timeline



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