'INDIE' EMPOWERMENT: NEW MEDIA STRATEGIES AND THE RISE OF THE

INDEPENDENT ARTIST

by

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This thesis was prepared under the direction of the candidate's thesis advisor, Prof. Michael Zager, Department of Music, and has been approved by the members of her supervisory committee. It was submitted to the faculty of the College of Business and was accepted in partial fulfillment for the requirements for the degree of Master of Science.
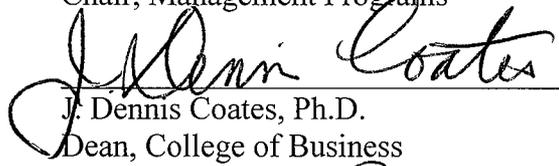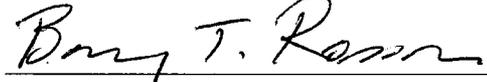
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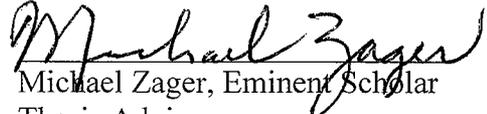
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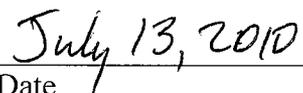Thesis Advisor
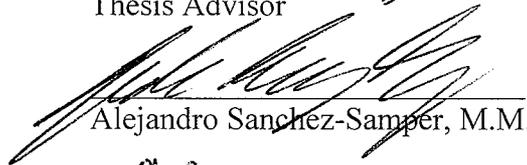
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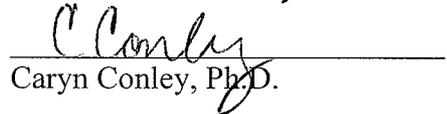
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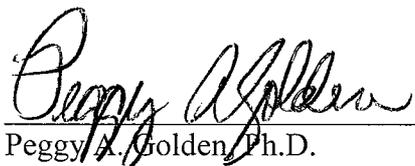
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ABSTRACT

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The use of new media technology which refers to digital, computerized, or networked information and communication technologies such as the Internet, mobile devices, gaming, and social networks, has come to define the music industry today, and it is this technology that has empowered independent artists in such a way that they are now free to pursue heights of success previously only available to major label artists. New media technology has affected the traditional business models of major labels, it has resulted in gross decline in recording costs, given birth to new channels of music marketing, and business models, and has created a new music clientele that requires instant gratification, personalization, and connectivity. In the face of such change, independent artists have been empowered and can access opportunities to distribute music independently, market and promote music effectively to niche markets, secure publishing deals, while building their own community of dedicated fans.

'INDIE' EMPOWERMENT: NEW MEDIA STRATEGIES AND THE RISE OF THE

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LIST OF DEFINITIONS

Bridge Ratings - is the only provider of media consumer behavior analysis and the impact of new media on traditional radio.

comScore - an Internet marketing research company providing marketing data and services to many of the Internet's largest businesses.

DAW – a digital audio workstation (DAW) is an electronic system designed to record, edit and play back digital audio.

DIY - is a term used to describe the strategy used by bands or solo artists to release their music on self-funded record labels.

EBITDA - income before interest and taxes and depreciation and amortization have been subtracted; an indicator of a company's profitability.

eMarketer - a business information service that aggregates, filters and organizes data from over 4,000 global sources.

EMI – Electrical and Musical Industries Ltd. is the fourth largest recording company in the world.

Entertainment Software Association - the trade association of the video game industry in the United States.

EP - "extended play," usually a shorter version of a full-length album that could include anywhere from 2 to 10 songs.

EPK – electronic press kit.

Future of Music Coalition - a national nonprofit organization that works to ensure a diverse musical culture where artists flourish, are compensated fairly for their work, and where fans can find the music they want.

IFPI - The International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI) is the organization that represents the interests of the recording industry. .

MP3 - a common audio format for consumer audio storage, as well as a standard of digital audio compression for the transfer and playback of music on digital audio players.

NAS Recruitment - creates solutions that assist organizations with their recruiting, employment branding and on boarding/retention efforts.

Podcast - a series of digital media files (either audio or video) that are released episodically and downloaded through web syndication.

RSS feeds – Rich Site Summary or Real simple syndication (RSS) is a relatively new and easy way to distribute content via the Internet.

SWOT - a strategic planning method used to evaluate the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats involved in a project or in a business venture.

UMG – Universal Music Group.

WMG – Warner Music Group.

INTRODUCTION

These are indeed exciting and dynamic times in the global recording industry.
Artists, consumers and executives alike have witnessed (and continue to witness)
historical shifts in the macro and microeconomic structures of the industry, brought on
in large part by numerous technological advancements in areas of music production,
distribution, and consumption. These technological shifts have catapulted the musical
product into a characteristically digital, and computerized realm where 'new media,'
"the most current electronic means of mass communicating messages to an audience"
(Inculink, 2009) has reduced barriers to entry and has created endless opportunities for
independent artists to achieve measurable success.

New media does not depend on the traditional means of communication; rather,
it includes the use of the Internet, mobile devices, electronic games, RSS feeds, social
networks, blogs and podcasting. While traditional media is still utilized, statistical
reports on the growth of new media usage reflects an astounding increase in popularity
and preference. New media has introduced affordability, simplicity, convenience and
availability, attributes that drive consumer demand in today's music industry.

In exploring the use of new media technology in music, the purpose of this
thesis is to establish that a relationship exists between new media strategies and the rise
of the independent artist. The thesis statement therefore states that there is a relationship
between new media strategies and the rise of the independent artist. A discussion of this

nature requires placing some emphasis on statistical data associated with increased new media usage, and general shifts across the traditional economic framework of the music business, including declining CD sales and the associated poor financial performance of major labels, growing niche markets, and shifting consumer preferences as they relate to music consumption. It must be acknowledged that new media use has contributed to these shifts and these shifts have contributed to the breaking of certain control mechanisms that have for decades prevented independent artists from servicing demand in the music marketplace.

According to the NAS Recruitment Communications Report (2009), "Internet usage in the United States has more than doubled in the past 10 years, reaching approximately 220 million," steadily moving from mere curiosity to the mainstream form of communication. Industry research leaders, comScore (2009), have also reported that "accessing the mobile web is a daily activity for 22.4 million mobile users in the US," indicating that between January 2008 and January 2009, the number of mobile web users have doubled. The electronic gaming sector has also seen impressive growth, with "sales increasing from 22.9 percent in 2008 to $11.7 billion – more than quadrupling since 1996" (Entertainment Software Association, 2010). The term "Music 2.0" (coined by Gerd Leonard) aptly describes the current nature of today's music business, driven by digital, web-based strategies that have effectively flattened the old guard of hierarchical structure allowing virtually anyone to create, modify and share content while allowing consumers to access, acquire and interact with music in ways not previously available.

Adam Ostrow (2009), in his article, 'Stats: Old Media's Decline, New Media's Ascent' for Mashable: The Social Media Guide presented the following statistics:

• *Blogs are used by 24 percent of Internet users, up from 13 percent in 2006;*

• *Social networks are used by 26 percent of Internet users, up from 17 percent in 2006;*

• *Video casts are used by 11 percent of Internet users, up from 6 percent in 2006;*

• *RSS feed use has grown from 5 to 7 percent; and*

• *Podcast use has grown from 5 to 7 percent.*

These figures reflect the pace at which consumers are accepting new media technology and highlights key channels that producers of content, including music, must emphasize if they are to connect with members of their target market.

The development of social networks as well as ad supported business models dedicated to connecting people while allowing them to discover and share new music has created access to a "middle class of professional entertainers that has been missing in previous decades" (Hutchison, 2008, p. 10). Throughout this paper, this widely expanding "musical middle class" will be referred to as 'independent artists,' individuals or bands who are self-funded and do not have access to massive recording, distribution, or marketing budgets. Editor-in-Chief of Wired Magazine, Chris Anderson (2006), in his New York Times bestseller, 'The Long Tail,' describes how new media applications/software are moving the market away from an army of top sellers, moving consumers down the tail where they can discover less popular products easily – products produced by independent artists in many instances.

Traditionally, networks in the recording industry "were highly concentrated, and new entrants were unable to access national and international distribution…which limited the extent of competition in the industry, and reduced the diversity and variety of product offerings" (Alexander, 1994, p. 9). This concentration of control continued for much of the past ten years resulting in the four major record labels referred to as "The Big Four" (Warner Music, EMI Group, Universal Music Group (UMG), Sony Music), who control over 80 percent of all the titles produced in the United States and comparable percentages in the rest of the world. These conglomerates represent the major producers or sellers in the recording industry. But despite their position as major players, they have still been affected by the current shifts in the music industry. As the industry overview will reveal, major label, EMI, may be sold off to the highest bidder as its traditional operations strategies have failed to keep the company profitable.

Technological determinists purport that "changes to technology, which usually manifests as a progressive new world of opportunity, alters the rules that govern the ways in which we operate our lives" (Dubber, 2009, p. 10) and there is no doubt that today's digital shifts have created opportunities while altering the 'processes' of music. It would be erroneous to imply that this is the first time that the music industry has faced a technological revolution. As a matter of fact, throughout history, technology has been in constant correlation with the delivery of music. Kusek and Leonhard (2005, p. 142) state that music's marriage to technology came in the form of the player piano which represented the first "freestanding audio output machine" and continued with the introduction of electricity facilitating the development of "sophisticated music technology and amplification." It was also during the 1980s that the industry began an

era of "new technology" with the introduction of "Jerry Shulman's Frisbee," (Knopper, 2009, p. 15) more popularly known as the "compact disc" (CD).

The compact disc brought with it a shift from analogue to digital delivery (in a format originally made without copy protection mechanisms) but also represented an opportunity to change consumer's expectations about what music should cost, while "precipitating the transformation of music as more than just a product but also an entertainment service" (Kusek and Leonhard, 2005, p. 4). The introduction of audio and video focused hardware and software then led to the development of the MP3, today's most common form of digital sound file that compresses audio, video and software files allowing for easier use across media applications. There is little doubt that the MP3 significantly affected the established recording industry, requiring players to react quickly to the growing consumer demand for the format.

The ease of distributing the MP3 over the Internet, coupled with the growing demand for an easy way to access music, whenever, however, and wherever consumers wanted to, created the perfect opportunity for enterprising independents to create their own e-commerce web sites and offer their music (in MP3 format) for a small fee, bypassing the traditional recording industry's established methods for distributing artists' work. (Tiley, 2009). Technological determinist, Andrew Bubber (2009, p. 4) argues that "the new media environment has allowed for the traditional gatekeepers to be circumvented, thereby empowering the artist who is connected directly to the masses."

According to Eric de Fontenay (2010) in his article on 'The Impact of New Media/Internet on the Music Recording Industry,' the growing popularity of new media technology in the music business has resulted in structural shifts characterized by:

- *Digital challenges to the entrenched structure;*

- *Shifting of the supplier-distributor relationship from a hierarchically layered structure to an open structure where traditional roles of manufacturing distribution and retail are being fundamentally redefined; and*

- *Highly competitive upstream market of content creators (the artist).*

Fontenay's points speaks to the inherently open nature of new media technology as well as its ability to act as a uniform platform to sustain a limitless number of competitors.

Although major labels have tried to reposition themselves to secure further control of the marketplace, the growing community of independent artists have responded to digital challenges and opportunities, utilizing new media strategies (fan base management, social networking, digital distribution, etc.) to exploit their musical product in ways tailored to their brand's message, while creating fresh and profitable approaches to the business of music. These enterprising independents have caused an explosion of diversity in musical products, pushing us into "an age of cultural richness and abundant choice that we've never seen before in history" (Bhuiyan, 2006).

Independent artists (numbering in thousands), who are not affiliated with any major label, are actively utilizing new and hybrid business models to capture niche markets, and independently determine the direction of their musical careers. With their high level of flexibility, they can react to dynamic movements across the market thereby satisfying the needs of music consumers for instant access, the right to choose and the

hunger for non-mainstream product. 'Indie' empowerment has indeed come in the form of new media and this empowerment represents several steps forward towards breaking the proverbial "glass ceiling" that has for so many years prevented unsigned artists from attaining specific levels of success. These artists can sell their music online and broaden their fan base, while having access to licensing, publishing, booking and merchandising opportunities, which have all been longtime indicators of an artist's success.

'New media strategies' as used throughout this paper will refer to digital, computerized, or networked information and communication technologies such as the Internet, mobile devices, gaming, and social networks. 'Independent artist' will refer to artists/bands/musicians who do not currently have recording contracts with any of the four major record labels (Sony, Warner Music, EMI, Universal), and are not represented by an independent record label that is affiliated (in any way) with a major record company.

The term independent artists will speak specifically to artists who fulfill at least four of the following:

- Self-funded the release of *at least* one album or EP (available via major online music retail networks such as iTunes and Amazon.).
- Self-funded the release of *at least* one music video.
- Have *at least* five years experience in the music industry. (Artist-Manager contracts are usually drafted for a term of two to three years (Long, 2007). After five years, a completely self-funded independent artist who is serious about developing and promoting their musical career should be able to show some concrete results.)

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- Performed in *(minimum)* 100+ venues locally or outside of their geographic region over the five years. (This represents an average of 20 shows per year. In today's music industry where revenue from live performances is critical to supplementing sales from recorded music, independent artists with a clear touring plan can perform in venues ranging from small cafes, and jazz clubs to major outdoor music festivals such as Lollapalooza, SunFest, Vans Warped Tour and Lilith Fair.)

- Maintain a fan base of *at least* 10,000 fans (Given the 80/20 rule of thumb, if a band wants to earn US$500 at every gig, the band needs to earn double this at the door. Therefore, their draw would be US$1,000. Assuming an average ticket price of US$7, then audience needs to be roughly 143, or 150 people (rounded up). Assuming the artist is able to get 80 percent of their fans each night, at least 120 people coming out whenever they play, for example (120 X 100 gigs) – they should have at least 12,000 fans.

- Established presence on *at least* two major social media networks, such as MySpace, Facebook, Reverbnation and/or YouTube.

These areas have been selected based on the argument that independent artists (like major labels) strive to produce musical products (audio and video) and make it available in the market, maintain a solid fan base (on and offline), and satisfy that fan base via live performances throughout the year. They are classified as 'independent' because they do this free of the financial support that comes with major label affiliation – they are self-funded.

The term "rise" will relate specifically to levels of industry success measured across specific areas defined herein. 'Success' as used in this paper will be measured by the achievement of at least three of the following points:

• Receiving an industry award nomination and/or winning an industry award. (This is an extensive list that varies depending on region.)

• Received an endorsement from a major brand.

• Sold *at least* 5000 units in year one of release of EP or album.

• Listing on *at least* one industry chart. (Local/Regional/International. This is an extensive list that varies depending on region.)

• Addition of *at least* one track to radio play rotation (terrestrial and online).

• Booked *at least* 20 performances in a single year (explained above).

Although changes are evident across the music industry, 'success' continues to be associated with music sales, regular live performances, airplay, and charting. These factors culminate annually with being recognized by peers and the music industry in general with an industry award. More award shows now include categories for independent artists and some shows are designed specifically for independents, such as the Independent Music Awards.

An industry overview will be presented to provide a snapshot of the current state of the industry. This overview will serve as the backdrop to the discussion on how new media has empowered independent artists and is crucial to establishing a connection between new media technology and the rise of the independent artist. A generalized independent artist SWOT Analysis, focusing on factors in the internal and external environment will also be presented in an effort to outline key areas of the artist

(as a product) that must be developed and maintained if they are to take advantage of current favorable shifts. Particular focus is placed on articulating 'how' such strategies have been incorporated by Jamaican, Reggae/Dancehall Soul artist, Cherine Anderson, Chicago based 'Improg' band, Umphrey's McGee and World/Reggae crooner, Michael Sean Harris (also from Jamaica), to achieve measurable levels of success (as defined within the framework of this paper). It is hoped that the information presented here will enable upcoming independent artists (despite genre) to not only utilize available new media technology but to do so strategically.

INDUSTRY OVERVIEW

The recording industry is comprised of companies that record, distribute publish and/or market recorded music (Hoovers, 2010). Consumer spending drives demand in the industry and it is not surprising that the profitability of individual companies depends on their ability to connect with consumers while discovering, promoting, and generating revenue from the recordings and publications of musical talent. For decades major labels have functioned within a model that carried excessive overheads and burdened artists allowing "less than 10 percent of them to recoup royalty advances" (Kusek & Leonard, 2005, p. 5) while labels reported record profits.

Chole Wright (2008) in her Harbottle & Lewis LLP article, 'Record Companies Face an Uphill Struggle to Protect Digital Revenues,' argues that the same high operating costs that have historically defined the sector have today prevented major labels from adequately responding to the digital revolution. The following points are based on arguments presented by Rob Cumberland (2010) in 'The Money Sponge.'

- *Major record company costs are out of control, preventing them from reporting profits;*

- *Core market (CD albums) has a limited lifespan now that digital distribution is at 20 percent of revenue and rising;*

- *Mainstream music industry is losing its monopoly on broadcasting and distribution to the Internet;*

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- *Traditional mass media audiences are declining in popularity as technology and entertainment options increase;*

- *Major record labels are weak in the new media sector where new acts and independents are strong; and*

- *Independent artists (for the first time) have direct access to affordable high quality recording, cheap record duplication and the global market.*

Cumberland's arguments are supported by almost constant press surrounding the current financial woes at record labels such as EMI, mergers to maintain market share, and the proverbial death of the CD. Survival has become the marker of success for industry players, as the convoluted network of self-interest now unravels bringing with it trends that are increasingly facilitating the rise of the independent and a loosening of the corporate hegemonic stronghold that historically dictated the economics of entertainment.

This industry overview will focus on five key areas, the nature of the recording industry, declining recording costs, shifts in music sales, the shrinking popularity of traditional mass media, and changes in consumer behavior, as it relates to music consumption. Numerous other factors can be considered when presenting an industry overview for the recording industry but in the interest of time and in an effort to focus on issues directly connected to the empowerment of the independent artist through the use of new media, these will take precedence.

The Nature of the Recording Industry

Understanding the inner workings of the recording industry requires examining a few economic models, including the concept of 'oligonomy' – a recently coined

economic term. In an 'oligopoly' or mature industry, "the market is dominated by just a few companies who control most of the market share," (Hutchison, Macy & Allen, 2006) equating to many buyers but few sellers. This is in clear contrast to an 'oligopsony,' where there are many sellers, but few buyers, and an emerging industry that would have numerous small competitors vying for market share in an effort to grow and expand. Economists argue that "in an oligonomy, companies act as an oligopoly to one group and an oligopsony to another" (Hannaford, 2003). Proponents of this theory argue that a record label, in its retail dealings with the music-buying public, operates as part of an oligopoly, where a few sellers control a market in which there are many buyers, while at the same time acting as an oligopsony for songwriters and artists who represent innumerable sellers, in a market where there are relatively few willing buyers (Hannaford, 2003). This oligonomic condition gives the record labels the power to draft artist contracts that provides them with low-cost content, and allows them to sell that content to music buyers at retail prices, which it controls.

Over several decades the recording industry has nurtured an oligonomistic environment, which has developed into a sector currently dominated by four major players - Universal Music Group (UMG), a subsidiary of French telecommunications company Vivendi, followed by Sony Music Entertainment, Warner Music Group (WMG) and the UK-based EMI Group (Associated Press, 2008). These entities have over the years extended their market share through acquisitions, and mergers, successfully driving out competitors and controlling more than 80 percent of total market share worldwide (Nielsen SoundScan, 2008). The remainder of the industry (approximately 12 percent) is controlled by countless independent record labels, such as

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Epitaph, Matador, TeeVee Toons, and Koch Entertainment (some of which are affiliated with major labels).

The very nature of an oligonomy is control – the 'Big Four' controls the rights to much of the world's copyrighted music, own numerous distribution companies, and have become a bigger presence in the retail sale of recordings. According to Bishop Jack (2005), record labels in their role as 'gatekeepers' determining which music passed into the global marketplace, secured control over what music would be conceived, performed, transmitted and received by a wide audience. In 2003, Martin Mills, chairman of Beggars Group stated that consolidation plans between major record companies "presented a real danger for independents … and may encourage them to exercise semi-monopolistic control in the marketplace" (Matheson, 2003). Hannaford (2003) also argued that "the pace of consolidation throughout the industry was increasing at a questionable pace."

Universal's acquisition of BMG's extensive library only four years later (making Sony-BMG and Universal, clear leaders in the industry) and Sony's acquisition of BMG the next year (2008) further questioned the major labels plans to control the entire industry. Currently, the four large studios have bought libraries from smaller studios and are actively acquiring studios, libraries, and labels in Asian and Eastern European countries.

Universal Music Group (UMG). Universal Music Group (UMG) is the leading music company in the world, involved in two core businesses: recorded music and music publishing. They discover, develop, market, and distribute recorded music through a network of subsidiaries, joint ventures and licensees in 77 countries. In the

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U.S., Universal Music Group Distribution has been the industry market share leader for the past ten years and consists of four major divisions: Universal Music Distribution (UMD), Fontana, Vivendi Entertainment (VE), and UMGD Digital. In a March 2009 press release, outlining UMGs financial performance, Vivendi executives reported that UMG had posted:

- *Revenues of $4,821 million, representing a 6.2 percent decline from 2008;*
- *Recorded music sales decline of 8.8 (due to a decrease in demand for physical products and lower license income); and*
- *Digital sales growth of 8.9 percent (the company attributed to strong growth in online sales yet tempered by softening demand for mobile products in the United States and Japan.)*

UMG reported a decline in full-year profit but beat industry estimates with its net loss that was much narrower than expected (Bender, 2010). Previous financial statements indicate that the company's revenue from physical product sales (CDs) is in continuous decline.

Sony Music Entertainment Inc. Sony Music is a subsidiary of consumer electronics giant Sony Corporation of America, and Sony Music Entertainment (formerly Sony BMG Music Entertainment). It holds the second highest market share in the global recording business behind Universal Music Group. Originally formed as a joint venture in 2004, between Bertelsmann and Sony "to combat illegal file sharing and shrinking CD sales" (Sandoval, 2009), Sony managed to buy out Bertelsmann's 50 percent stake in 2008 and now owns record distributor RED Distribution, as well as several recording labels, such as Columbia, Epic, RCA, and Zomba Label Group.

In January 2009, Sony Music reported a 22 percent decline in revenue from the previous year (Nielsen Soundscan, 2009) plunging its market share of digital album and song sales from 28.6 percent in 2004 to 22.5 percent.

The consolidated results for its third quarter ended December 31, 2009 reflected:

- *2.0 percent increase in sales (due to strong sales of a number of key releases which offset the continued decline in the physical music market – Michael Jackson and Susan Boyle" (Sony Music, 2009;*

- *8.2 percent increase in operating income (reflecting the contribution from higher sales as well as decreases in overhead and restructuring costs) over the previous quarter; and*

- *26 percent decrease in net come compared to previous year.*

Sony has been arguably slow to respond to digital shifts in the environment but at the recent Canadian Music Week in Toronto, Executive Vice President of Global Digital Business, Michael Paull, outlined that Sony's key theme over the next few years will be to "bring niche digital business to a mass market…adding that the company is expected to see growth through the integration of services social networks, mobile and other emerging services" (Resnikoff, 2010).

Warner Music Group (WMG). Warner Music Group (WMG) ranks third in terms of US market share (behind Universal Music Group and Sony Music Entertainment) and is one of the largest recording companies in the world. It operates through two businesses: Recorded Music and Music Publishing. WMG's financial statements for the last quarter of 2009 indicate:

- *WMG revenue declined 16.5 percent to $668 million from $800 million in the previous year's quarter;*

- *Domestic revenue declined 9.7 percent and international revenue dropped 22.4 percent;*

- *Digital revenue of $173 million grew 5.5 percent over the prior-year quarter;*

- *Operating income from continuing operations fell 46.4 percent to $15 million from $28 million in the prior-year quarter; and*

- *Digital revenue from Music Publishing slipped $2 million to $7 million.*

According to the report, "continued contracting global demand for physical product and the soft economic and retail conditions limited recorded music physical revenue but this was partially offset by increased digital and licensing revenue" (WMG, 2009).

EMI. EMI is the number four record company in terms of market share but it is the label in the most financial distress. EMI is organized into two core businesses: EMI Music and EMI Music Publishing with regional divisions - EMI Music North America, International, and UK & Ireland. In August 2007, Terra Firma bought EMI for US$8,000,000,000 with a 90 percent approval rating from its shareholders. In March 2008, Maltby executive released the first annual financial review for EMI Music Group. The report reflected very different performance data for EMI Music, which is facing numerous financial challenges and EMI Publishing, which stands as an industry leader in the industry. The financial section of the review indicated:

- *Continuing under performance from EMI Music since March 31, 2008;*

- *An adjusted EBITDA of $245 million down 5 percent from the pervious year;*

- *Pro forma loss of approximately $1.2 billion after tax for 2008 compared to a*

   loss of $428 million in the previous year; and

- *Falling CD sales eroding revenues from EMI Music's core product*

- *61 percent drop in operating profit.*

The Matlby Report also presented the following figures indicating EMI's spiraling

losses.

Table 1

Matlby Annual Financial Review for 2008

$ Million	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Revenue	3,238	3,157	2,998	3,100	2,608	2,170
Operating profits before exceptional items	316	295	265	299	146	(200)
Operating profit/(loss)	597	64	240	306	(234)	(383)

Matlby executives attributed the losses reflected to "the very large loss due to continued

operational poor performance, but more particularly, accounting factors" (Matlby,

2008). According to Maltby Chairman, Lord Birt (2008), "the market was of course a

major factor in EMI's recent decline…but the past year has exposed how internal

factors within EMI Music significantly eroded the Group's profitability." It is important

to note that several of the artists on EMI's roster including RadioHead, OkGo and

Robbie Williams, have left the label since the financial woes intensified.

The information presented above presents a clear picture of the current financial

state of the major players. Because new media's relationship with music and music

consumers stands to upset the longstanding oligonomic business model and alter

relationships between stakeholders, industry pundits have continuously argued that the

inability (or reluctance) of record labels to invest in research and development in the area of new media and music, early on, has currently left them playing a game of "catch up" as technologically proficient individuals continue to develop more ways to marry music and media. To fend off the negative impact of declining CD sales, and the digital growth market, major labels are now turning their attention to pushing digital product via online and mobile channels, exploiting product via social media, and offering 'all encompassing' 360 degree deals which allows them to share in revenue streams originally limited to the artist and their publishing companies. Much of the promotional strategies incorporated by artists such as Universals' Lady GaGa, and Beyonce are mobile and web-based, engaging fans and encouraging interactivity.

Declining Recording Costs

New media technology has resulted in the "democratization of production tools" (Anderson, 2008). Large multi-million dollar commercial studios, such as Manhattan's Sorcerer Sounds, the Record Plant, Sony Studios, and the Hit Factory, were once the only place artists could make a professional recording. Today, many of these brand name entities that became cornerstones of the recording community have been forced to close their doors - unable to compete with the growing number of 'home or project studios,' and easy access to recording equipment. According to Propellerheads founder, Ernst Nathorst-Böös, "a recording studio historically supplied a number of things: Instruments that weren't available otherwise, the room to record in, the recording equipment to do it, and experts that help you use all these resources" (Oranburg, 2008). Oranburg argues that over the past few years we have seen where the roles that recording studios used to fill have been taken over by computers, "whose digital-data-

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crunching power is sufficient to turn any Hit Factory condo into a studio that only a decade ago would have taken up the entire building."

Today's music production equipment is almost entirely centered around a computer and digital software programs such as Apple's Logic, Digidesign's ProTools, and Propellerhead's Reason. Artists can now build small (even portable) studios by purchasing fairly low cost computers, and readily available interfaces, mixers, speakers, microphones and external processing units for under US $1,500.00 (assuming that they already own a computer) at the very low end (Towne, 2010) and depending on the artist's needs. A CD production studio, designed for composing, recording basic tracks, including a drum kit, overdubbing and mixing, can cost close to US $5000, while an advanced CD Production Studio with "…plenty of inputs, a good range of microphones, analog summing capabilities, and lots of I/O flexibility" can cost close to US $26,000 (Electronic Musician, 2009). These figures may sound high but stand minimal in comparison to the crippling prices associated with setting up an independent studio a few years ago. Thanks to the affordability and processing power of the computer (and software to match), a novice composer or producer can create a studio complete with mixing board, amp simulators, EQs, an endless number of synthesizers, MIDI controllers, a virtually limitless number of tracks and anything else an audiophile could possibly desire.

One must not forget that the latest laptop computers are powerful enough to make them a viable alternative to the power of the personal studio, especially when portability is crucial. Len Sasso (2009), writing for the Electronic Musician Magazine, estimates that a 'software only' mobile set up (assuming that the individual already

possesses a laptop computer) can cost anywhere from US$89 to US$1000. What he calls the 'full-featured in-the-box' set up can cost between US$2,700 and US$4,600, thereby improving the audio experience. As these programs become more ubiquitous on musicians' laptops, because they supply the resources once available only at professional studios just a few years ago, the need for a studio's acoustically optimized rooms has waned, though not completely because, of course, there are reasons why experienced engineers still utilize professional studios. But an increasing number of artists are producing professional-sounding projects from small project studios or home studios.

As the cost of production tools declines and the sound quality from low cost hardware and software improves, independent artists are realizing that they do not need to have a massive budget to create high quality mixed and mastered music. Today's popular music production software supplies a multitude of instruments and sounds and can act as mixers and recorders that are much cheaper (and more flexible) than the equipment that was once popular. The table below outlines the bare minimum equipment (and costs) associated with setting up a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW).

Table 2

Basic components of a DAW

Component	Specifications	Retail Price
Computer (Mac or PC) *Preference of the user	Must offer at least 3 GB of memory	Mac Book Pro/Quad/8-Core US$2,299 - US$3,299
External hard drives (minimum two)	Must be a minimum of 7200 RPMs or faster and compatible with USB and FireWire connections.	Hard Drives between 1 and 2TB starting at $120
Microphone and Speakers		Varying price depending on brand and specifications
Recording software Options include but not limited to ProTools, Logic Pro, Nuendo, Cubase		Varying price depending on brand
Keyboard/Controller		Varying price depending on brand
Interface	*If using ProTools LE/M-Powered/HD you must use DigiDesign Audio Interfaces (OXs and M-Boxes)	Varying price depending on brand

The expanding bandwidth and faster speeds of Internet connections allows producers to quickly exchange music files over the web via email, significantly reducing long time recording budget burdens such as transportation and studio fees. In addition, a host of traditional music entities and Internet networks such as eSessions.com, Abbey Road Studios, DiscMakers SoundLab, eMixEngine, and TuneCore (via Universal Mastering Studios) allow artists to record their tracks in their studios and send the files to engineers across the globe to have them mixed, tempo-corrected, and pitch-corrected at a fairly low cost. The DiscMakers SoundLab for example, masters a song for US$99, 4 to 6 songs for US$390, and 7 to 12 songs for US$490. These fees include "signal processing with equalization and compression to

optimize levels to radio and commercial standards, as well as tune-up" (DiscMakers, 2010). eMixEngine, on the other hand offers mixing services for US$199 per song, and US$55 per song mastering fee.

Quality is not affected by the increased accessibility and reduced cost of recording equipment, since many of the top remaining commercial studios utilize the same recording software (such as Pro Tools) that small or home base studios have installed. A major label artist may have access to the top engineers (and the budgets to pay them) but an independent artist can shop around and actually find a few good offerings at low cost and at comparable quality.

New media has not only democratized production tools, it has also allowed artists to compete at the same level in the music creation process. Today's highly digital production software has changed the way music is produced, enabling independent creators to make music that is often times comparable in sound quality to music produced by major label artists with big budgets.

Trends in Music Sales – What Do the Figures Say?

These are tough times for music sales in general but CD sales in particular. The shift to digital has not only forced major labels to review their traditional models, but it has also represented the biggest threat to brick-and-mortar music retailers, such as Tower Records, Camelot Music and the Virgin Mega store chain. In 2009, Billboard Magazine reported that Apple iTunes had surpassed Walmart as the biggest music retailer in the United States. This heralded the end for the last major music retail entity standing – Virgin Mega store. Tower Records and Camelot had thrown in the towel years before but Virgin, which was seen as an iconic entity providing the full music

experience, had been trying to combat slow music sales by adding more 'lifestyle products' such as apparel and books, but this was not enough to combat disastrous music sales. For the first time, members of the 'old guard' were forced to face the music – the chords were shifting to digital and there was no turning back.

According to TheWrap columnist, Lauren Horwitch (2009), "brick-and-mortar music retailers across the country had been fighting a losing battle with Internet sales," and the fact that many of these retail entities had developed into iconic entities, especially Virgin Megastore, was not enough to keep music lovers loyal. Other entities such as Borders Books and Barnes and Noble, faced with staggering quarterly losses, have cut their music inventory by close to 50 percent, while electronic and entertainment outlets such as Walmart, Best Buy, and FYE currently dedicate 90 percent of their shelf space to the top twenty major label artists leaving very little room for variety offerings. EMI A&R executive, Steven Melrose, speaking at the recent SXSW Conference noted that "the physical retail landscape, already decimated by the loss of Tower Records and hundreds of independent distributors continues to shrivel" (Martens, 2010).

Tom Hutchison's (2008) research into music sales trends revealed that digital album sales reached the 50 million mark in 2007 (a 53.5 percent increase over the previous year), and accounted for 10 percent of total album sales. With more than 500 online music services available in more than 40 countries at the end of 2007, the US sled the market for online sales with more than 844 million tracks sold online, representing a 67 percent market share. Nielsen SoundScan (2008) presented the following, which they refer to as 'known facts' for 2007:

- *Digital music downloads emerged and experienced tremendous growth of 490 percent;*

- *Digital accounts for 40 percent of total U.S. music purchases;*

- *In 2008 digital album sales reached 65 million; up 32 percent over digital album sales in 2007;*

- *2009 U.S. music purchases up 2.1 percent over 2008;*

- *Record: Digital album sales broke the 2 million sales mark for one week during the last week of the year (2.4 million); and*

- *Digital track sales broke the 1 billion sales mark in 2008 and were up 27 percent over 2007's digital track sales.*

By 2008, SoundScan reported that digital music sales had grown to account for approximately 20 percent of total music sales (in units) and based on this rate of change between physical and digital sales, overall digital sales should account for 50 percent of all music sales by the end of 2010. The IFPI Digital Music Report for 2009 echoed a similar message indicating that for the first time ever, more than a quarter of the recorded music industry's global revenues (27 percent) came from digital channels – a market worth an estimated US$4.2 billion in trade value, up 12 percent in 2008.

However, at the close of 2009, the overall music industry was valued at half its worth ten years prior, plunging from a 1999 estimated revenue of US$14.6 billion to US$6.3 billion (Goldman, 2010). But despite the decline in overall sales, statistical data reveals that falling physical sales stand in contrast to growth (though not equivalent to offset loss) in digital sales. Billboard Magazine's (2010) weekly national music sales for the week ending February 21, 2010 reflected net sales of 1,606,000 (units) for

digital albums compared to 1,451,000 (units), a 10.7 percent increase from the same period in 2009. The magazine's year to date analysis reported CD album sales reflected a 14.4 percent decline, while digital album downloads increased by 19.6 percent. According to Tom Silverman, founder of Tommy Boy Records, "the percentage of increase is slowing down, but … the actual amount — the number of additional units was almost 100 million more digital tracks sold this year than the year before" (Price, 2010). Some industry pundits argue that although the industry was experiencing continuous decline by at least 8 percent each year since 2000, this dramatic plunge reflects "shifts in consumer demands in terms of variety and access to music and the 'growing pains' associated with adapting and monetizing these shifts" (Goldman, 2010).

Although piracy remains a problem, a recent Forrester Research Report revealed that "at least 64 percent of Americans who buy digital music think that music is worth paying for" (Goldman, 2010). An eMarket 2010 report on paid music content also revealed that online and mobile revenues now account for approximately 40 percent of music sales in the United States, the world's largest music market and that US consumer spending on digital music will increase at an annual growth rate of 11.04 percent in the next four years, reaching $4.56 billion up from $3 billion in 2009. The latest figures from the IFPI (2010) reveal that between Jan. 5, 2009, and Jan. 3, 2010, total album sales (encompassing CDs, cassettes, LPs and digital albums) plummeted 12.7 percent, digital album sales gained 16.1 percent and digital track sales climbed 8.3 percent. These trends suggest that despite a decline in the overall sale of music, digital music sales are increasing and are becoming the preferred format for music consumers.

The Shrinking Popularity of Traditional Media and the Changing Face of Marketing

"Music marketing has always been and will always be about exposure and discovery" (Kusek, et al, 2005). For years, radio, television, MTV, live shows, magazines, brick and mortar retail outlets, and word of mouth have been the dominant methods of exposing new music to consumers. But in today's characteristically digital market place, we are exposed to new music in a vast array of new and innovative ways that integrate direct and personalized methods and of course, new media. There is no question that the Internet has grown faster than any other media because of its ability to sustain content that is relevant to everyone (Stewart, 2009) and because of this traditional mass media – radio, television, and print – have come under extreme pressure. Not only are consumers venturing to the Internet to access, discover, share, purchase and download music, but marketing executives are following suit and spending their ad dollars on new media strategies.

According to Jeff Price (2008) of TuneCore, "the Internet has created new media outlets and given everyone global access." Through control and programming commercial radio had successfully blocked independent artists from attaining any significant amount of airplay. Today, Satellite radio stations and Internet based recommendation streaming radio stations like Pandora and Last.Fm are slowly replacing this control. These alternative services have a growing listenership because consumers simply are not listening to terrestrial radio like they used to and online radio stations offer an ever-increasing variety of new music (not just music pushed by major labels). This presents an excellent opportunity to provide "exposure for artists in an

environment that supports creative discovery and diverse tastes" (Kusek, et al, 2005, p. 62). A Bridge Ratings study (2009) conducted between December 2009 and January 2010 on Internet radio listeners revealed that 60 million Americans listen to Internet radio during an average week. Eighty-four percent of those regularly listen to online simulcasts of terrestrial radio while 62 percent listened to Internet only stations such as Pandora, Last.Fm, Live365, LaunchCast, and AOLMusic. The study concluded that 77 million Americans will be regular listeners of Internet radio stations by 2015.

According to A2IM, a not-for-profit trade organization serving the Independent music community, "independent music makes up approximately 40 percent of all music played at non-traditional web radio stations." Satellite technology is also a part of new media. Currently there is one satellite radio service in the US – Sirius XM Radio – that caters to a broad variety of music genres from classical to rock to reggae and dancehall, commercial free. At the close of 2009, Sirius XM reported an additional 257,000 subscribers bringing their total radio subscribers to 18.8 million (Hypebot, 2010).

It is important to note that consumers and advertisers alike are shifting their focus to online platforms. According to the Barclays Capital U.S. Media and Internet Report for 2009 radio ad revenue decreased 15.1 percent overall, while digital advertising increased 13 percent to $480 million." In terms of ad revenue online, Barclays believes that for 2010 advertising growth will accelerate to 5.7 percent, reaching $25.1 billion.

Gone too are the days of MTV when artists needed a killer video to become a hit. Today's music consumers demand diversity – something that MTV failed to offer as its "music television programming became less and less diverse and more and more

expensive for record labels" (Kusek, et al, 2005, p. 63). Today it is online video sites like YouTube, Hulu and Vevo that are the most popular mediums for access to entertainment and discovery of new music. comScore's January 2010 Video Metrix numbers revealed that "the Vevo music video network scored another month as the top music entertainment network in the U.S, … and for the first time broke into the top 10 list of overall internet video properties" (Bruno, 2010). It is important to note that since launching in December 2009, this is the third month that Vevo has taken the top spot in comScore's Entertainment-Music category, with 35.4 million unique visitors in February. These entertainment/music websites are the new MTVs, VH1s and BETs, with the added benefit of variety and choice. Mike Vorhais, President of Magid Advisors, a top research based consultancy service, argues that "online video viewership has reached critical mass and its growing popularity indicates that online video is fast becoming an entertainment genre in its own right" (Friedman, 2009).

Print magazines, which in the past informed entertainment lovers about the latest hits and trends, while providing wide exposure for artists have experienced a similar fate. Numerous entertainment magazines have been replaced by blogs and entertainment websites. In 2009 approximately 367 print magazines folded (Flamm, 2009). According to Trish Hagood, President of Oxbridge Communications, parent company of MediaFinder, the largest online database of U.S. and Canadian publications, "given the rise of digital media and the severe recession, the number of new magazines is also declining. In 2008, there were 342 magazine launches in the U.S. In 2007, there were 411" (Flamm, 2009). Many of these magazines have moved online and have embraced the power of blogging and creating a presence on social networks

like Facebook and Twitter. These sites, combined with social networks possess limitless circulation and the ability to allow readers and users to form a community that listens to, shares, rates, and comments.

Content producers and Marketers alike are now focused on engagement as the idea of communicating a marketing message has taken on a two-way conversation between advertisers and consumers. According to CEO of music branding consultancy agency Heartbeats International, Jakob Lusensky, "it's harder and harder to get people's attention, and innovative advertisers say they no longer believe in traditional advertising" (Mullins, 2010). The nature of today's market makes music the perfect candidate to connect with consumers in a strong and meaningful way.

According to BrandPlusMusic.com (2010), "96 percent of consumers say that they are more likely to remember a brand if it is paired with music that fits the brands identity." RedBull's use of music for example, has given it 15 years of the highest brand loyalty rate among teens and college students within the energy drink category. Sonic Bids, the company, which services more than 220,000 independent artists by connecting them with event promoters, venues, media projects, and commercial brands has over the past few years provided independent artists with a host of opportunities that were not as accessible in the past. According to Sonic Bids Executive Panos Panay, independent artists are attractive to marketers for a number of reasons including their audience, their message, the carrier, and the cost. According to Panay, marketers believe that people who listen to 'indie' music are young, passionate, early adopters of trends and, more importantly, influencers in their own right. They also contend that every brand craves authenticity and 'indie' music is just that – authentic, home grown, and

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uncompromising (not affected by corporate interests). He also added that young

independent artists are easy to work with especially because of their entrepreneurial

spirit and interest in social media promotions. It is also the belief that the costs

associated with supporting an independent artist or band is much cheaper than those

associated with working with a major label act.

In August 2009, clothing retailer Gap partnered with Sonic Bids to create an

event at nearly 770 Gap stores around North America that featured 770 independent

bands performing in its retail stores at the exact same time. It was a win - win marriage

of brand and band with Gap receiving valuable viral exposure through social networks

(of their own and from the 770 artists/bands), increased store traffic, as well as captive

consumers, while the artists received promotion and support on a scale that only major

label artists were once privy to.

The massive growth in cellular phone use has resulted in increased mobile

marketing and advertising and has opened a whole new landscape for music marketing.

Mobile music marketing enables accessibility and allows artists to communicate and

engage with their target market in an interactive and relevant manner through any

mobile (cellular) device or mobile network. According to comScore, there are

approximately 234 million people with mobile devices. One hundred and ten million of

these people take pictures with them, and 26 million use it to access Facebook, Twitter

and other social media platforms. eMarketer (2009) reported that, "social networking is

one of the fastest-growing activities among mobile users and has become a significant

driver of Internet usage on mobile devices."

Mobile and music are very much interconnected especially with the strides that

companies such as Apple (iPhone), Nokia, and Samsung have made in designing their devices to make music and entertainment easily accessible. Mobile applications, referred to as 'apps,' now allow consumers instant gratification for entertainment that they choose, while providing artists with an avenue to facilitate sharing on and across social media platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and MySpace. Artists can invite users to live chats via Skype and other networks, and can access mobile features that allow them to dictate their level of engagement with their fans. Internet radio stations now offer mobile applications, so too do special events such as the Grammy Awards, and of course artists like Mariah Carey, Elvis Presley (Foundation), Soulja Boy Tell'Em TV, Lady Gaga: Haus of Gaga, Pink's FunHouse, Akon: Freedom, and Death Cab for Cutie.

According to Dexter Bryant Jr. (2010), "music-based mobile apps are one of the most powerful tools in a musician's digital marketing arsenal… they are a hot commodity with customers, and provides an avenue for deeper engagement." Many of these applications are free and offer features such as interactive booklets with material featured on the artist's album. For example, the Soulja Boy Tell'Em TV application compiles his YouTube video blog archives and new posts, as well as other video updates using the Kyte mobile video service and includes Twitter updates, blog posts and a fan chat room, while Pink's FunHouse application lets users sample songs from her 'Funhouse' album, with links to buy either the entire album or each track individually from iTunes. It also includes photos, news, a discography and a link to her biography (Bruno, 2009).

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The shrinking popularity of traditional mass media channels has changed marketing and advertising from an industry reliant on mass-market channels to an industry that embraces the power of the consumer and the value associated with engaging in conversations. The traditional approach of wide reach and repetitive messaging has been replaced by many much smaller, niche and people-centric activities.

New Business Models

The new digital landscape of the music business has acted as a category five hurricane, diminishing barriers to entry and enabling for the introduction of new players who are utilizing new business models that are intricately linked to new media, primarily the Internet. According to the IFPI (2008), business models in today's music business number in the hundreds and the variety is good for independent artists who desire creative control over their music and the path to the development of their brand. The Future of Music Coalition (2009) lists digital retail, subscription, artist-to-fan, patronage, licensing, radio/web casting/digital performances, and advertising supported revenues as examples of the more commonly used new business models. A few of these models are outlined below.

Digital retail. As new media becomes a staple in this new music business, independent artists who wish to take advantage of distributing their music via the Internet must develop a relationship with music distributors referred to as 'digital aggregators.' These companies aggregate music and materials and deliver them to major online retail channels such as iTunes, Amazon, and eMusic (and some brick-and-mortar outlets). The aggregator delivers the music and collects on sales on an artists' behalf

while passing on the earnings directly to the artist for a relatively small percentage of

each sale or for a flat fee (see Table III. below). Many aggregators are now offering

marketing support, something that was usually reserved for major label artists. In the

same way that major labels have been seen as 'gatekeepers,' aggregators are considered

the 'gatekeepers' for independent artists since they can get 'indie' music onto the virtual

shelves of the major digital retail entities without the help of major labels. Digital

Aggregators in the US include:

Table 3

Major Digital Aggregators (US)

Aggregator	Characteristics
TuneCore	Has arrangements with leading digital music retailers that let them place music in their online stores and via subscriptions services. Artists pay a flat fee for the service - $0.99 per track, $0.99 per store per album, and $19.98 per album per year storage or, $9.99 flat per song - and receive 100 percent of earnings from digital distribution (TuneCore, 2010)
IODA	Has a catalog of nearly two million tracks that is licensed to more than 400 digital storefronts worldwide. IODA's catalog represents a diverse range of music from over 50 countries, including rock, electronic, hip-hop, metal, punk, 'indie', world, latin, and classical. (IODA, 2010)
CD Baby	They sell both physical CDs and digital downloads from their site. They also deliver artists' music to other download retailers with no start-up costs and just a 9 percent commission, (CDBaby, 2010)
The Orchard	They provide artists with access to 730 retail outlets in 69 countries. Physical division leverages direct relationships with key physical retailers in the US to provide established independent labels distribution to major retail chains, one-stop shops, and independent retailers nationwide. (TheOrchard, 2010)
Zimbalam	Zimbalam is a digital distribution service that gives artists the ability to sell their music through dozens of the most popular digital and mobile music stores worldwide. Like TuneCore, artists collect 100 percent of the royalties earned from their sales. (Zimbalam.com, 2010)

Major online music retailers include:

Table 4

Major Online Music Retailers (US)

Retailer	Characteristics
iTunes	Songs sold via a three-tiered system - US$.69, US$.99, US$.1.29, Complete album pricing varies. iTunes has sold over four billion songs and features the world's largest music catalog of over six million songs (iTunes, 2010).
Rhapsody	Streams music online with a monthly fee of US$12.99
Napster	Monthly subscription from US$5 - US$7 that gives users an unlimited number of mp3 credits to download songs and access streamed music
eMusic	Subscriptions from US$11.99 for 24 song downloads per month to US$20.79 for 50 songs per month
CD Baby	Consumers buy physical CDs that are then shipped to them in the mail, or can buy digital albums via website.
Amazon	Consumers buy individual tracks or albums for set rates, usually US$.99/track or US$8.99/album, though some tracks are steeply discounted
Amie Street	Users purchase songs at a price that varies according to demand, starting at 0 cents and ending at US$.98. Users also earn credits by recommending songs to their friends.

Digital music retail facilitates variety offerings and facilitates the set up of good customer service plans. Consumers have access to short and low quality samples to allow them to listen before buying, they can purchase individual full quality tracks (a-la-carte) instead of being limited to purchase the entire album, and they can also purchase album artwork, videos, complete albums, artwork, and ring tones. Digital retail also facilitates ecommerce for traditional music merchandise such as custom band tees, tour booklets, band passes, key rings, bottle openers, jewelry, books, skins, posters, etc.

According to Tony van Venn (2007), writing for TAXI:

the appealing thing about merchandise is that you don't need any notoriety to

start generating revenues. You don't need to be famous. All you need is a desire

to perform live, a few gigs booked and a cool design. Once you're performing

live, people will buy your merchandise, so long as it's cool.

Traditional merchandise can represent a massive alternative revenue stream if

fully developed, so much so that major label artists who are now signed via 360

recording contracts must relinquish a percentage of their earnings from merchandise.

Ensuring that merchandise is available via the artist website and also on social media

platforms ensures that products are exposed to current fans and potential fans and that

no opportunity to secure a sale is missed. Independent artists can price custom band tees

from a low of US$10.00 to a high of US$40.00 depending on what their fan base is

willing to pay for "a piece of the band/artist" as well as whether they are offering

product bundles.

Subscription services. This model allows consumers to pay a monthly

subscription fee to access a large library of albums and songs for a specified period of

time. Subscription services represent experimentation with the 'cloud' technology,

which allows consumers to take their music with them anywhere and access it

(increasingly) on a range of devices. The idea of subscription services has taken time to

catch on in the US, primarily because of consumer perceptions linked to 'ownership' of

music as opposed to 'access' to music and issues with interoperability. The more

popular US based services include, Rhapsody, Napster, MOG, and eMusic.

Advertising-supported models and social networks. Consumers are already

comfortable with ad sponsored TV, radio, magazines and websites so it was not a

considerable leap to extend ad support to into the realm of music. The Nielsen report on

Social Networking (2009) revealed that visits to social networking sites account for

approximately 10 percent of all Internet use worldwide. With its growing popularity,

these social networks facilitate new ways for people to connect while giving publishers

and content providers new ways to better serve and connect with their target market.

According to the report, because the social network audience is becoming more

encompassing – covering varying demographics - music content providers must seek to

work with networks more closely to develop more authentic and conversational ad

campaigns that are focused on adding value. So it becomes more than just having a

profile/presence on these networks; rather, the focus should be on strategically

interacting and building brand affinity with the artist and musical product.

The primary social networks in the US according to SocialNetworkingWatch

(2010) are, Facebook (112,442 unique visitors each day), MySpace (69,717 unique

visitors each day), YouTube, Twitter, Mocospace, Blackplanet and Hi5.

 Nielsen estimates for 2008 revealed that Facebook earned approximately US$ 300

million in ad revenue versus, MySpace's US$ 1 billion. Facebook may have replaced

MySpace as the top social network in the US in terms of unique visitors but "it had been

MySpace's more focused overall offering targeting teenagers and young adults through

vehicles of entertainment (music and video) that proved fruitful" (Nielsen, 2009). But

Facebook's increase in unique visitors, and average daily visitors, may oust MySpace

completely. (See Table 5 below)

According to the eMarketer Social Network Ad Spending Outlook for 2010, "Facebook will surpass MySpace, in ad revenues in 2010 and will account for nearly one – quarter of all social network ad spending worldwide, up from 20 percent in 2009" (Williamson, 2009).

Table 5

US and Non-US Online Advertising Spending on MySpace and Facebook, 2009 and 2010 (millions and % change)

	2009	2010	% Change
MySpace			
US	$465	$360	-23%
Non-US	$25	$25	3%
Worldwide	$490	$385	-21%
Facebook			
US	$335	$450	34%
Non-US	$100	$155	65%
Worldwide	$435	$605	39%

Patronage. The patronage model has existed in the artistic community for centuries. Numerous world-renowned pieces of art were created with the financial aid of a 'patron.' The concept is becoming popular again today extending to general fans of the artist who are willing to donate anything from US$1 to even US$10,000. Peter Spellman, in explaining the concept, argued that "the computer sets the industry back 300 years, enabling the artist to go directly to their audience in the same way they used to before the arrival of new media" (Levine, 2008). Fans have the opportunity to not only buy CDs and digital versions of the songs/album, patronage allows them to fund the projects in exchange for the privilege of accessing 'the creative process' – attending

recording sessions/rehearsals, working drafts of music in progress, credit on the CD, etc. The money donated basically underwrites artists' expense to create the album.

It is important to note however, that the patronage model is not limited to financing an album. Kickstarter.com, a Brooklyn-based startup that pairs aspiring creators with financial backers, uses the Internet to democratize the patronage system, calling it 'crowdfunding' or 'micropatronage.' According to Patrick Caldwell (2010) of American – Staff, "it's a method for would-be artists, athletes and journalists, among others, to finance creative endeavors and adventures, gauging interest in their work and negating the financial risk." A Kickstarter creator sets a fundraising goal and a deadline, with a maximum of ninety days to raise the money. Each project gets its own page with text updates, videos, music or links, where the creator keeps in touch with contributors classified as "backers." If a project hits or exceeds its goal by the deadline, all backers are simultaneously charged through Amazon Payments, and Kickstarter takes a 5 percent commission. If a project fails to meet its goals, no backers are charged, and the creator does not receive a penny.

Several artists have used Kickstarter to fund album projects without having to commit percentages of their overall income. Brooklyn based singer/songwriter; April Smith needed to raise US$10,000 to produce her sophomore album, 'Songs for A Sinking Ship.' Using the power of social media and Kickstarter, she raised US$13,100 in three months from 224 backers, including the Chief Information Officer for a chain of hospitals in Wisconsin. For US$50, Smith gave backers a signed copy of her album. For US$100, she'd include the name of the contributor in her liner notes. For US$1,000, she'd write a song about the backer — or a subject of his or her choice — and send the

person five copies.

Another artist, Allison Weis utilized Kickstarter in an effort to raise US$2000 to produce her album. She was able to raise US$7,711 from 205 backers. Her incentives ranged from US$1 to US$300 or more and included receiving exclusive video updates on her project, having your name/link placed on her website, digital copy of her album a week before its release, name listed in liner notes, and performing a song in honor of the backer at an intimate show in a city of their choice (Caldwell, 2010).

A growing number of companies currently offer patronage programs including Artistshare, MyBandStock, and Reverbnation but artists can also develop patronage programs via their own website or social networks. Artists like Amanda Palmer managed to utilize Twitter to raise US$19,000 in 10 hours (King, 2009), Jill Sobule, raised US$75,000 (Quan, 2009), and Ellis Paul raised US$100,000 from 300 fans (Hyatt, 2010). More than just rumors, Palmer, Paul and Sobule have openly discussed their strategies with numerous 'Music 2.0' pundits. Associate Director of Marketing at Berklee College of Music, and author/instructor of Music Marketing 201, Mike King (2009), blogs about Palmer's resourcefulness via Twitter, outlining how, in three steps – 'Friday Night Losers' t-shirts, webcast auction, and a Twitter donation only gig she accumulated US$19,000.

There are instances where artists chose to give patrons ownership in a song or the album – paying them a percentage of each sale. There is no standard percentage rate in these relationships and as such will differ from artist to artist. Research has revealed that most artists tend to shy away from percentage splits in models of this type, opting to thank patrons via other means.

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Licensing. This is considered a Business-to-Business (B2B) service where Music directors utilize specific websites such as Pump Audio, Broadjam, TAXI and Rumblefish to access music for specific advertising/film/TV projects. The budgets may range from US$0 (benefit of exposure) to thousands of dollars. Many of these websites charge artists a fee to submit their music and although there is no guarantee that their song will be selected, this model has opened up avenues of opportunity not previously available to independent artists. More artists are understanding the need to mine additional revenue streams, and licensing and publishing opportunities not only drive additional revenue to an artist but it can also build on an artist's brand and reputation, while increasing fan base.

Direct-to-fans. Much of today's marketing is tied to interaction, so artists and labels alike have been exploring different direct ways of creating interest from fans and potential fans. Direct-to-fan models involve identifying the fans, marketing directly to them and developing relationships with them so that they can be moved to the point of purchasing product while becoming lifelong fans. Some tools supporting the Direct-to-Fan model include:

- *Storefronts to sell direct-to-fan via Websites;*
- *Storefronts to sell direct-to-fan on social networking sites such as Facebook or MySpace;*
- *Widget tools to embed sales, calendar, profile information anywhere including blogs; and*

- *Marketing tools such as email marketing and messaging, Event tools, Central Content Management tools, and Central Catalog Management tools for both digital and physical products.*

Many of the companies that support this strategy are Internet based and include, Nimbit, Tunecore, FanBridge, CD Baby, Constant Contact, iContact, Reverb Nation, Bandzoogle, Aime Street, Pandora, MySpace Music, and Facebook.

This model involves "knowing" your fan base - becoming familiar with the way a fan thinks, the way fans discover, consume, and interact with music, and how to provide the right contextual information to enrich their music experience. Strategy is crucial in direct-to-fan models because once the fan begins connecting to an artist, business operations must all work in unison to offer different products (music, merchandise, tickets, etc.), giving the fan an experience. Unfortunately, this is where many artists falter.

To obtain measurable results from this model, TopSpin Co-Founder Shamalanasinghe (2010) argues that artists must set direct-to-fan goals, which should address reach, engagement, acquisition, and monetization, carefully craft offers to allow for authentic connection with fans, collect data, measure their success (quantifiably), and repeat, iterate, and experiment because promotional effectiveness has a short half-life that requires the emulation of successful methods quickly.

Consumer Behavior

Consumers are listening, purchasing and touching music in more ways than ever, now that music is available in an historic variety of formats around the clock. Consumers can experience music in their homes via CD Players/Turntables/MP3

Players, Internet, Radio, at work using Hardware players, Radio & Internet, in their cars with CD & MP3 Players, Terrestrial and satellite radio and while they are 'on the go' using their MP3 players or Mobile phone (radio, streaming, downloading). This variety reflects the fact that since 2001, consumers have been shifting from traditional music stores to non-traditional outlets (digital, Internet, etc.) to purchase music. According to Nielsen (2008), "nearly 1 out of every 3 album purchases in the U.S. currently are through a digital service, Internet retailer, mail-order, at a 'non-traditional retail store' or at a concert."

Russ Crupnick, Entertainment Industry Analyst at leading North American market research company NPD Group (2010) argues:

> Consumers bought fewer CDs in 2008, purchased more music from authorized download sites and increased their usage of social-networking sites and Internet music services to enjoy music…these trends in our consumer tracking studies are evidence of the continued transformation of the music industry.

In an annual consumer survey involving more than 4,000 Internet users age 13 and older, the NPD Group found that almost 17 million fewer people bought CDs in 2008 compared to 2007 and the number of Internet users paying for digital music increased to 36 million in 2008 from 28 million in 2007. Purchases of music online over the period also increased by 29 percent. According to the report, the decline was across all demographic groups, but was highest among teens and consumers 50 years and older. These figures are indeed indicators of a shift in consumer preference.

The NPD also found that consumers have reduced entertainment spending and the purchasing of CDs, noting the current recession, satisfaction with their existing

music libraries, and the ability to buy/download only the songs they want and listen to them immediately, as primary reasons. The report also revealed consumer music consumption trends and social networks as follows:

- *Growing percentage of consumers increasingly turning to Internet music services and social-networking sites to listen to music;*

- *Growing percentage of consumers claiming to listen to music on social networks (increase from 15 percent in the fourth quarter of 2007 to 19 percent in the fourth quarter of 2008);*

- *Growing percentage of U.S. teenagers are listening to music on social networks; and*

- *Growing percentage of college-age Internet users (the percentage increased to 41 percent in 2008 from 30 percent in 2007).*

'Have it your way' speaks to how today's consumers prefer to interact with products. Personalization, connectivity, access and portability have much to do with the draw to social networking. Because the music business is driven by consumer demand, it is this consumer that producers of content must seek to satisfy if they are to attain any level of success in the marketplace.

According to the first annual Avenue A Razorfish Digital Consumer Behavior Study (2007), "the majority of today's consumers are actively personalizing their digital experiences and sampling niche content and video with increasing frequency." The study which involved 475 consumers across the US (screened based on broadband access, entertainment and social media use and e-commerce habits) revealed that at least 67 percent of consumers watch videos on YouTube or similar sites on a regular

basis, 42 percent purchase music online, consumers react positively to recommendation and personalization services such as those offered by iTunes and Amazon, and consumers start their shopping experience at a search engine such as Google.

The Internet has vastly extended consumer choice and with the expansion comes demand that has been met with supply from the vast amount of niche markets now available to consumers. Razorfish researchers believe that in order to better navigate shifts in consumer consumption, industry players should make content portable, invest in online video by making sure that all video assets are digitized and integrated into online platforms, and think beyond the website and develop a meaningful presence on social media site.

A VIEW FROM THE TOP: WHAT THE INDUSTRY OVERVIEW MEANS

FOR THE INDEPENDENT ARTIST

The industry overview provided a snapshot of the changes now occurring throughout the music industry. While these shifts do not necessarily echo complete collapse for major labels and corporations with a vested interest in music business, it signals new opportunities for artists to independently produce and distribute music (globally), while satisfying consumer demand for variety, creating a core fan base and building a solid brand.

According to economists, 'economic triggers' cause significant shifts or changes within the larger economic framework of an industry. Based on the information provided throughout the industry overview, the oligonomistic model that has dictated the operations of the recording industry has been disrupted, resulting in out of control major label overheads, the decline of its core product (the CD), the explosion of demand for non-mainstream product, and the overall exodus of music and entertainment to the Internet. Chris Anderson (2008, p. 54) identifies three economic triggers - "democratization of production, declining costs of consumption as a result of the democratization of distribution channels, and the ability to connect supply with demand." These triggers are unquestionably connected to the rise in the use of new media technology in the music industry.

Anderson's (2008 analysis of these forces connects the democratization of

production tools to producers of content. The introduction of the computer and the development of various software applications have essentially destroyed previously existing barriers to entry. Author of 'An Army of Davids,' Glenn Reynolds (2006), argues that "…twenty years ago there was no alternative to the record-label route because production and distribution was so capital intensive…those days are done." In today's new music business anyone can create content and publish it to the world in a matter of minutes. Tracks produced by independent artists in home or project studios are now more of the rule than an exception in the music marketplace. According to Anderson (2008), "the number of new albums released in 2005 grew a phenomenal 36 per cent over 2004," this number swelled to 139,000 in 2009. Anderson attributes the increase to the ease with which artists can now release and record their music.

Today's music production equipment is almost entirely centered around a computer and digital software, and declining recording costs allow independents to compete with major label musical product. Independent artists can now build small (even portable) Digital Audio Workstations (DAW) studios by purchasing low cost, readily available computers, recording software, interface, mixer, speakers, microphone and external processing units. In the past, big record labels paid musicians large advances and then shouldered the costs of recording and promoting albums. Today, independent artists can pump out albums/EPs/singles faster with lower overhead. Musicians like John Wood are making use of sound - proofed garage spaces to create albums. Wood decided to release a new album every month. After 24 albums in two years, his collection has hundreds of songs, some of which have attracted the attention of television producers interested in using his music in their shows. In February, MTV

used an instrumental version of his song 'Contagious' in Real World: Washington, D.C. (Nakashima, 2010).

The fact that many of the major recording studios have closed their doors has meant that many acclaimed studio engineers and producers have taken to the Internet, offering their services to independent artists. Engineers like Ken Lewis whose credits include six Grammy awards, and 14 nominations, 48 Gold and Platinum albums and singles, and 28 number one albums and singles, offers 'major label mixing for independent artists' (Pro ToolsMixing.com, 2010) via his website. Companies like Universal Mixing Studios now offer mixing and mastering services starting at roughly $80 per song to independent artists via TuneCore. This company's roster of mixing and mastering engineers includes; Vlado Meller, who has worked for artists ranging from Kanye West to Harry Connick Jr. and Celine Dion, and Helen Fitton, who has worked with artists from Donna Summer to Elvis Costello to Bob Marley. The Internet has truly opened doors for independent artists. It is not only the fact that these artists now have access to these top engineers, it is the low cost at which they can get their music professionally fine tuned.

"The Internet has made everyone a distributor" (Anderson, 2008, p. 55). The democratization of production tools has allowed for the fairly easy creation of content, but it is the ability to make that content available in the music marketplace (affordably) that may be turning the traditional pillars of the industry upside down while presenting extensive opportunities for the independent artist. The current decline in demand for physical product (the CD) in comparison to growing sales figures for music in its digital format has left significant dents in the revenue streams of the major labels and has given

birth to several new business models including digital retail models that focus specifically on the distribution of music via the Internet. These sites, referred to as 'aggregators,' are the new gatekeepers of the industry (although not as selective as the major labels were in the past) that have allowed independent artists to deliver their music to fans and potential fans around the world at the click of a button.

The growing number of digital retail websites is astounding and the interesting fact is that these sites compete based on service fees or commission rates. The most recent to enter the US market is UK based - Zimbalam and it is able to compete with household names such as the US based TuneCore because of its ability to offer worldwide digital distribution to more digital retail sites at even lower cost, with the added benefit of offering clients a marketing representative. As more of these entities enter the marketplace and compete, independent artists are given a wide range of options when selecting a distribution channel for their music. Because agreements with aggregators are often times non-exclusive, artists can also sell their music via their own website.

Beyond enabling independent artists to distribute their music via the Internet, new media has facilitated the current connection between fans as well as the artist and fan. This 'connection' exists in the availability of diverse music offers via maturing niche markets, but also exists as part of customer review pages, recommendation technology, blogs, and online forums that allow consumers to rate, share, and or give well needed feedback.

The shrinking popularity of traditional media is also an indicator of good news for the independent artist. Because Internet radio stations now number in the thousands,

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independent artists can get access to airplay in more ways than previously available. Websites like Jango.com let artists buy their way into Jango's recommendation engine, promising guaranteed airplay alongside a pick of popular artists. Artists can buy 1000 plays for US$30, 2000 plays for US$50, or 5000 plays for US$100. While some argue that this is legalized payola on the Internet, others celebrate the option. Independent artists like Brian Hazard who started out with 5000 plays for US$100 states that his return on investment, evident in increased sales, royalties, song feedback, and improved targeting, far outweighs the initial cost (Hazard, 2009). Other Internet radio stations like Pandora, "the largest and fastest growing radio platform in the world with 45 million registered listeners," (Renee, 2010) offer similar opportunities to independent musicians for free. According to founder Tim Westergren (2010), "Pandora is completely blind to popularity in selecting songs. It's a completely level playing field, offering a tremendous opportunity - approximately 50 per cent (spin-weighted basis) of music played on Pandora is from independent artists (unsigned or aligned with independent labels)."

The explosion of entertainment bloggers has also empowered independent artists. Many of these blogs such as ABandADay, 'indie'Update, Shepizzle, and 'indie' Music Universe are professionally designed and are wholly dedicated to promoting independent artists. ABandADay, for example, finds a new band a day and blogs about them so that their readers can investigate and determine if they like it. These sites offer free online subscription services, newsletter updates, and encourages music reviews from consumers.

Because music videos no longer hold a position of 'make or break' for an artist

in today's music business, independent artists can experiment with their own recording equipment and simply post videos to video sharing sites such as YouTube. This viral video phenomenon has proven to be more than just a fad as artists like OKGO, Liam Kyle Sullivan, and Soulja Boy have exploded into mainstream music scenes because of the success of their videos on YouTube. OKGO's 'Here It Goes Again,' better known as the treadmill video received so much viral buzz that it got acknowledgement from the Grammys, earning the band the trophy for Best Short-Form Music Video in 2007. Liam Kyle Sullivan, who created the 'Shoes' video "to poke fun at a stereotypical blond American teen obsessed with shopping and controlled by violent mood swings" (Friedman, 2010) was a pick for the 2008 People's Choice Award after garnering 34 million YouTube views. Artists should be aware that the most brilliant marketing strategies executed by the biggest companies quite often does not come close to creating the viral boost that a little imagination, ingenuity and sense of humor can create.

In the marketing realm, the fact that major consumer brands such as Apple, Target, and Gap are embracing more independent music in their campaigns speaks volumes to licensing opportunities available today. Commercials nowadays can be more powerful than a music video. Currently, marketers believe that securing a sync license agreement to have your music in an Apple commercial is a coveted opportunity. The same is true in the film and television industry. What this means is that independent artists can also focus on developing alternative revenue streams linked to their publishing. And they have the help of a host of websites such as TAXI Publishing, Broadjam, MusicXRay, and Pump Audio. Artists do not stand to make 'big bucks' from these deals if selected primarily because of their lack of track records, but the

promotional value is undeniable.

Singer/songwriter Judy Norbury, who has registered with Pump Audio, receives a few hundred dollars every six months for song snippets used in productions like VH-1's Mary Kate and Ashley special. Los Angeles-based alt-country musician Brady Harris got more than money when his song 'Good to Know' was used in the background of a 30-second commercial for a Portuguese bank. He also received letters from Portuguese fans who searched the Internet to figure out who wrote the song (Singel, 2005). Jamaican dancehall artist, Cecile Charlton (otherwise known as Cecile) currently has music from her catalog featured on E! Entertainment's 'Keeping Up With The Kardashians,' and MTV's 'Real World/Road Rules' series. Her music is also featured as part of a 'dancehall oriented' in-flight entertainment package on Air Austral in France and Kenya Airways. 'Cecile' did not receive a large advance for these placements, but the high promotional value that these placements will bring is undeniable. Licensing for unknown artists is not necessarily the money, it is the exposure. On average, production companies will pay an unknown artist between US$1000 and US$2000 upfront. Artists still receive performance royalties every time the song (whether it is a 15 second, 30 second or 1 minute clip) is played. The royalty rates differ depending on the length of the clip and the time or number of times the clip is aired.

With the growing popularity of mobile music marketing, independent artists can also take advantage of software that allows them to create ring tones as well as mobile applications. Digital aggregator, TuneCore, which services independent artists, now allows its clients to create their own custom iPhone applications, just like major label

artists. Artists can custom design their iPhone applications, share music, photos, videos, tweets, gig dates, ticket sales, merchandise and links to buy their music on iTunes for as little as US$0.50 a day (TuneCore, 2010).

While this has meant that independent artists can now compete in an industry that was previously controlled by major labels, it also means that these artists must invest more time and effort into marketing and promoting their music so that it stands out among the sea of competitors. Sales figures indicate that more music consumers are going online to purchase and discover music. Independent artists are fortunate to have an array of channels online to service these consumers. They can integrate marketing strategies across social media with widgets, email, direct updates to fans while utilizing aggregators as distributors. There are many companies available to help service direct-to-fan opportunities, including Topspin, Nimbit, ReverbNation, Bandzoogle, and Artistdata.

In a March 2010 release from Nimbit.com, a direct-to-fan music marketing and sales platform, marketing executive Scott Kirsner revealed how the company utilized their platform (as a one stop shop) to re-launch the musical career of 1983 ska-core band, the Mighty Mighty Bosstones. The band had previously released seven full-length albums, three EPs and a live album while touring continuously before the announcement of a hiatus in December 2003. The band reunited in the fall of 2007 and partnered with Nimbit in late 2009 as part of their re-launch campaign. At the beginning of the project, the Bosstones had no fan database, an inactive (fan run) Facebook page, and had not released an album in seven years.

The goals of the campaign included recapturing fans and building a contact

database, selling 500 VIP ticket bundles, marketing a new album release to U.S. fan base, while selling 10,000 units, creating a basis for future touring, merchandising, and promotion, and selling out venues for their 'Hometown Throwdown' concert series. Nimbit's digital marketing team created a three month plan involving two primary steps: re-engaging/engaging fans and giving them a reason to buy.

Re-engaging/Engaging fans through the creation of multiple entry points to receive free MMB tracks in exchange for offering new or updated contact information. Fans were also provided with the opportunity to join a 'VIP' list with exclusive access to pre-sale 'Hometown Throwdown' tickets. They also gave the fans a reason to buy by placing pre-sale bundles (including tickets and merchandise) in VIP-only storefronts on MMB's new website. These bundles had multiple offers and price points, such as single ticket, ticket plus CD & vinyl, ticket to three shows plus CD & vinyl, t-shirt plus CD & vinyl, etc.

At the end of the three month period:

- MMB had sold 600 VIP ticket/album bundles (sold in 25 minutes from the MMB website) at an average price of $40.00;

- 2,800 fans redeemed promotional codes for free music;

- 7,000 new Facebook fans were added to their page (100 percent increase);

- 5,000 new contacts were added to their fan list including sales and demographic information; and

- 4,000+ units of the new album were sold (Nimbit, 2010).

Nimbit was able to help the Mighty Mighty Bosstones re-launch their career by using new media tools, which included the Nimbit MyStore for Facebook, the NimbitSkin

storefront, digital download cards, promotional codes, and redemption widgets.

The decline in the sale of recorded music means that a critical part of any artist's career today is live performance. The way that independent artists have tackled this realm is really no different from how bands approached touring years ago. Many 'indie' bands start out by defining their territory, focusing at first on their hometown, and then branching off into nearby cities, taking advantage of local support and resources. As major conglomerates like Live Nation and AEG Live monopolize live performance venues across the US, independent artists have grown accustomed to making contact (often times on their own) with promoters and talent buyers at small to medium live venues with capacities ranging from 80 to 1000 to secure 'gigs.' Many of these promoters only book independent acts and do so via email (with the help of an electronic press kit or EPK), 'snail' mail (physical press kit) or via MySpace.

The first element a band would need in order to explore securing bookings would be a press kit. They can cut costs for mailing and postage with the use of EPKs (though some promoters and talent buyers still prefer physical kits). The EPK is a fast and easy way to send music, biography, photos, press clips, videos, technical information and more to promoters anywhere in the world. Independent artists have the option to utilize an array of web-based services such as SonicBids, Reverbnation, and Indie On The Move. SonicBids offers an EPK service at US$6 for standard and US$11 for premium access per month, while Reverbnation offers a similar service for US$5.95 per month. Although these paid channels exist, MySpace still proves to be an asset to independents, who can avoid monthly fees for EPKs by keeping their page updated and contacting venues via that platform.

Websites like SonicBids possess an added benefit to independent artists. It not only helps bands organize the content they need to book a professional gig, it also provides them with access to bookings. In January 2010 alone, 2,735 artists were selected from their database for 1,659 gig listings, with 'indie' Laura Meyer securing 18 bookings (the most for the month). In the same month, the NX35 Music Conferette booked 130 acts via SonicBids. In 2009 alone, 71,000 gigs were booked via SonicBids not only for artists from the US, but also from as far as Argentina, Bolivia, Japan, Australia, and Brazil. Services like these connect the artist with the promoter and vise versa.

Indie On The Move, a completely free music venue database and tour booking resource more focused on connecting artists with live venues/promoters across the US, has also facilitated certain levels of success of independent artists. The website is managed by members of an independent band who between 2006 and 2008 independently booked and performed in over 500 venues across the United States and Europe without the aid of a record label or any kind of corporate sponsorship. Despite serving niche markets, within its first year, the site has accumulated a loyal and very involved following of over 10,000 members and doubled their initial list of venues to over 2000 (1000 capacity) venues. According to Tyler Reardon, vocalist for the Massachusetts based band, Semester Abroad, "I needed to book an entire east coast tour within one month and without [them], I would have failed miserably" (Urbanic, 2010).

Co-promotion arrangements are very common today. Independent promoters such as Afton Miami, and talent buyers at popular South Florida venues like Tobacco Road, do not pay largely unknown independent artists (and even touring acts) a

guarantee. Rather, they enter into what is considered to be 'co-promotion' arrangements where both the promoter of the event and the artist are expected to share the responsibility of promoting the event. In some instances, after selling a specific number of tickets, artists are given a percentage of ticket sales. Arrangements like this put the artist in the seat of the sales person, expanding their role beyond performing while empowering them to determine how many people will attend their event as well as how much money they will make at the end of the night.

Some independents have been fortunate to secure a booking agent after performing well locally. Others have simply organized a small tour of their own whether along the east or west coast, south or mid west, utilizing a van or car owned by a band member. Tours of this nature are similar to corporations, where the players share in the expenses (which are kept at a minimum) and profits. Costs associated with securing merchandise, fuel, food, accommodations are covered out of a pool of funds, and profits from performances (whether it is a small guarantee, merchandise sales, tips, etc.) are split among band members. It is fairly difficult to organize a tour of this nature with work for hire musicians who do not have a vested interest in the artist. In those instances, overheads are much higher because musicians can charge a low of US$250 per show (outside of their home towns/states) or US$800 – US$1000 per week. An artist with even a three-piece backing band would probably have to seek sponsorship support or perform acoustically or with tracks until he/she is able to afford to pay a backing band.

Important to note, is the fact that strategies for independent booking varies depending on genre. Channels such as Indie On The Move and SonicBids seem ideal

for Rock, RnB, and Pop artists. This could be because promoters of events that specialize in these genres have strong ties with sites like SonicBids. Independent Reggae artists on the other hand have a difficult time securing gigs via these platforms simply because there are not enough (if any) promoters associated with that genre of music, utilizing these channels to find artists. Reggae acts must either try to secure a booking agent, or manager or try to contact venues or promoters directly. Although new media has allowed for the development of new ways for artists and promoters to connect, the area of live performance booking is still very difficult to traverse, and for many independent artists, can be the 'maker' or 'breaker.'

A successful marketing program does not need to cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. Thomas Glenn, Vice President of Business Development of the New York based East Coast Graphics (www.EcoastGraphics.com), states "the key to success in today's market is to be as efficient in your marketing efforts as possible" (EastCoastGraphics, 2010). Today's market dynamics have proven that only using one form of media to reach potential clients does not work; it is being unique and clever, while integrating multiple forms of communication, that will convey messages effectively. New media has provided a host of marketing options for the independent artist, ranging from Internet marketing, and social media, to pay-per-click advertising. But it should be noted that (especially today), in isolation, none of these options will generate successful returns - an integrated approach exploiting multiple media sources is the way to generate the highest returns.

Survival for independent artists rests in their ability to not only be creative musically, but also to be able to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the

popularity of new media, merging them with creative and innovative strategies that will

appeal to their target market and create life long fans.

GENERAL SWOT ANALYSIS OF AN INDEPENDENT ARTIST

A SWOT analysis is a widely used business decision-making tool used to develop an understanding of an organization's or products position in relation to various internal and external variables. SWOT is an acronym for strengths, weaknesses, (internal environmental factors) opportunities, and threats (external environmental factors). The SWOT analysis provides a good framework for reviewing strategy, position and direction of a company, product, or project and can reveal competitive advantages, prospects for sales, profitability and product development, prepare your company for problems and allow for the development of contingency plans. For independent artists to effectively navigate today's dynamic music industry, they must have a keen understanding of the external forces that stand to affect the possibility of being successful. It is critical that independent artists be aware of their core competencies and develop strategies that will allow them to build on strengths and allow them to explore opportunities, while countering threats and minimizing weaknesses.

The SWOT creation process involves more than just answering questions in four sections. The most critical part of the process is the ability to draw conclusions about the company's/product's overall situation and then translate these conclusions into strategic actions. The following SWOT Analysis has been designed from the perspective of an independent artist. It is not genre specific but rather addresses general

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internal and external factors that would affect any independently marketed and distributed musical product. It is important to note that a SWOT analysis done specifically for a particular artist would include internal factors specific to their core competences, financial situation and genre

Internal Environment Analysis

The internal environment analysis examines an artist's resource strengths and competitive capabilities by assessing various skill sets, specialized expertise or competitively important capabilities, such as product differentiation, low cost operations, technical expertise, expertise in getting new product to market quickly or low overall costs relative to competitors. Outlining points specific to these areas will better allow the artist to identify their capabilities, which will then determine whether they should explore various business paths.

According to Thompson Jr., Strickland III & Gamble, (2007, p. 107), "the caliber of a firm's resource strength is a big determinant of its competitiveness." Therefore, identifying the strength of an 'indie' artist and their music product is important in determining whether they will have the ability to attract fans and keep those fans in the face of competition. Awareness of weaknesses provides artists with a platform from which to build. Weaknesses can be converted into strengths if enough time and energy is invested on the part of the artist.

Strengths.

- Lacks capital intensive production process making the final product less expensive and more affordable for the customers;

- Access to affordable recording equipment;

- Low cost of production duplication (duplication of 500 CDs in jackets ranges from US$1.38 to US$1.90 in eco wallets, duplication of 1000 CDs costs about US$.90 per CD *Disc Makers);

- With digital distribution there is no inventory, and therefore no cost per unit or shipping expenses;

- Ability to develop distinctive niche markets. As the Long Tail theory suggests, "selling less of more can create a successful niche business" (Anderson, 2008).

- Ability to develop customer loyalty within target group through direct contact between artist and fans;

- Level playing field. In an online retail storefront, an 'indie' artist's album page looks the same as the others and it is as easy to search for as the other listings

- Access to numerous low cost new media channels for distribution, marketing, fan base management, promotions, direct-to-fan services, etc.;

- Ability to develop a direct commerce route to make a stronger connection with fans;

- Development of artist website and store front widgets that provide secure, easy to use payment solutions so that consumers can feel confident entering their credit card information when buying directly from the artist;

- Ability to track and verify sales (which will be extremely helpful when approaching major distributors, sponsors, or record labels) via web-based services such as Topspin and IndieHitMaker;

- Ability to drive traffic to artist website with the presence of ecommerce

solutions;

- Artists can release music more frequently and quickly if it is made available online;

- Artists have the option of releasing limited edition, out-of-print, or live material that would be too costly to produce through traditional means;

- Artist retains recording rights and in most cases 100 percent of profits (if utilizing Do It Yourself (DIY) strategies and not associated with an independent record label);

- Able to respond with flexibility to industry shifts, such as product pricing;

- Directly determines what the product looks like and how the product sounds;

- Ability to position banner ads with hyperlinks, creating a digital footprint to artist website or social network pages;

- Ability to experiment with new media in marketing and fan interaction strategies; and

- Greater flexibility to experiment with sound. Artist is able to experiment without necessarily spending the money for an expensive studio.

Weaknesses.

- Product may not be strongly differentiated;

- Weak or no brand/image/ industry reputation;

- No well developed or proven core competence;

- May lack clear strategic vision for the long term (which includes all areas of the business, from marketing and management to distribution and human resources);

- High sales numbers are difficult to obtain without strategic marketing and promotions plans;

- Without marketing strategy may have to rely on such distribution sources as direct sales, which include sales at the gig, to supplement digital sales;

- Limited financial resources to pursue new opportunities;

- Small profit margins (in the short term);

- New opportunities may be unobtainable and long-term improvements (artist development) may not be affordable due to initial startup costs;

- Losing ground to artists signed to large firms because of limited exposure; and

- The competitive threat of new entrants.

This list of generalized strengths and weaknesses of an independent artist is by no means exhaustive. The listing indicates that these artists are in a position to produce and distribute music inexpensively, while supplying a niche market and establishing and maintaining a loyal fan base. Ready access to free or low cost e-commerce services and direct-to-fan services further facilitates the servicing of niche markets. However, without a strategic plan that addresses the development of the artist's brand, niche, and image, they will be at risk of not being able to meaningfully compete with new entrants (as well as major label acts). The weaknesses also indicate that 'indies' should not expect to find high return on investment rates in the short term – being an independent requires a deep commitment to developing talent and the fan base. They may not make a profit or break even until six months to a year, and this is if there is constant promoting and live performances. But this dedication should pay off if the artist's strengths are strategically implemented.

External Environmental Analysis

Numerous factors in the external environment can affect an artist's profitability and competitiveness. These can range from the introduction of improved product by rivals to unfavorable shifts in consumer preference. It is important for an independent artist to develop and refine their internal competencies, but it is equally important for them to be aware of developments in their external environment. It is the refined core competencies and resource strengths that will provide them with the necessary skills set to combat or take advantage of shifts in the external environment.

Opportunities.

• Sharply rising buyer demand for niche market products and variety;

• Use of Internet to expand reach via e-commerce opportunities;

• Use of Internet to release music in MP3 format;

• Expanding digital sales into new geographic markets;

• Acquiring channels of traditional distribution to reach wider customer base exposure;

• Expansion of product offerings and product formats to meet a broader range of consumers;

• Cost advantages with new technology arising from the digital revolution;

• Low barriers to entry;

• Access to new technologies to cope with the driving forces of the industry;

• Ability to sell physical product online, cutting out the distributor. People all over the world can shop online and buy music (in digital or physical formats) – this kind of availability was previously only obtained with a distribution

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deal;

- Digital sales are on the rise and can be a large revenue stream for professional musicians;

- Pushing sales into non-traditional areas;

- Ability to have music available in as many places as possible allowing people to find music at their preferred store. The only choice they should have to make is to buy or not to buy, not where to buy;

- Accesses to Subscription Download Services – these sites allow customers to download a maximum number of tracks per month for a flat subscription fee. Advantage: people who use these types of services typically love seeking out new, niche oriented and obscure music. This model is geared towards discovery;

- Access to Subscription Streaming Services – streaming services are much like on-demand radio. Customers pay a monthly fee and are able to stream as much music as they would like (within various tiers of subscription options). This is a great way for people to find an artist's music;

- Access to digital services that offer the opportunity of exposure to new fans and the possibility of increased sales through online retailers;

- In the case of digital distribution, artists are only required to sign non-exclusive distribution contracts, and the rights to the music generally remain with the artist. The non-exclusivity of the contract allows many artists to have an online presence while continuing to sell directly through their local independent music stores;

- Popularity of mobile music services;

- Popularity of Internet and satellite radio services that are open to music by independent artists;

- Increasing number of consumer products are being 'married' to music from independent artists;

- Access to patronage model – further connecting artist with target audience; and

- Access to low cost recording equipment to take advantage of online viral marketing.

Threats.

- Likely entry of potent new competitors;

- Slow downs in market growth;

- Loss of sales to substitute products;

- Increasing intensity among industry rivals;

- Growing bargaining power of consumers;

- Competitors such as major labels and independent labels with major label affiliation can exercise major market power and influence - specifying when their music should be played on radio and negotiating large contracts with distributors and retail outlets, giving themselves broader appeal;

- High number of new entrants due to the digital revolution;

- Shifts in buyer needs and tastes;

- Vulnerability to industry's driving forces;

- Rivalry among sellers of recorded music (competition for better market

position and competitive advantage);

• Vulnerability to unfavorable industry driving forces; and

• With new media technology anyone can produce studio-quality music from

their own home.

The opportunities presented indicate that an independent artist is now operating in a digital realm with opportunities that were not readily available to 'indies' years ago. These opportunities range from global distribution to the servicing of niche markets that demand variety in music offerings. But in the face of these far reaching opportunities exist threats that in some instances may act as barriers to 'success.' Independent artists must constantly be mindful of these variables and ensure that strengths are developed to take hold of opportunities in the marketplace.

INDEPENDENT ARTIST CASE STUDY

To further explore the relationship between new media strategies and the rise of the independent artist, three independent artists will be presented – Cherine Anderson, Umphrey's McGee, and Michael Sean Harris. These artists have been selected as 'independent' because they meet criteria outlined in the Introduction:

- *They have at least five years experience in the music industry;*

- *They have self-funded the release of at least one album (which is currently available via major online music retail networks such as iTunes); and*

- *They have a presence on at least two major social network platforms.*

Based on the information provided in Tables VI-IX, Cherine Anderson and Umphrey's McGee fulfill more than three of the six criteria for 'independent,' – both having an average of 20 performances per year (over five years), released at least one music video, and both have a minimum of 10,000 fans. However, in an effort to create balance in this discussion, it was appropriate to present information on an artist who met the criteria for 'independent,' was utilizing new media in some way but has not seen any marked levels of success. Information on Michael Sean Harris was provided in this regard.

Note well that the inclusion of Michael is in no way meant to suggest that he can never be successful in the industry, rather, his inclusion further suggests that artists can only truly benefit from new media if it is utilized as part of a wider strategy to

communicate with fans and to attract potential fans. New media merely provides the tools, but artists must determine how these tools can best serve them.

Although a range of new media strategies have been discussed throughout this paper, it is important to remember that artists' strategies vary depending on their overall goals and product outlook. No single artist will utilize all strategies discussed, as it may not be relevant to their development path. While Cherine Anderson, Umphrey's McGee and Michael Sean Harris are not utilizing all the strategies presented throughout previous sections the strategies that they are utilizing are worth discussing.

Table 6

Artist Background and General Information

	Cherine Anderson	Umphrey's McGee	Michael Sean Harris
Genre	Reggae, Dancehall-Soul	Jam/Rock/Improv (Improg)	Reggae, World Fusion
Origin	Rockfort, Jamaica	Chicago, IL	Spanish Town, Jamaica
Years of Experience	5+	10+	10+
Discography	The Introduction-Dubstyle EP (2009), Kingston State of Mind (2008), Good Love (2007), Say Hey (I Love You) – with Michael Franti (2007), Sound System with Michael Franti (2007), Little Bit of Riddem with Michael Franti (2007)	Greatest Hits Vol. III (1998) Songs for Older Women (1999, recorded live in 1998) One Fat Sucka (2000, recorded live) Local Band Does OK (2002) Local Band Does Oklahoma (2003, recorded live) Anchor Drops (2004) Safety In Numbers (2006) The Bottom Half (2007) Live at the Murat (2007) Jimmy Stewart 2007 (2008) Mantis (2009) **DVD releases** Live from the Lake Coast (2002) Wrapped Around Chicago - New Year's Eve at The Riviera (2005) Soundstage: Umphrey's McGee - Live (2009)	Ten Thousand Miles (Album- 2000) Breath of Fresh Air (Single-2004) This Time Is Yours (Single- 2004) Blessed (As JOY MECHANICS)- (2005) Moonshine Darlin' (Single)- (2007) Table Top (Single)- (2008)
Average shows per year	50+ *estimated based on schedule for 2009 and 2010 available via MySpace	122 *based on past show schedule available via band website	4 – 6 *based on past show schedule available via Reverbnation

	Cherine Anderson	Umphrey's McGee	Michael Sean Harris
Awards/ Nominations	Best Actress in a feature film MTV2, Best Female Vocalist (2008) Caribbean Urban Music Awards, Best New Female Artist, Excellence in Music and Ent. Awards (2007), EME Female Vocalist of the Year and International Artist of the Year nomination (2009)	The band scored a leading three nominations at for the fifth Jammy Awards in 2005. 'Anchor Drops' (Sci Fidelity) was nominated for studio album of the year, 'Its In the Kitchen' was nominated for song of the year. The band's 2004 Bonnaroo set with Moe earned a nod for live performance of the year.	**N/A**
Major Performances	Coachella Bluesfest Rototom Festival Summer Jam Arras Main Square Fest Your World Festival Rock-Zottegem Festival Sierra Nevada world Music Festival Mountain Jam Festival UCLA Jazz & Reggae Festival Earthdance Ragga Muffins Festival Hollywood Bowl KCRW Series Hollywood Bowl Reggae Series Reggae Rising BVI Festival	Bonnaroo, Lollapalooza, Nateva Festival, Japan's Fuji Rock Festival, All Good Music Festival Summer Camp Jam in the Dam (Amsterdam) Byron Bay Bluesfest Summerfest Alpine Valley Music Festival High Sierra Festival 10,000 Lakes Festival F.U.N.K Festival Harmony Festival Mountain Jam	Jamaica Jazz and Blues Festival, Holiday on Ice world tour

	Cherine Anderson	Umphrey's McGee	Michael Sean Harris
Charting	'Good Love' video peaked at #2 on Jamaica's local video charts and added to BETJ & MTV Tempo's video rotation. 'Shine On Jamaica' from her EP went to # 1 on the South Florida Reggae Charts and # 5 on the South London Reggae charts Hey (I Love You) with Michael Franti was featured on 14 Billboard charts listing at number 21 on the Hot 100 chart, number 14 on the Digital Songs chart, and number 23 on the Pop Songs Chart.	Latest album, Mantis, released on January 20, 2009, debuted at number 62 on the Billboard 200 Chart, and number 6 on the 'indie' Chart. 'Mantis' also reached number 25 on the iTunes Album Chart and number 9 on the iTunes Rock Chart.	Information not available
Other Specializations	Actress (staring roles in Jamaican films, Dancehall Queen, and One Love)	N/A	Vocal coach, training participants in Jamaica's Rising Stars (similar to American Idol), Musical director, and Producer ('Joy Mechanics')

ANALYSIS OF ARTIST BACKGROUND AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Hailing from the tough streets of Kingston, Jamaica, Cherine has spent the past five years building her catalogue of songs while performing across North America and Europe extensively. Cherine became familiar to Jamaican audiences first as an acclaimed actress, having starred in two of Jamaica's most successful films, 'Dancehall Queen' and 'One Love' (which featured son of Bob Marley, Kymani Marley). Cherine then jumped from the big screen into music collaborating with numerous renowned artists including Sly Dunbar (of the drum and bass duo, Sly and Robbie), Madonna, Britney Spears, Sir Paul McCartney and Wyclef Jean. In 2007, Cherine collaborated with Michael Franti and Spearhead on his 'All Reggae Rockers' album. Since then she has been a staple 'opener' for his US, Europe, and Australian tours. Although not the headline act on these shows, she has maximized the opportunity, driving fans to her major social media accounts and keeping them updated via daily status updates, video blogs, and photos. She ended 2009 touring with Franti & Spearhead and also made her US television debut appearing on The Late Late Show with Craig Ferguson and the Ellen Degeneres Show, and is currently on tour as the opening act for Michael Franti and John Mayer.

Compared to Cherine, improvisation Jam band, Umprey's McGee had a different entry into the music business, but it is an introduction that is very familiar to many – these musicians were college 'buddies' that decided to form a band. Founded in

1997 and based in Chicago, IL, Umphrey's McGee is often compared with classic rock artists, King Crimson, Led Zeppelin, Phish, and The Grateful Dead. At a time when the music industry is becoming increasingly difficult to traverse, Umphrey's McGee has independently become one of the premier live acts in today's touring circuit. Over the past ten years, the band has performed at festivals such as Bonnaroo and Lollapalooza, and Japan's Fuji Rock Festival and have traveled around the world, headlining festivals across the US, Europe and Australia similar to how Cherine has toured. The most intriguing thing about UM, however, is how they have proactively tried to incorporate the use of new media in their attempts to promote the UM brand and music while maintaining a strong fan base. They have published albums, live albums, as well as DVDs, and have experimented with their live performances, at every step trying to incorporate their fans into the creative process.

Of the three artists examined in this thesis, Michael Sean Harris could be considered the least successful (if successful at all) because of his limited live performance showings, few releases, and lack of charting. He has a full-time job as a lecturer at a performing arts college and promotes himself and his music in his spare time, though he desires to be a full–time artist. Michael is one of the most respected players in Jamaica's circle of young music industry professionals with a musical career that spans close to 14 years. He is a graduate of Berklee College of Music in Boston and was the lead vocalist with the 'Holiday on Ice' production, which toured several parts of Europe and Australia. Michael is an established vocal coach, training participants in Jamaica's Rising Stars (similar to American Idol), and the musical director for several theatre groups in Jamaica. He is also one half of 'Joy Mechanics' a team of multi-

talented creative producers who provide creative planning services for musical productions, write songs for popular artists, and produce choral music. It should be noted that Michael has not listed any performances for 2010 because of his commitment to dedicate more time in studio to complete his album to be released by Fall 2010.

Although Cherine and Michael share the same geographic origins, it is important to note that their musical journeys have been very different. Michael is known throughout Jamaica's music circles as a music educator, capable of molding vocals to the peak of perfection. His popularity in this capacity has not translated to demand for his solo musical product. Cherine, on the other hand, had already secured a wide local following from her acting roles, and her first set of singles (released in Jamaica) were collaborations with major Jamaican artists such as Chuck Fender and Sly and Robbie.

Table 7

Artist Online Presence

Channels	Cherine Anderson	Umphrey's McGee	Michael Sean Harris
Artist website	**www.cherineanderson.com**	www.umphreysmcgee.com	Michaelseanharris.weebly.com/index.html
Live Product site	N/A	**www.umlive.net**	N/A
MySpace	**www.MySpace.com/cherineanderson** • 34,230 friends (as of 3/16/10) • ………. Profile views (as of …) • 10 songs - total of 1,237,388 plays (as of 3/16/10)	**www.MySpace.com/umphreysmcgee** • 37335 friends (as of 3/16/10) • 985325 profile views (as of 3/16/10) • 10 songs - total of 1243966 plays (as of 3/16/10)	**www.MySpace.com/michaelsharris** • 1261 friends (as of 3/16/10) • 19889 profile views (as of 3/16/10) • 6 songs - total of 6898 plays as of 3/16/10
Facebook	**www.facebook.com/cherineanderson** • 11399 fans (as of 3/16/10) **http://www.facebook.com/cherineanderson?ref=ts** • 4965 friends as of (4/16/10)	**www.facebook.com/umphreysmcgee** • 31872 fans (as of 3/16/10)	**www.facebook.com/Michael-ean-harris** • 1950 fans (as of 3/16/10)
YouTube	**www.youtube.com/cherinetv** • 114506 total views as of (3/16/10) • 303 subscribers as of (3/16/10)	**www.youtube.com/user/umvideo** • 1547995 total views (as of 3/16/10) • 1830 subscribers (as of 3/16/10)	**www.youtube.com/user/aelsean** • 33476 total views (as of 3/16/10) • 32 subscribers (as of 3/16/10)
Twitter	**www.twitter.com/cherineanderson** • 2288 followers (as of 3/16/10)	**www.twitter.com/umphreysmcgee** • 4256 followers (as of 3/16/10)	**www.twitter.com/aelsean** • 117 followers (as of 3/16/2010)

Channels	Cherine Anderson	Umphrey's McGee	Michael Sean Harris
Last.fm	**www.last.fm/music /Cherine+Anderson** • 1920 listeners (as of 3/16/2010) • 8053 plays (as of 3/16/2010)	**www.last.fm/music/umphreypercent27s +Mcgee** • 76450 listeners (as of 3/16/2010) • 1719786 plays (as of 3/16/2010)	**N/A**
iLike	**www.ilike.com/artist/Cherine+Ander son**	**www.ilike.com/artist/umphreypercent2 7s+Mcgee**	**www.ilike.com/artist/Michael+Se an+Harris**
Blog	**N/A**	**http://blog.umphreys.com/blogs/thefloo r**	**N/A**
Reverbnation	**www.reverbnation.com/cherineande rson** • 46090 fans • 3108 song plays • 3490 visits • 76061 widget hits	**www.reverbnation.com/umphreysmcge e** • 37581 fans • 389 song plays • 948 visits • 1465 widget hits	**www.reverbnation.com/michaels eanharris** 2207 fans 1286 song plays 1245 visits 6925 widget hits
Bebo	**http://apps.bebo.com/my-band/artist/cherineanderson**	**N/A**	**http://apps.bebo.com/my-band/artist/michaelseanharris**

ANALYSIS OF ARTIST ONLINE PRESENCE

In today's new media driven music industry, an artist's online presence is an indicator of popularity, demand, and potential. Record label executives have been known to frequent social media platforms like MySpace for new talent. Artists such as, Lilly Allen and Arctic Monkeys secured major label attention via their MySpace profiles. Cherine, UM and Michael have all created an online presence utilizing social media platforms and their own websites.

Without access to Cherine, UM's and Michael's site analytics it is difficult to compare their artist websites in terms of viewer traffic/demographics, etc. It would not be unfair to state however, that it is unlikely that Michael's Weebly site is receiving much traffic since it did not appear in the top 10 or 20 Google search results for 'Michael Sean Harris' and since Weebly does not offer search engine optimization for its free accounts.

Umphrey's McGee is the only artist examined with a website dedicated to the sale of live performance footage. At a time when live performance is increasingly becoming the dominant revenue stream for artists, this has obviously helped the band in maintaining a satisfied fan base, while driving an alternative revenue stream.

All three artists have a presence on many of the same social media platforms, indicating that all three are interested in taking advantage of the ability to develop consumer loyalty through direct contact between artist and fan, which social media

facilitates. Their presence on Bebo, Reverbnation, iLike, and Last.FM is a clear indicator that limiting your online presence in today's music promotions landscape to just one social media platform or just your website does more harm than good. Having a presence on these platforms further exposes the artist to music lovers who can discover their music whether by recommendation or other techniques that social networks use to match users with music or activities they may like. The fusion of music and social media has resulted in the development of a vast number of platforms that cater to music and social interaction online. It is this external environment factor that all 'indie' artists must be mindful of.

In terms of MySpace, viewer traffic figures are close for Cherine and UM (reflective of strong demand and exposure), but extremely low for Michael despite having six songs available (compared to Cherine's and UM's 10 available songs). For largely unknown artists and up and coming independents, popularity on MySpace has much to do with how engaging a profile is and its level of customization. Both UM's and Cherine's profiles have been customized, signally a message of professionalism and commitment to their brand. Michael's profile, on the other hand, is messy with no structure and customization. This could be a 'turn off' to profile viewers, who would be unable to navigate the profile easily. The draw of the music is also a primary factor in the number of profile views an artist can receive, as well as the number of comments people leave. According to 'indie' artist Ingrid Michaelson, "…obviously, your music needs to be good and people have to like it." Between 2007 and 2008, Michaelson's music was aired several times on the television series 'Grey's Anatomy,' appeared on the Grey's Anatomy Vol. 3, Original Soundtrack, was used in an Old Navy commercial,

and was featured in other film and TV projects. Michaelson was able to achieve this by 'catching' the attention of an A&R Representative who viewed her MySpace page. According to Fran Vincent (2008), "label executives have described MySpace as the ideal virtual demo." This being said, it would be 'smart' for an independent artist to invest a few dollars into customizing their profile, and post not just songs, but their 'best' and most professionally produced songs.

Facebook page fan numbers for UM is quite high – over 33,000 (indicating that they have either directed fans to that platform or that fans who use Facebook have actively searched for them and joined the UM community there). This page is updated several times throughout the day and features a merchandise tab where fans (and potential fans) can securely purchase their favorite UM memorabilia from a wide selection of items. The page also features a Tour dates tab with a continuously updated hyperlinked list of dates and venues (facilitating ease of ticket purchasing where possible), iLike and YouTube connections, RSS feeds to their blog, photos, and a host of other plug-ins. UM seems to treat their Facebook page in the same way that they treat their website – as a portal where their fans can go to find anything UM. The information available on their page is very in tune with functionality and information – key factors on platforms outside of the artist's website.

Cherine's fans on her Facebook artist page number close to 12,000, while her profile page (a second account with a number of limitations when compared to the Facebook artist page) has the maximum 5000 friends. There is no clear reason why Cherine has both an artist and a profile page on Facebook, but it is possible that early on she established a 'profile' account on Facebook, unaware that there was a limit to the

number of 'friends' she could have. It is worth noting that numerous other artists have both an artist page and profile page. Cherine utilizes both pages to post videos, photos, and make regular updates (both pages are updated with the same information). Unlike UM, she has not optimized her artist page on this platform, and the information available to fans is limited to music, (some) videos, and pictures. Because of the nature of the Facebook platform, artists often times must hire customization specialists to incorporate the artist's style and brand to their artist page. Involver, for example, offers a wide variety of plug-ins for artist pages at a fee of US$99 per month for a one-year subscription or US$199 per month for a month-to-month Pro account. Many artists do not create budgets for customization on platforms such as Facebook simply because it is not a 'personalized' customization. Cherine for example, has not invested in any added plug-ins, but with over 10,000 dedicated fans that 'Like' her and her music (on one page alone), and her page operating at less than half its capabilities, her strategy seems to be working and deserves kudos.

Of the three, Michael, has the lowest numbers on Facebook. Similar to Cherine, he also has two accounts, a profile as well as an artist page. Both offer little activity and are far from optimized, which is reflected by his low fan numbers. YouTube is driven by video content activity. Video content has been a strong force in UM's overall strategy from the beginning so it is no surprise that their subscriber and viewer numbers are high. Cherine's numbers are fairly high as well. She has several music videos, some of which have been added to various music video top ten charts. Michael has developed a very small community of subscribers on his YouTube channel, which includes other local artists as well as some of his students. Although many of his videos feature his

live performances as well as performances with other noted young Jamaican artists, which should allow him to connect more with his fans, his presence on YouTube again seems to be limited to just that – a presence. There does not seem to be an effort placed on driving traffic to YouTube from other pages, such as MySpace and Facebook.

Popularity on Twitter, a micro-blogging platform, is largely reflected in the number of 'followers' an individual has. The number of followers (when not connected automatically to a famous name/face) is connected to the number of 'tweets' an individual posts because of course an active Twitter account does more to drive people to want to follow you as opposed to an inactive one. Beyond being a micro-blogging platform, however, it has evolved into a medium that facilitates sharing of text, links, audio, photographs, video, and even live video streaming (even from a cell phone). Twitter can be a great way to not only keep fans informed about artist news but it can also make fans feel closer to the whole process when an artist 'tweets' about things they are working on as they are doing them. Social interaction is also a key aspect of Twitter, implying that users need to both start and engage in wider community-oriented conversations to build a fan base. According to Hyatt (2008):

> the opportunity for musicians is huge… if an ordinary person can suddenly get an audience and a micro, micro, mini celebrity kind of thing going on, someone with a bona fide audience and something to constantly give their audience, like their music, and relationships to build and peaks into their lives, can really build something substantial using Twitter.

Tweets of the three artists presented here are quite different, and possibly just reflective of their style. Although there are numerous articles that specifically address

the 'Do's and Don'ts' of 'tweeting' there seems to be no real rule as to what is best for an artist to tweet. UM's Twitter updates are primarily product/brand based. Michael seems to utilize his for more one-on-one- conversations with other users, who are limited in geographic reach (fellow Jamaican musicians). Cherine utilizes a combination of both styles. UM's strategy seems directly connected to a larger strategy focused on keeping fans informed, Cherine's strategy involves this as well, but Michael again seems to be more focused on having a presence on this platform as opposed to a 'meaningful' presence connected to the development of his musical brand.

Table 8

Artist New Media Strategy

	Cherine Anderson	Umphrey's McGee	Michael Sean Harris
Digital Distribution	Music available for sale via iTunes and CDBaby Music available on one other social network channel where she has a presence	Music and merchandise available for sale on every social network channel where the band has an established presence and via website	Digital distribution via CD Baby for Joy Mechanics album – 'Blessed' The album has been available on major online retail entities such as iTunes and Amazon since its release
Experimentation with new technologies	**Not evident**	Sale of live concert tickets via expansive music archive site. The Stew Art Series or S2 and UMBowl. Fans "conduct" the band's live improvisations. For S2, sold-out crowds of 50 fans submitted their ideas by texting words, phrases, and pop culture references to the UM's Mozes mobile interface. Suggestions were then filtered and projected on a screen for the band to turn into the next phase of the jam.	**Not evident**

	Cherine Anderson	Umphrey's McGee	Michael Sean Harris
Experimentation with new technologies (continued)		Fans who pre-ordered the Mantis album online gained access to exclusive bonus material, and as more pre-orders were received, fans participated in 'unlocking' new levels of content – nine tiers in all. (Umphreys.com, 2010). The Mantis album incorporated PUSH™ technology by Digital Insert. PUSH™ requires no software installation or serial number. By simply putting the Mantis CD in a CD-ROM drive, the disc acted as a "key" to an Umphreys.com micro-site where fans got access to exclusive content as it became available. Hosting an Umphrey's McGee iTunes friendly Podcast, which releases 2 75 min. episodes of live material twice per month to more than 20000 subscribers.	

	Cherine Anderson	Umphrey's McGee	Michael Sean Harris
Experimentation with new technologies (continued)		Made their content available in the new HDMP3 format. The new format allows for the creation and playback of a new type of audio file using lossless compression. MP3HD files are approximately four times the size of corresponding MP3 files, but remain compatible with existing MP3 players. (Umphreys.com, 2010) Offer their fans a video subscription service exclusively at iClips.com. Umphrey's has made an entire week's worth of concerts available in real-time video streaming to their fans for the low cost of only US$5 per show, or the total package for only US$20. Fans have the option of streaming the shows live as they happen, as well as further streaming on demand for two weeks following the concert.	

	Cherine Anderson	Umphrey's McGee	Michael Sean Harris
Experimentation with new business models	Not evident	Sale of live performance footage via UMLive.net, which acts an online archive of the band's live performances, hosting downloads of over 300 shows with 750,000 tracks sold since 2004.	Michael has employed the Patronage model in his "Guardian Angels" program. Individuals can become angels by: 1. Making a contribution to a certain project Current Projects include: 1. Album (proposed date of completion-Dec 2008) 2. Music Video for 'Table Top' 3. Two performances at the Phillip Sherlock Centre 2. Sourcing corporate sponsorship or being an advisor or consultant to Michael. Guardian angels have their names placed in the liner notes of his album, their banners or logos prominently displayed, are given the opportunity to make cameo appearances in Michael's music videos or receive tickets to performances (gratis).

	Cherine Anderson	Umphrey's McGee	Michael Sean Harris
Online driven promotions	Links to where fans can vote for Cherine's music on various charts Notices to text to have Cherine's music or music videos added to charts Announcement of free mix tape '*Street Anthems*' via Twitter	Mantis album incorporated PUSH™ technology by Digital Insert. PUSH™ requires no software installation or serial number. By simply putting the Mantis CD in a CD-ROM drive, the disc acted as a "key" to an Umphreys.com micro-site where fans got access to exclusive content as it became available.	Utilization of social networks to promote Michael Sean Harris events Michael produces an annual event called 'ArmChair Revolution.' His strategy has been to use the update and notification features available for free on social networks to promote the event and post video and photos Fans have an opportunity to write to Michael and let them know the songs they would like him to perform
Fan base management	Status updates via social media postings and updates.	They offer professionally designed monthly newsletters (powered by FanMail) that are consistently populated with compelling and engaging content	Utilization of free fan update services via Reverbnation and Facebook

	Cherine Anderson	Umphrey's McGee	Michael Sean Harris
Social Media	Customized social network pages Dedication to online community building and creation of a digital footprint	Customized social network pages Dedication to online community building and creation of a digital footprint Actively maintain a blog '*The Floor*' that gives them an opportunity to share some of the day-to-day experiences with people who are interested in peeling back another layer of the band.	Dedication to creating online footprint through social media accounts

ANALYSIS OF ARTIST NEW MEDIA STRATEGY

The advent of new media technology has increased possibilities for marketing ten-fold, and has broadened the span of any traditionally static marketing plans. Music consumers are connected to their favorite music in numerous ways, and artists now possess an equally vast number of ways to reach their target market. Operations for an independent artist should be no different from a major label, these artists must approach their newly developed online landscape with strategies geared at launching them ahead of the competition. Specific strengths and opportunities presented in the SWOT Analysis are directly connected to new media use, specifically the ability to develop direct artist fan relationships, create digital footprints via artist websites and social media platforms, develop direct commerce routes to create stronger connections with fans, and the ability to expand opportunities to sell their music.

The integration of music and social media requires a discussion in itself. Beyond a general discussion on marketing, social media marketing presents immense opportunities, allowing artists to become more human and be seen as more than just a mystical, musical figure. A presence on social networks like Facebook, MySpace and Twitter, where an increasing number of Internet users are spending their time (as well as where an increasing number of companies are spending their ad dollars) is critical in an artists' promotional plan. These sites allow fans and artists to connect in a way that was never really experienced.

The three artists presented have taken varying approaches to new media usage, which has helped each on varying levels.

Cherine Anderson

Cherine's new media strategy seems grounded in creating a digital foot print while keeping fans updated on her activities, promoting her music and music videos. Her website www.cherineanderson.com is currently under construction but hosts a hyperlink to her MySpace page –both pages share a similar theme. While she has numerous social network pages, her primary focus seems placed on updating her Facebook and Twitter accounts – understandable, since these are two of the most popular social media platforms today. Facebook's US user base grew from 42 million to 103 million in 2009, reflecting a whopping 144.9 percent growth rate (Corbett, 2010), while Twitter's user numbers jumped from eight million in 2009 to over 105 million registered users so far this year. With approximately 180 million unique visitors per month and at least 37 percent of active users 'tweeting' from their cell phones (Gervai, 2010), it is no wonder Cherine dedicates time to her 'tweets.'

Cherine's Facebook pages are updated at least five times per day with live performance videos, back stage photos, updates from her tour bus, links to articles that she finds interesting, 'wise words,' and thanks to the fans every time she leaves a city/country. These updates build on her strength, as an independent artist, to develop customer loyalty within her target group because they allow fans to respond and for an interactive conversation to develop between artist and fan. Interactions like this undoubtedly strengthen the artist fan relationship over time.

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The release of her EP, mix tape and singles were not supported by any clearly evident new media strategies that involved fan integration and without access to sales figures, it is difficult to say whether this affected revenue.

Although Cherine has engaged her fans using quick updates via social networks, her strategy lacks a particular focus and does not seem to give fans a 'reason to buy.' Her strategy may be focused solely on using new media to connect with fans. Without access to sales statistics from her EP – 'The Introduction' – it will be difficult to determine what percentage of her fans she has given a 'reason to buy.' What is evident from her online presence is a focus on utilizing the media to build on fan relationships. Michael's strategy on the other hand is critical to the philosophy of this paper. Despite his use of new media (digital distribution, new business models, presence on social media platforms, etc.), he is yet to report any marked levels of 'success' as defined in this paper. It was important to present an artist like Michael because the reality is that despite the numerous opportunities that new media has presented for artists; there are many who it has not worked in favor of. It is important to note that this is not because of flaws in new media channels, rather, it is connected to failure on the part of the artist to see new media technology as systems that should be incorporated in efforts to achieve specific goals.

It is evident that Cherine's approach to new media strategy does not involve experimentation, or technological online driven promotions. Her choice at this point has been to utilize the platforms as communication channels between herself and her fans, keeping more than a window open to facilitate interaction, and more so meaningful interaction with her fans. The nature of her updates suggest a more human side to her as

an artist, offering her fans, as well as potential fans, a way to communicate with her, while revealing the little girl that grew up in Rockfort, Jamaica. But despite not having an extensive new media strategy and focusing primarily on her social media presence, she currently boasts an impressive live performance schedule and social network fan base, which seems to be blossoming into a true online community of 'dancehall soul' fans.

Umphrey's McGee

Umphrey's McGee on the other hand provides a clearer example of how new media can be utilized (beyond providing online updates). This band's approach to experimentation with new technologies in an effort to satisfy their audience warrants applause. They have not only built on the strength and opportunities connected with the ability to experiment with new media marketing, they have been very proactive about experimenting with new technologies to deliver product to fans, while satisfying their needs for recorded music as well as live performance footage. Their use of new MP3 formats, video subscription, live performance archive sites, and PUSH™ technology sends a clear message to all independent artists – success is not impossible! It seems that UM's strategy of engaging fans at live performances and translating that engagement online has aided their success today. Fans can find UM's music in most (if not all) major music retail outlets online and most importantly via their own dedicated website. Again, with no access to sales figures, it is impossible to assess how these strategies have translated into revenue.

Umphrey's has been acknowledged on numerous occasions by industry pundits for their constant incorporation of new media technology into marketing and

promotions strategies. Their innovative and creative web-based promotions plans, coupled with their dedication to serving their fan base with content they want, while incorporating them into the process, led to the widely recognized Mantis Pre-Order campaign. Fans who pre-ordered the Mantis album online gained access to exclusive bonus material, and as more pre-orders were received, fans participated in 'unlocking' new levels of content – nine tiers in all. Billboard Magazine recognized Umphrey's McGee for their creative marketing savvy and the Mantis pre-order campaign calling it "…a likely template for emerging and established acts trying to kick-start interest in a new release." According to band manager Vincent Iwinski, Umphrey's McGee has sold more than 2,400 pre-orders since it launched in late October, including a $50 deluxe package that contains a bonus DVD and vinyl copy (Umphreys.com, 2010).

Their exploration of new technology to deliver added value to fans did not stop there. In addition to their one-of-a kind pre-order campaign where fans could participate in 'unlocking' exclusive bonus material, the Mantis album incorporated PUSH™ technology by Digital Insert to deliver new content throughout 2009. PUSH™ requires no software installation or serial number. By simply putting the Mantis CD in a CD-ROM drive, the disc acted as a 'key' to an Umphreys.com micro-site where fans got access to exclusive content as it became available. Umphrey's McGee was also among the first bands to make their content available in the new HDMP3 format. The new format allows for the creation and playback of a new type of audio file using lossless compression. MP3HD files are approximately four times the size of corresponding MP3 files, but remain compatible with existing MP3 players. Umphrey's McGee's audio engineer & producer Kevin Browning stated that the format would offer fans "a much

richer sound spectrum combined with the convenience and familiarity of the MP3 format" (Umphreys.com, 2010). They are also one of the first bands to offer their fans a video subscription service. Available exclusively at iClips.com, Umphrey's has made an entire week's worth of concerts available in real-time video streaming to their fans for the low cost of only US$5 per show, or the total package for only US$20. Fans have the option of streaming the shows live as they happen, as well as further streaming on demand for two weeks following the concerts.

The Umphrey's McGee Podcasts are also worth mentioning. These 75-minute episodes of live material released about twice each month to more than 20,000 subscribers, represents just how strategic UM has been in terms of servicing their fans. These mp3 podcasts can be uploaded to any mp3 player (or downloaded to any computer), and are created from high quality soundboard recordings of each night's concert. UM fans do not have to wait a year or six months for the release of a 'live' UM album; they have the luxury of just visiting www.umlive.net and accessing an ever growing archive of live audio and video content.

The band's most noted used of new technology is 'The Stew Art Series' or 'S2' and 'UMBowl,' where fans could "conduct" the band's live improvisations via text messaging. The first few S2 events were received with overwhelming enthusiasm and to rave reviews, including coverage in Billboard Magazine. For S2, sold-out crowds of 50 fans submitted their ideas by texting descriptive words, phrases, and pop culture references to the Umphrey's Mozes mobile interface. The suggestions were then filtered by a member of the band's team and projected on a screen for the band to digest and turn into the next phase of the jam. The band's music varies stylistically with

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suggestions ranging from "an afternoon bus ride in Jamaica" to "drinking pina coladas…in a hurricane". One elated fan commented after a show, "S2 was the coolest thing I have ever been a part of. It is always been a dream of mine to meet the band, and the opportunity to participate in leading the Jam for the band was a dream come true as well" (MadisonHousePublicity, 2010).

Umphrey's McGee is known for their innovative approach to distributing music and building a community and they seem to have an inherent understanding of who they are as a band, what they can offer to their target market, as well as what kind of packaging would appeal to their fans. Offering their live performance footage via dedicated website www.umlive.net indicates a keen understanding of what fans of their style of music want. They acknowledge the need to preserve the live performance experience and have offered an opportunity for fans to do so. According to Richard Wilson (2010), "they have sold over a million tracks on their live archive site www.umlive.net to date."

At a time when music sales were at an all time low, Umphrey's McGee also managed to utilize their understanding of their fan base to revolutionize music marketing using new media technology as outlined in Table VIII. Successful active involvement in music marketing is something that artists dream of securing, but as evident from UM's strategy, getting fans to be involved in unlocking keys relied largely on their commitment to satisfying the fan's need for involvement. The PUSH™ technology (obviously new media) was but a medium that acted as the glue to bring artist and fan together. Umphrey's use of new media technology to connect with their fans, while giving them a reason to buy has proven most effective and is reminiscent of

Michael Masnik's (2009) 'formula' for how to be successful in the digital era of music business:

Connect With Fans (CwF) + Reason To Buy (RtB) = The Business Model ($$$$)

$$(CwF) + (RtB) = (\$\$\$\$)$$

According to Masnick, this formula lies at the very base of any successful new media strategy for "building up a stronger fan base, creating wonderful new works of art, distributing them out to the community and getting paid for it at the same time" (Masnick, 2009). Note well that artists can approach this simple formula in an infinite variety of creative ways. For example, UM, outside of providing content for their fans, have 'connected' with them, essentially developing a language that does more than dictate, rather, it communicates.

The UM new media strategy spans a proactive effort to experiment with new technologies, exercise new business models with the sale of live video and audio footage at performances as well as online via a dedicated website, and professional fan base management systems (FanMail, The Floor). Umphrey's McGee gives fans incentives to participate, follow, and buy, as reflected in the massive fan following across social media platforms.

Michael Sean Harris

Today's music industry is a game of survival of the fittest and as outlined previously, and only those independent artists who are willing to experiment and think outside of the box with the new technology that is available will be successful. However, it seems as if Michael's strategy is just to have a presence on as many social networks as possible, thereby creating a digital footprint. He has employed the

Patronage model in his 'Guardian Angels' program where individuals can become angels by making a contribution to a certain project, or by sourcing corporate sponsorship or being an advisor or consultant to Michael. Guardian angels have their names placed in the liner notes of his album, their banners or logos prominently displayed, are given the opportunity to make cameo appearances in Michael's music videos or receive tickets to performances (gratis). There has been no update (via his website or social networks) regarding the status of securing 'Guardians.' The projects for which Michael needs 'Guardians' includes, his album, which had a proposed completion date of December 2008, a music video for a dancehall flavored single, 'Table Top,' and two performances at the Phillip Sherlock Centre in Kingston, Jamaica. It may seem that Michael has not been able to secure a 'Guardian' for any of his projects, especially since the program was only included on his Weebly website and that site is not connected to any of his social media accounts and does not appear in search results via Google for 'Michael Sean Harris.'

Although Michael has not been very strategic in implementing this patronage model he deserves applause for his willingness to experiment with a new business model, especially in the Caribbean. New business models assist independent artists in navigating the never before seen demand for 'niche' market music. Fred Davis (2009), Senior Partner at the Entertainment law firm, Davis, Shapiro Lewit, and Hayes, argues that "in this new content economy, consumers want access, not ownership." To support his argument, Davis points to the staggering difference between CD/DVD sales compared to online music streaming – the difference is phenomenal. Hundreds of thousands of dollars compared to tens of millions of dollars, respectively. Not only does

this reflect a continuing preference for music in its digital format, but it is also an indication of how far the industry has come in terms of embracing new media. The music industry is driven by consumer demand; if that demand is for connectivity, access and portability, the content producers must satisfy the demand in order to survive – artists must turn to online channels to not only distribute their music but also to market and promote it.

As of April 2010, Michael had not secured a 'Guardian' to fund the release of his album, has not released a music video for 'Table Top,' and produced only one performance at the Philip Sherlock Center – 'Arm Chair Revolution.' In promoting this event, Michael utilized social media platforms like Facebook and Reverbnation. His strategy has been to use the update and notification features available for free on social networks to promote the event and post video and photos. Fans also had the opportunity to write to Michael and let him know the songs they would like him to perform. It is hard to determine whether online promotions resulted in sold out shows without access to ticket sales.

> **Problems with Michael's strategy.**
>
> • No clearly defined new media strategy;
>
> • No financial investment in the development of a Michael Sean Harris brand online;
>
> • No searchable domain name;
>
> • Current web presence lacks appeal;
>
> • Weebly site is not search engine optimized so it does not appear in Google search results for Michael Sean Harris or Michael Sean Harris music;

- The Guardian Angels program, while creative is listed on his Weebly site but not on any of his social network sites;

- Michael currently has a presence on MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and several other networks but his fan/friends numbers are very low because there is now strategies plan to develop his fan base online;

- Employing non-targeted advertising for the promotion of his events:

    o The audience numbers at Michael's annual event ArmChair Revolution has been less than 100 each night in a 350 capacity venue.

    o Michael has not utilized Facebook's advertising package (pay per click or pay per impression). These packages allow for targeted advertising campaigns across the platform. Creating events on Facebook does not allow for effective 'targeting' in terms of ensuring that members of the artist's target audience will see the event;

- Current strategy is to just try to translate current fans into persons who will 'pay' to see Michael perform live (and hopefully buy his music when it becomes available);

- No meaningful interaction with fans via social networks:

    o Michael's last login on his MySpace page was March 9, 2010 (as of 3/17/2010);

    o Michael's last fan update on Facebook was more than 3 months ago; and

    o Updates are primarily used when Michael needs to promote an event.

Michael for example, has ensured that he has created a digital footprint but because the creation of this footprint was not done within the framework of a wider marketing and promotional strategy, which embraced Michael's strengths as well as industry opportunities, we find that his presence online or attempts at new business models have fallen short of connecting with fans. According to Greg Kot (2009), "an artist with the know-how can create quite a buzz for their music online, to the point that people will be actively looking for them but the problem is that far too many artists don't have clue how to promote their music on the Internet." As with Michael, they just put up a web page, open a social media account, make a few updates and basically hope for the best. Artists like this seem to be aware of the power of new media but in a very real sense, they have not armed themselves with the knowledge of how to utilize these channels.

In relation to new media, the data provided in the tables above suggest that it is Umphrey's McGee that has capitalized on new media strategies to drive fan commitment. Through online community building, creative web-based promotions, and open taping policies allowing live music sharing among fans, Umphrey's McGee has harnessed the Internet's momentum to spread their music. The band's unique approach to online and digital distribution, while keeping their fans a top priority, has helped Umphrey's McGee sell out shows across North America and worldwide. This is evident from their live performance roster available via their website (the site lists when shows have been sold out).

Beyond having a 'presence' on a new media platform – as Michael does - it is 'how' independent artists manage to incorporate these mediums into their marketing and promotions that makes the difference. In the same way that major labels have

departments dedicated to designing marketing plans and strategies specific to particular artists, independent artists must do the same and use new media to promote their product and brand. Based on an independent study, musical mentor, Tom Hess (2010), argues that musicians who are 'trying to make it into the music industry' primarily make the mistake of trying to get their music heard by as many people as possible before trying to focus on 'converting' the people who actually hear and see them into becoming actual fans. He believes that this 'conversion' is the first key to promotional success. Hess' perspective supports Masnick's argument for connecting with fans, and speaks to the fact that independent artists must be aware that one of the main shifts in today's music business is associated with consumer behavior, and their need for personalization, connectivity, access and portability. The nature of today's market makes music the perfect candidate to connect with consumers in a strong and meaningful way.

In the past, only a handful of large corporations could afford to funnel heavily marketed recordings by superstar artists through a few radio chains and MTV to the public. In place of that top-heavy business model, a new brand of self-marketing is emerging, fueled by new media. Roles have changed and as Greg Kot states; "bands can now become de facto record companies: not only creating art but then distributing and publicizing it through websites and e-mail." Fans are no longer a faceless marketing demographic to which products are sold; communication with fans is now a two-way conversation that allows for the development of solid fan relationships facilitated by new media technology. Without it, it can be argued that independent artists like Umphrey's McGee who have been largely known among industry executives for their

constant experimentation with new technologies in promoting their music, would not have the type of relationship with their fan base that they now share.

From the independent artist case study, one thing is clear – beyond being aware of popular new media channels, the rise of the independent artist is attributable to their strategic utilization of available new media technologies. Based on assessments of Umphrey's McGee's social media accounts and websites, the band has developed a new media strategy that involves:

- Product placement across major online music retail channels (including music, merchandise, video content);

- Proactively engaging fans and potential fans – whether on their website, or on a social media platform – holding their attention by satisfying their need for information, updates, video content, concert tickets, in-depth look at the band (The Floor blog), and the sale of music;

- Experimenting with new technologies to add value to their product offerings;

- Experimenting with new technologies to engage fans' interest while rewarding involvement;

- Using the media to provide a seemingly constant 'conversation' between artist and fan (iTunes podcast, professionally designed monthly newsletters via FanMail system); and

- Dedication to online community building as well as the creation of a digital footprint.

Independence has truly come in the form of new media. One cannot help but to believe with much certainty that without these new channels and without their wide appeal, a great majority of independent artists would still be waiting for that golden recording contract to 'make it' in the business. The information presented here goes beyond identifying popular new media channels that independent artists can utilize. Rather, the discussion focused on how these channels can be incorporated into a wider strategy thereby allowing for measureable success in the marketplace. As mentioned, it would be erroneous to suggest that all artists who make use of new media are basking in the glory of music sales, extensive live performances, high radio rotation, etc.. This is because with new media, it is not just about creating digital footprints – these footprints must lead fans and potential fans to some ultimate goal – and must be strategically incorporated into their blueprint for achieving success. This blueprint of course would be based on their perceived core competencies and strengths and not just what everyone else is doing.

We are certainly witnessing a new era where new media strategies are pivotal to the rise of the independent artist.

CONCLUSION

There is no question that we are now functioning in a new music industry that is defined, not by oligonomistic control of distribution channels and opportunities for mass exposure, but rather by the ever-increasing popularity of new media technology, choice, and product diversity. The primary purpose of this paper was to explore the use of new media technology in music, while establishing that a relationship exists between new media strategies and the rise of the independent artist. The Overview provided a snapshot of the current state of the US music industry, and revealed that with the introduction of new media technology into core operations of the business (creatively and technically), both content producers and consumers are now able to navigate with much more 'freedom' in terms of supplying and satisfying demand for musical variety.

According to Music Biz Academy founder David Nevue (2003), "ten years ago, the only way for an independent artist to gain exposure on a large scale was to endlessly pursue, and hope for, that one-in-a-million major label recording contract." Although some 'indies' continue to hold out for that ever-illusive recording deal that Nevue refers to, others have empowered themselves by recognizing that opportunities exist for them today in a largely new media driven landscape.

The information presented throughout this paper outlines key areas of the recording industry whose operating methodologies have been largely reshaped by new media. Artists can now produce and distribute product globally at very low cost,

develop marketing, promotions and live performance campaigns centered almost entirely around the Internet and social media platforms. According to Hypebot executive Kyle Bylin (2010) argues that the traditional oligonomistic system is ideally optimized for a different era far behind the one we are living in today. "The Internet era music consumption system has promoted ranges of social behavior in those who were born digital which are incompatible not only with the traditional system, but with the assumptions that the record industry currently operates under" (Bylin, 2010). Anderson's (2008, p. 37) arguments coincides with this perspective, stating plainly; "the traditional model of marketing, selling, and distributing music has gone out of favor…we are witnessing the end of an era."

In this new era, the criteria for success has not changed rather it remains connected primarily to record sales as it was historically. And with record sales comes other 'success' points, such as charting, industry award nominations (and awards), extensive live performance schedules, as well as receiving airplay on commercial radio stations. Though the methodology by which artists achieve success today may be largely different from traditional strategies, it is still considered success. We are at a point in the general music business landscape where a one-size-fits-all approach has lost its favor and new media technology has completely changed the way music is produced, marketed, promoted, distributed, and consumed - essentially reshaping how an artist can achieve success. This fact has transformed the industry into prime market for new business strategies, many of them aimed at servicing independent content producers. Sonic Bids, MySpace, Indie on the Move, Reverbnation, KickStarter, Pledge Music, TuneCore are just a few 'young' companies that have capitalized on the 'broken'

traditional model of the music business. These companies are changing the face of the music business, further empowering independent artists by providing services that allow them to take advantage of available opportunities in the marketplace. Although this does not mean an apocalyptic end for major labels, it has opened up the marketplace significantly, expanding the opportunities available to an independent artist.

As consumers continue to migrate to the Internet to access, share, and discover music, music marketing is also expanding to include new media concepts such as blogging, viral videos, mobile music, and social media promotions, while at the same time embracing brands that sell well with the music, look and feel of an independent artist. With new media, the realm of music marketing has become an uncharted world, filled with opportunities to creatively present musical product, while satisfying the consumer's need for fresh, innovative (sound), musical product delivered when, where and how they want it. The idea of the 'best' marketing mix is a term of old, as there seems to be no right or wrong way, or single way to deliver an artist's message to their target market. Independent artists can now inexpensively market their music using the Internet. Based on the virtue of its open structure every artist/band has an equal opportunity to introduce their music to a potentially enormous audience at little or no cost.

But as presented in the short independent artist case study analysis, this brave new world requires not just an online presence or a social media presence. It requires the strategic use of the presence – it is not just being on Facebook or MySpace or having a website that makes the difference, it is how the artist is using that platform to promote their music and brand that will make a difference in their quest for success. In

order to be successful and take advantage of the favorable shifting of the industry philosophies, all independent artists must first assess the market in terms of their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. They must embrace their strengths, which could include the ability to experiment with new technologies, experiment with sound that will appeal to a specific niche market, develop strong relationships with fans, and develop creative promotional strategies. They must also widely assess the external environment for opportunities, such as sharply rising demand for niche market product, wide acceptance of Internet as a legitimate tool to reach consumers, low barriers to entry, and the rise of digital music sales, the integration of music and social media platforms, music subscription and streaming services, as well as Internet radio services. It is the artist's strengths that will be refined to take on opportunities while fending off threats in the environment.

Based on information provided throughout this paper, it is evident that with the introduction of new media, artists have been empowered to achieve success 'independently,' resulting in a growing number of artists who are exploiting new media technology in terms of producing, distributing, marketing and promoting their music while building a solid fan base – everything that is needed to compete in today's music business.

APPENDIX

BLOGGING

Blogging is an excellent tool for artists who enjoy sharing their thoughts, experiences and ideas. It is a great way to get a conversation going with fans and build on your fan base. Explore some of the more popular 'blogospheres' and tools and see if blogging is for you.

Associated Content (www.associatedcontent.com)

Associated Content provides its users with an opportunity to get paid for their blog entries. This is called "content economy." Just publish content on any topic, in any format (text, video, audio and images), and get paid based on the number of views to your posts.

Backupmyblog (www.backupmyblog.com)

Your content is valuable. This is a paid service that allows you to safely backup your blog and its contents. Sign up for an account starting at US$19.95, then provide backupyourblog with your blog account info, and it will check your account every day and copy your posts, comments, photos and style onto its servers.

Blogburst (www.blogburst.com)

BlogBurst is a service that places blogs on popular online destinations such as Reuters, and USA Today. Submit your blog URL link to Blogburst for review. If accepted, your

blog becomes active in the BlogBurst network making it discoverable by publishers for selection and exposure to their audience.

Blogger (www.blogger.com)

Blogger is a free service that allows you to post your content (text, video, audio, images) to a webpage that you design and monitor.

Feedburner (www.feedburner.com)

Feedburner provides account holders with RSS (Rich Site Summary) 'feeds' that allows readers of a blog to subscribe to regular updates, delivered via a web portal, news reader, or email. Feeds allow site content to be packaged into "widgets," "gadgets," mobile devices, and other technologies that make it possible to display blogs technically anywhere.

LiveJournal (www.livejournal.com)

Live Journal is a free online service with an emphasis on user interaction. You can use Live Journal as a private journal, a blog, a discussion forum or a social network. Write entries in your personal journal and use different security levels to restrict their visibility, ranging from public entries, which any site visitor can read to private entries, which are only visible to you.

Movable Type (www.moveabletype.com)

Download the Movable Type software to build blogs, social networks, and websites while utilizing its content management system. At its basic level, Moveable Type is a free **Wordpress.org (www.wordpress.org)**

On this site you can download and install a software script called WordPress. To do this you need a web host that meets the minimum requirements. WordPress is completely

customizable and can be used for almost anything. Knowledge of web scripting is required.

Wordpress (www.wordpress.com)

WordPress.com is a free blogging platform powered by Wordpress.org. No download necessary.

Type Pad (www.typepad.com)

Type Pad is a paid blogging service. Subscription costs range from a basic US$4.95 per month to a business package costing US$89.95 per month.

Xanga (www.xanga.com)

Xanga is a website that hosts 'weblogs,' photo blogs, and social networking profiles.

BOOKINGS, LICENSING AND PUBLISHING

Take control of how and when you make money. There are numerous online channels dedicated to helping independent artists develop as many revenue streams as possible. Check them out for yourself.

Artist Force (www.artistforce.com)

ArtistForce offers a web based platform and marketplace for live entertainment. It connects independent artists and entertainment buyers making it possible to receive and negotiate performance offers in real time. Artists can manage their show bookings, create performance agreements and act as their own booking representative.

AudioSocket (www.audiosocketmusic.com)

Audio Socket Music represents music for placement in film, television, video games and other media platforms.

Chop Shop Music Supervision (www.chopshopmusic.com)

Chop Shop Music Supervision focuses on music placement to TV music supervisors. Their successes include placing new music and breaking bands on Grey's Anatomy, Gossip Girl, Chuck, Made Men and more. They do accept band submissions.

Crucial Music (www.crucialmusic.com)

Crucial Music links independent artists and musicians to individuals in the industry who use music for commercial purposes. They specialize in licensing music to TV, Films, Commercials and Video Games. It is free to sign up and if your music is placed the revenue is split based on specific revenue sharing programs.

D-Rom (www.d-rom.com)

D-Rom provides a unique opportunity for record labels and producers to expose their tracks to a worldwide subscriber base, as well as a wealth of DJs and clubs around the world. They allow you to make money from royalty fees you receive when DJs use your tracks in their own mixes. Their database consists of DJs who are established in their own countries and belong to reputable agencies.

Gig Masters (www.gigmasters.com)

GigMasters bills itself as *'The Online Booking Service for Live Entertainment.'* Visitors search by event or service required and features over 18,000 musicians on their roster. For musicians, GigMasters offers an online press kit and the ability to bid on gigs as they become available.

Musicians Contact (www.musicianscontact.com)

Musicians Contact puts artists in contact with musicians and is also a databank of events/promoters looking for artists/bands to perform.

Onlinegigs (www.onlinegigs.com)

Onlinegigs.com is your own personal music industry directory as well as a contact manager, reminder service, automated publicist and contract department for independent bands and agents. It is also a vast, detailed database of venues, colleges, festivals and media contacts.

PumpAudio (www.pumpaudio.com)

Pump Audio's technology allows artists to license their music into productions without giving up any ownership, while allowing TV and advertising producers to discover new music ready for use.

RipTideMusic (www.riptidemusic.com)

A music licensing and publishing company that represents the work of over 200 composers, 'indie' bands, artists and singer/songwriters for one-stop licensing in TV, movie trailers, films, video games, and advertising.

Rumblefish (www.rumblefish.com)

Rumblefish connects advertisers with bands and artists seeking to license their music. Artists upload music and marketers can browse the music and pick what they like. The license fee will then be split between Rumblefish and the artist.

Song Catalog (www.songcatalog.com)

SongCatalog connects publishers, labels, independent artists and producers with companies looking to license music for commercial use.

SonicBids (www.sonicbids.com)

Sonicbids helps artists get gigs, and promoters book the right bands. The community includes over 200,000 bands, singers, songwriters, and performers of all kinds, and

18,000 music buyers, including promoters, licensors and festival programmers. A registration fee is charged.

Taxi (www.taxi.com)

Taxi helps independent artists; songwriters and composers get record, publishing and flim/tv deals, no matter where you are in the world. Whether your song is accepted or rejected, TAXI will provide you with written feedback about your song. TAXI works with over 600 major companies including Arista, Atlantic, Capitol, Columbia, Disney, Dreamworks SKG, EMI, Epic, MCA, RCA, Universal, Virgin, Warner Brothers and many others. There is a yearly membership fee of $300, plus small submission fee ($5) for each song.

You License (www.youlicense.com)

YouLicense is non-exclusive, free network for Artists, Writers, Producers, Publishers, Labels, or any other music owners. It offers an online music licensing marketplace for Film & Television, Advertising Campaigns, Music on Hold, Mobile Phone Content, Web Content, Audio Projects, or a small business in need of musical content. They have developed a platform, which enables artists and those seeking musical content to conduct business directly with one another in a safe and secure environment.

COMMUNICATIONS

I'm sure communicating with your team and staying in contact with your fans is critical, especially of you are running on a low budget. Take a look at the sites below many of them are free or offer their services at low cost to you.

Constant Contact (www.constantcontact.com)

Constant Contact's email marketing and online survey tools can help you to create professional-looking email newsletters and insightful online surveys. A free trail is offered but a subscription fee is charged at the end of this period if you would like to continue using Constant Contact.

Gizmo Project (http://gizmo5.com/pc/)

Gizmo5 is a free software for your computer (Windows, Mac, Linux), tablet (Nokia Wifi Tablets) or mobile phone that makes calling easy. Call anyone in the world using Gizmo5 credit, or call other Gizmo5 users for free. This software also features instant messaging, file sharing, video calling, two-way text messaging, call recording, free mobile phone and landline conference calling, and free voicemail.

GoogleTalk (www.google.com/talk)

The Google Talk downloadable application for Windows offers numerous features for communicating including, instant messaging and group chat (chat with all of your Google Talk and Gmail contacts in real time), free PC-to-PC voice and video chat (talk to anyone else for free who's online and has the Google Talk client), unlimited file transfers (send files to your contacts without file size or bandwidth restrictions), and the ability to send and receive voicemail messages.

iContact (www.icontact.com)

iContact allows you to create, publish, and track email newsletters, surveys, blogs, autoresponders, and RSS feeds. iContact facilitates permission-based email marketing campaigns with high deliverability.

Jaxtr (www.jaxtr.com)

Over 10 million people across 220 countries use Jaxtr to receive calls from people visiting their social networking pages, to make calls to their friends and family worldwide and to get to know fellow Jaxtr members on café Jaxtr, the world's largest talk network. Jaxtr is a free service.

Oovoo (www.oovoo.com)

OoVoo is a free software that allows several persons to connect, collaborate and communicate simultaneously using video screens no matter where they are located.

Skype (www.skype.com)

Skype is a free software that enables you to make free video and voice calls, send instant messages and share files with other Skype users. Skype is also used to facilitate low-cost calls to landlines and mobile devices locally and internationally when users purchase Skype credit.

CONTENT SHARING

Sharing content (photos, music, videos, etc.) is a key part of utilizing social networks and because it is that important, content sharing sites exist that can provide us with codes (html, URL links, etc.) needed to post content on our personal website and/or social networks. I've listed some of the more popular sites here.

Animoto (www.animoto.com)

Submit your images and music to Animoto, the system analyzes your images and creates a video organized to the feel of the music that you can post anywhere. If you

don't like the first result, select "remix" and Animoto will produce another unique video for you. This is a free service. Upgrades are available at various prices.

Babelgum (www.babelgum.com)

A free Internet and Mobile TV platform supported by advertising, Babelgum combines the full-screen video quality of traditional television with the interactive capabilities of the Internet while offering professionally produced programming on-demand to a global audience. The Babelgum site has been recently revamped and now comes with a new Flash-based, download-free, global web video service. The Coldplay video catalogue is featured on the Babelgum site.

Box.net (www.box.net)

Share your own documents, power points, and other files securely at Box.net.

Dropsend (www.dropsend.com)

Dropsend allows you to do two things – send large files (up to 2 GB) and store files online.

Flickr (www.flickr.com)

Flickr allows you to share photos and video content by uploading them from the web, from mobile devices, from your computer and from any software management tool.

You can also share content on the Flickr website, in RSS feeds, by email, or by posting to outside blogs.

Photobucket (www.photobucket.com)

This is a free website which allows you to upload, share, link and find photos, videos and graphics.

Picasa (www.picasa.com)

Picasa allows you to organize, edit and share your photos online.

Sendspace (www.sendspace.com)

Send large files that are too big for email attachments (up to 1.5Gb each) to friends, family and businesses, anywhere in the world.

Slide.com (www.slide.com)

Slide is a social entertainment company that allows you to communicate, and engage friends on social networking sites. Their products include Super Poke, Super Poke Pets, Top Friends, Fun Space and Slideshow, which can be found on several networks including Facebook and MySpace.

SoundCloud (www.soundcloud.com)

SoundCloud lets you move music fast & easy. The platform takes the daily hassle out of receiving, sending & distributing music for artists, record labels & other music professionals.

Vodpod (http://vodpod.com)

Vodpod is a free service that allows account holders to share their favorite videos. Videos can be uploaded directly to Vodpod or via YouTube and posted on your website, blog or social network site. With Vodpod you can also post a video "widget" that shows all your favorite videos in a video reel.

YouSendIt (www.yousendit.com)

Instantly send any files to anyone, anywhere with no software installation. It is a convenient and worry-free e-mail attachment replacement that eliminates e-mail bounce-backs when sending large and time critical attachments.

YouTube (www.youtube.com)

YouTube allows people to upload and share video clips across the Internet through websites, mobile devices, blogs, and email. Everyone, worldwide, including persons without an account can watch videos on YouTube but only account holders can leave comments on videos. YouTube is probably the most popular video sharing website and it is used a lot by artists to promote their music videos to the YouTube community or on their social networking pages. Get as creative as you'd like with YouTube and build your own channel featuring your videos and your favorite videos and build a fan base while you're at it.

DATA MANAGEMENT

Forget about the days when you had to travel with loads of paper work and files! Computer software now makes it easier for anyone to manage data and be on top of their game, whether you're on the road or in the office.

BandCentral (www.bandcentral.com)

BandCentral is online band management software for unsigned or self managed bands that launched in Feb 2009. The software has capabilities to keep a band calendar and message board, store files in one centralized place, act as gig manager, help with band promotion and fan management, update all social networks in one place, handle band finances and keep track of band to do lists. Some of the features you can get for free but to utilize all features they charge a monthly fee. They currently only show costs in British Pounds as based out of England.

Bandize (www.bandize.com)

Bandize allows you to create a common place online for band members. Bandize is currently invite-only but they generally send out invites once a week, so be sure to leave your email address in the form provided on bandize.com, if you'd like access to the site.

Band Manager Pro (www.bandmanagerpro.com)

Band Manager Pro is a database software that's great for solo artists, 'indie' bands, and even full time managers. Use it to book gigs, manage your fan base, promote your band and complete accounting tasks. This is not a free software.

iFanz (www.ifanz.com)

iFanz provides artists with tools needed to collect, store and manage fan emails and demographics. Users can "iBlast" thousands of emails to their "Fanz" in minutes from anywhere in the world, announce shows, new CDs, merchandise or just keep in touch using plain text or rich HTML email. You control your music/performance. You control all your copyrights. You own your database.

Indie Band Manager (www.indiebandmanager.com)

Indie Band Manager is a database management system for musicians, artist managers, agents, and other industry processionals. You download it, install it, and then run it locally on your computer (compatible with PC and Mac). Since it is a local application rather than a web-based one, you can use it anywhere, no Internet access required. It is a great tool for booking gigs, promotions, selling merchandise, and even pitching songs, jingles, or voiceovers to TV, film, or advertisers. 'Indie' Band Manager costs between US$250 (PRO) to US$50 (Lite).

Music Arsenal (www.musicalarsenal.com)

Use Music Arsenal to manage and schedule your upcoming projects, plan your tours, find new places to promote your music and more.

My Band Link (www.mybandlink.com)

MyBandLink is a free, web-based band management software. You can use the application to manage your band's schedule, website and fan base.

Vertical Response (www.verticalresponse.com)

Use Vertical Response to build, target, send and track email marketing newsletters, online surveys and direct mail postcards.

DIGITAL DISTRIBUTION

Digital music has become a powerful marketing, distribution and revenue -generating tool for artists around the world. This is a primary area to focus on once you've got your finished product. A word to remember is "aggregator." These allow artists to obtain digital distribution through popular online music retail channels such as iTunes, Amazon and eMusic. Why is an aggregator all that important? Well independent artists cannot interact directly with for example, iTunes, so you have to contract a third party – the aggregator- to act on your behalf. I've listed some of the more prominent aggregators here as well as a few companies that are not aggregators but distribute music digitally.

Note that each company will have its own terms of service.

Amazon MP3 (www.amazon.com)

Amazon MP3 is a popular online destinations offering mp3 music downloads, CDs, DVDs, Blu Ray and even Vinyl.

Amie Street (www.amiestreet.com)

The only store with dynamically priced MP3 downloads. On Amie Street, the community determines the price of music. Every song starts cheap (or even free) and increases in price up to 98 cents as more and more people purchase it. This ensures that you get music at a sensible price. If you find cheap songs or albums, that means they're new to the site and/or undiscovered; conversely, when you pay top price for an album, you know that a lot of people think it is really good.

Bluetracks (www.bluetracks.ca) * Canada

Bluetracks.ca, is a Canadian based independent online music store that offers independent artists and labels, an online store that is dedicated to the promotion and distribution of their music. The artists or labels decide on prices and manage their own products. When products are sold, royalties are paid according to an agreed system. The site contains music by more than 600 artists, with hundreds of CD and thousands of downloadable tracks.

Catapult (wwwcatapultdistribution.com)

Catapult Distribution is a distributor of audio content to top digital music stores. With their service, you can get your music sold on iTunes, Rhapsody, Napster, eMusic, AmazonMP3, and many other digital retailers. With Catapult, Artists and Labels receive 91-95 percent of the payments received from the various digital music stores. Their unique payout structure makes it easy for their clients to begin receiving higher

payments for each album. Each payout level is determined by 'All Time Track Downloads' for each album, so as an album continues to receive download purchases over time their clients receive a higher payout for that album.

CDBaby (www.cdbaby.com)

There's no need for middlemen with CDBaby. Submit your music, it is then digitized, warehoused, and sold to the public. Revenue from sales is paid directly to you. CD Baby handles both digital and physical product. According to the CDBaby website, 287,828 artists sell their music at CDBaby, 5,499,750 CDs have been sold online to customers, and $113,840,869 has been paid directly to artists since inception. Several independent artists who have distributed their music via CDBaby were either Grammy nominees and/or winners in 2009 including Reggae artist, Burning Spear (Reggae) and Pete Seeger (American Folk). CDBaby handles both digital and physical product (CDs).

Celly Space (www.cellyspace.com)

Use Celly Space to create, send and sell ring tones from your own music. You'll also be able to create, publish, send and sell Multimedia Messages (MMS) that contain Audio, Video, Text and Images of your performances. Offer Broadcast Alerts (SMS & MMS) that allow fans to subscribe to your content or regularly send your fans new ring tones, video, images, and tour information. You can decide whether you'd like to distribute your content for free or for a fee. If you decide to sell your content, you will earn a revenue share for every piece of content sold.

Digi-cards (www.digi-cards.ca), Disc Revolt (www.discrevolt.com), Hip Digital Media (www.hipdigitalmedia.com), SoundLoadMusic (www.soundloadmusic.com), Platinum Music Pass (www.musicpass.com)

These are companies offering physical solutions for digital delivery of content using printed and pre-programmed cards, similar in size to a gift card or credit card. You are able to personalize your card artwork and fans who purchase your cards usually only have to visit a website and submit the code provided on the card in order to download your music. Don't worry about multiple downloads using a single card because each card can only be used once. These cards are a cool and trendy alternative to CDs, so think about it when you're going on tour (leave all the bulky CD merchandise at home and forget the hassle). When you're choosing a card company however, make sure that you choose one that reports each sale to SoundScan so that you can earn placement on charts like Billboard.

DiscMakers (www.discmakers.com)

Disc Makers is primarily a CD and DVD manufacturer that caters to independent musicians, filmmakers, and small businesses. Their services include, CD/DVD Design, CD Mastering, DVD Authoring, ROM Authoring, CD Distribution, Digital distribution, Download Cards, Custom-printed Merchandise, Promo Printing and Direct Mail Fulfillment.

eMusic (www.emusic.com)

eMusic is a subscription-based system that gives artists the opportunity to sell their music online while engaging a social network community of music fans, record labels, and artists alike. eMusic was one of the first digital music retailers to sell DRM-free

music in the popular MP3 format beginning in 1998 and became the first service to sell audio books in MP3 in 2007.

Flotones (www.flotones.com)

Flotones serves artists and fans. Musicians with an account can sell mobile content to their fans and build new fans and fans can discover new music from independent artists.

FUGA (www.fuga.com)

FUGA is a web application that allows record labels, distributors and aggregators to manage their digital catalog from a central location and distribute it amongst many online stores. Think about it as your own digital warehouse and logistics infrastructure.

Indiestore/7 Digital (www.7digital.com)

This is a UK based digital media delivery company that powers services for record companies, artists, brands, film and TV companies as well as other digital media owners throughout the world. They offer a wide variety of services including Do It Yourself (DIY) download stores.

IODA (www.iodaalliance.com)

IODA's, catalog represents music from over 50 countries, including rock, electronic, hip-hop, reggae, metal, punk, indie, world, latin, jazz and classical which are distributed via major digital music services including, iTunes®, Amazon, and MySpace Music as well as mobile carriers such as Verizon Wireless, Sprint and Nokia. In July 2009, SONY Music partnered with IODA as part of a strategic investment plan. Sony's independent distribution unit, RED, will now use IODA's digital distribution as part of the overall Sony Music Network.

Last.fm (www.last.fm)

Last.fm is free to music lovers, artists, and labels. You can either listen to all sorts of radio stations (on the website or with its Last.fm Scrobbler (desktop player) or tune in to previews in either full-length or as 30 second samples. As an artist or label, you can upload your music and earn royalties every time someone listens. It also uses recommendation technology to recommend songs from other account holders' music collections while connecting you with other users.

MySpace Music (www.music.MySpace.com)

MySpace profiles for musicians in the website's MySpace Music section differ from normal profiles in allowing artists to upload their entire discographies consisting of MP3 songs. The uploader must have rights to use the songs (e.g. their own work, permission granted, etc.). Unsigned musicians can use MySpace to post and sell music using Snocap. In 2005 they launched their own record label, MySpace Records, in an effort to discover unknown talent currently on MySpace Music. Some well-known singers such as Lily Allen and Sean Kingston gained fame through MySpace.

Nimbit (www.nimbit.com)

Nimbit is a comprehensive sales, distribution, and promotion solution for artists. You can sell your music and merchandise directly from your site using their direct sales tools and/or through their network of third party online retailers. You can track all of your sales to identify key distribution, marketing, and promotional opportunities. They also provide web hosting and design, e-mail, calendar, CD Replication, radio promotion and fan management tools.

PayLoadz (www.payloadz.com)

PayLoadz is a leading online marketplace for digital downloadable goods. They enable tens of thousands of customers to sell digital goods such as videos, video games, ebooks, software and templates to a large audience of buyers from their online store.

Rawrip (www.rawrip.com)

Rawrip.com is a music service fuelling music discovery for fans and artists alike. Using the Rippler, fans search for artists they're already familiar with and receive recommendations of music from artists whose tracks share similar audio qualities (based on over 30 different variables). Artists earn 100 percent of the sale price, keeping every single penny on a track sale. The Rippler technology also means that artists are given the chance to showcase their music alongside established artists.

Snocap (www.snocap.com)

Snocap's digital registry system allows artists and labels to promote and sell their music through digital retailers or through their own unique artist store. Many artists use Snocap storefronts to sell their music on their MySpace profiles. All you have to do is upload your music, set your own price, provide your own bank account information and monitor you sales. You keep all your rights and only pay a small fee for using SNOCAP, while the rest of the money goes right to your bank account!

SongCast (www.songcast.com)

SongCast is an online music distribution service that delivers independent music to the world's most popular download retailers, including; iTunes, Rhapsody, Amazon, eMusic and Napster. With SongCast, you can start selling your music on major download sites right away. They also provide you with customized codes to link your

MySpace and other websites directly to iTunes. Your fans will easily be able to find and purchase your music online.

Song Numbers (www.songnumbers.com)

With Song Numbers you get assigned a phone number that anyone can call and preview your music, At anytime during the song your fans can hit #1 and buy your music. All the costs are billed to cell phones buyers. Costs to the musicians start as low as US$9.95 a year for nine songs to sell and there are other menu style costs to expand the songs.

The Bizmo (www.thebizmo.com)

TheBizmo widget can help sell ring tones, screensavers, videos, merchandise-on-demand, concert tickets, E-books/pdfs of sheet music, lyrics, and more. A unique feature of TheBizmo widget is simultaneous dual downloads to both computer and mobile. TheBizmo is an Instant free opportunity to get your wares to market. No need to pay anyone anything. Just set up your store and start selling

The Orchard (www.theorchard.com)

With operations in 28 countries, The Orchard controls and globally distributes music and video programming through digital stores including, iTunes, eMusic, Google, Netflix and has partnerships with several mobile carriers including, Verizon, Vodafone, Bell Canada, and Moderati.

TuneCore (www.tunecore.com)

CEO and founder of TuneCore, Jeff Price considers the digital aggregator to be 'the ultimate artist enabler' allowing its clients to get digital distribution through its arrangements with leading digital music retailers, while providing marketing and promotional. In June 2009, they partnered with Universal Music Group (whose artists

include Black Eyed Peas, Akon and 3 Doors Down) to host distribution portals for UMG's labels as well as partner labels and artists. This arrangement has expanded the opportunities that TuneCore has been able to provide for its clients.

Website Music Player (www.websitemusicplayer.com)

Website Music Player is a system that allows you to sell your music online. You can sell from many different types of websites at once, which creates multiple channels of distribution. You get a flash MP3 player widget that loads your catalogue/playlist. And allows anyone with a credit card or Paypal account to buy your music right from the music player while they're listening. The money goes straight into your Paypal account. Getting songs into your player is very easy with no technical knowledge required. You remain in complete control and retain of all the rights associated with your music.

MERCHANDISE RESOURCES

Merchandising has often served as a lucrative revenue stream for artists, especially touring acts. Take a look at the sites below and see how their services can assist you in getting your merchandise ready for the road.

CafePress (www.cafepress.com)

Use CafePress to sell your own designs whether on t-shirts, apparel, gifts for the home, stationery, or any kind of gear.

CD Brickhouse (www.cdbrickhouse.com)

CDBrickHouse offers complete merchandise fulfillment services for artists and entertainers in the music, movie and television industries and, unlike other fulfillment organizations, CDBrickHouse also offers multiple online and mainstream marketing

opportunities to tap into the artists' core audience while also developing new ones. Artists and entertainers with any type of merchandise and fan base can benefit from their suite of services designed to give you, the artist, an efficient, profitable method of fulfillment.

Fat Rat Press (www.fatratpress.com)

Since 1998, Fat Rat Press has been providing promotional materials to bands, record labels and small businesses. Visit their website to see if their services suit your needs.

Music Skins (www.music-skins.com/store)

MusicSkins offers high quality vinyl skin products that music fans can buy from you with your band logo on it to go on their phones, iPod's, computers and more. This could compliment your shirts, hats and stickers sales and give your fans something new to buy as well as promote your band wherever they go. Instead of them just downloading a cell phone wallpaper and ring tone from you complete the circle by offering them this vinyl skin. You could bundle it with your other cell phone products to encourage fans to buy them. MusicNomad has seen and tested the product and it did not leave any residue and was easy to remove from the device.

Spreadshirt (www.spreadshirt.com)

Spreadshirt offers an online platform for private individuals and commercial organizations to design, buy and sell creative and personalized apparel.

Sticker Guy (www.stickerguy.com)

Since 1993, **STICKER GUY!** has been making stickers for independent bands, zines, record labels, and businesses.

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Sticker Junkie (www.stickerjunkie.com)

Get 100 custom stickers starting at US$25.00

We Need Merch (www.weneedmerch.com)

They offer high-quality custom t-shirt screen-printing for your high, medium, low or no budget project. Whether you're looking to print 50 shirts for a family reunion, or 10,000 shirts to place in retail outlets, WeNeedMerch.com can produce your apparel order. Large Oversized print custom band merchandise is their specialty.

Zazzle (www.zazzle.com)

Zazzle is an on-demand retail platform offering billions of retail quality, one-of-a-kind products shipped within 24 hours. Offering the largest library of customizable digital images from world-class brands, Zazzle enables content owners to unlock their entire libraries of content, making it available for purchase and customization by consumers. Through Zazzle's innovative on-demand retail and technology platform, users can instantly create, customize to fit their personal style, purchase and sell a near infinite array of products online.

TUNE IN TO MUSIC ON THE INTERNET

Dedicate some time to exploring Internet radio as well as other online channels that incorporate systems such as playlists and music recommendation technology. Several Internet radio portals and online channels accept music from independent artists and can feature well in the promotion of your music as well as you the artist.

Accu Radio (www.accuradio.com)

AccuRadio is a multi channel Internet radio station that currently reaches over 400,000 unique listeners per month. They give exposure and airplay to numerous genres of music and hundreds of artists that virtually never receive broadcast radio airplay. They display the title and artist and album name for the song being played and display the CD covers of the last three songs played, with each cover being linking to the appropriate Amazon page so that interested listeners can purchase that music. They are fully licensed by ASCAP, BMI, SESAC, and Sound Exchange/RIAA.

Audio Candy (www.audiocandy.com)

Audiocandy.com offers streaming of thousands of full-length audio and video content while allowing artists to meet and interact with fans, friends and other 'indie' recording artists from across the globe. The site is free and allows you to create your own artist page, photo gallery, and free radio broadcast, and other great features.

Finetune (www.finetune.com)

With Finetune all you have to do is type an artist's name, and a playlist of related songs for you to listen to is created. You can also explore the fine-tune community - browse artists, users and listen to professionally managed playlists.

iTunes (www.apple.com)

iTunes is a free application for Mac and PC. It plays all your digital music and video. It syncs content to your iPod, iPhone, and Apple TV. And it is a store where you can find more to entertain you, any time of the day.

Jango (www.jango.com)

Jango provides you with the music you want, along with similar favorites of Jango users who share your taste. Just type in the name of an artist and your first station starts playing right away. The site allows you to customize your stations by adding more artists and rating songs that you want to play more or less. Jango allows you to tune in to other people's stations (and vice versa) you'll see who's listening to the same music as you, who's listening to your stations, and what your friends are playing.

Lala (www.lala.com)

Take your music and fuse it with a massive licensed catalog to easily play, buy and share on the web. With Lala you can play over 7 million songs for free anywhere on the web. Instantly upload the tracks on your computer to your Lala collection, get a feed of music picks from friends and experts, purchase new music, easily and affordably.

LAUNCHcast Radio (http://new.music.yahoo.com/launchcast/)

LAUNCHcast is a Yahoo! Music project, which allows you to listen to over 250 radio stations from any browser on both PC and Mac. Independent artists can submit their music to LAUNCHcast.

Live365 (www.live365.com)

Live365 is an Internet radio network where members can create their own online radio station or listen to other Live365 broadcasters' online.

Musicane (www.musicane.com)

Musicane allows users to create mixes of music, and broadcast it to all their existing online communities using a specially developed flash widget. Share your taste with friends, publish your favorite music and products to your feed, create themed mixes that

your friends can buy, and add product to the Musicane catalog, while you earn a share of all sales you help make.

Pandora (www.pandora.com)

An online music outlet that allows you to just type the name of one of your favorite songs or artists into Pandora and it will quickly scan its entire world of analyzed music, to find songs with musical similarities to your choice.

Real Music (http://uk.real.com)

UK based Internet radio subscription service. Real.com offers around 200 free radio streams, including 16 top-level-genre stations programmed by our editors. Lower-bit-rate streams of UK national radio broadcasters such as BBC Radio, Ministry of Sound Radio, Classic FM, XFM and Solar Radio. World radiobroadcasts searchable by country, language or genre. Additionally, real.com offers a sampling of music videos and thousands of artist pages with biographies written by Real's editors, artist photos and related articles from Rolling Stone.

Rhapsody (www.rhapsody.com)

Rhapsody is a digital music service that lets you listen to music anywhere, discover new artists, and create and share playlists. Rhapsody membership plans range from US$12.99 to US$14.99 per month allowing you to listen to music without limitations.

SHOUTCast radio (www.shoutcast.com)

SHOUTcast Radio is a free-of-charge audio homesteading solution. It permits anyone on the Internet to broadcast audio from their PC to listeners across the Internet or any other IP-based network (Office LANs, college campuses, etc..).

Slacker (www.slacker.com)

This is a free personalized radio service featuring over 100 expert programmed genre stations.

PRESS

Get the word out about current projects or anything your band/artist has been up to using any of these channels.

Beatwire (www.beatwire.com)

Beat Wire is an affordable press release distribution service for independent musicians and record labels, promoters, booking agents, managers, club owners and publicists. Your news is delivered directly to the desktops of over 10 000 music editors at daily newspapers, magazines, news agencies, top Web sites, radio stations, and other outlets.

Breakthroughchart (www.breakthroughchart.com)

Breakthroughchart features the latest buzz on underground bands currently trying to break into the charts and the mainstream media. Many of the artists featured on the site are not signed to labels and do not have huge promotional budgets. They rely on making great music and the music fan to vote them to the top. If you find a band you think people would like, add them to the site.

MOG (www.mog.com)

MOG generates over 6,000 music blog posts per week, making it easy to dig deep and find up-to-date information on your favorite artist, album, or song by searching our archive of hundreds of thousands of blog posts. Subscribe to your favorite artist on

MOG and get instant updates. If you've got something to say, why not say it where 5.5 million music lovers per month will hear you.

Music Rebellion (www.musicrebellion.com)

This is an artist feature podcast page, devoted to showcasing artists and their music in their own words.

SELF-PUBLISHING

'Self-publishing' gives authors the power to create product and make it available via online distribution channels. Essentially making you are both author and publisher. Check out some of the more popular self-publishing sites below and see which one suits you.

Blurb (www.blurb.com)

Blurb is a publishing service that has options for persons interested in being an author – bloggers, chefs, photographers, parents, travelers, poets, pet owners, marketers, just about everyone is covered.

Createspace (www.createspace.com)

CreateSpace provides inventory-free, physical distribution of books, CD and DVDs on Demand, as well as video downloads through Amazon Video On Demand™. They manufacture physical products when customers order so no pre-built inventory is needed. With Createspace, you can make your books, music and video available to consumers by selling on Amazon.com and on your own website with a customized eStore.

iUniverse (www.iuniverse.com)

iUniverse provides 'supported self-publishing' for authors. They offer special

recognition programs for authors in an effort to "identify, celebrate and support" them.

Lulu (www.lulu.com)

Lulu enables authors to sell their work directly to their particular audience. They offer

authors access to a global marketplace, social networking and author services, free

customized storefronts and retail listings on Amazon, Barnes & Noble websites.

Magcloud (www.magcloud.com)

MagCloud enables you to publish your own magazines using PDF files. They handle

printing, mailing, subscription management, and more for clients.

SOCIAL NETWORKING

Social network services create online communities of people who have similar interests.

These communities have exploded in popularity in just a few years and encourage new

ways to communicate and share information. Artists can use social networks to connect

with fans, promote music and just have fun!

Acousticfriends.com (www.acousticfriends.com)

Provides a social network for acoustic musicians, fans, and others that have an interest

in acoustic roots music.

AMP – Music Connection (www.musicconnection.com/amp)

The AMP Network offers the familiar social-networking tools and features found on

MySpace, Facebook, Friendster, etc.. AMP invites no fans, is always free and allows for

safe and secure interactions with members who share your passion for music.

ArtistData (www.artistdata.com)

ArtistData has built solutions to automate the monotonous updating of artist websites, social network profiles, concert databases, Twitter, official news feeds, iCal, local press, fan newsletters, and even tour books. When an artist updates their ArtistData account, they update all their sites.

ArtistNation (www.artistnation.org)

An online community of performing artists that creates an open, free and public online community for performing artists.

Baeble Music (www.baeblemusic.com)

Baeble Music is an online destination for free live music that streams full-length concerts for free and offers free single song downloads from each concert on the Baeble Podcast on every concert page. Users can also purchase full concert DVDs and high quality downloads directly from the site, or through retail partners, Amazon and The Orchard.

Bebo (www.bebo.com)

Bebo is a popular social networking site, which connects you to everyone and everything you care about. It combines community, self-expression and entertainment, enabling you to consume, create, discover, curate and share digital content in entirely new ways.

Blip.fm (www.blip.fm)

A blip is a combination of 1) a song and 2) a short message that accompanies it. The way you create a blip is to first search for a song that you want to hear (or a song that you want your listeners to hear), then add a short message (under 150 characters),

finally you submit it. Submitting a blip is also referred to as "blipping", so from here on out, when you read "he blipped my favorite track" it means "he submitted a blip that had my favorite song attached".

Boomtribe (www.boomtribe.com)

BoomTribe is a youth lifestyle brand, providing a range of Caribbean entertainment products and services. Its members are young Caribbean people, not only within the region but around the world.

CaribTweet (www.caribtweet.com)

A Caribbean oriented micro-blogging site similar to Twitter.

Delicious (www.delicious.com)

Delicious is a social book marking service that allows users to tag, save, manage and share web pages from a centralized source.

Digg (www.digg.com)

Digg is a place for you to discover and share content from anywhere on the web. From the biggest online destinations to the most obscure blog, Digg surfaces the best stuff as voted on by our users.

Facebook (www.facebook.com)

A free-access social networking website that allows users to join networks organized by city, workplace, school, and region and connect and interact with other people.

Friendfeed (www.friendfeed.com)

FriendFeed is a service that makes it easy to share with friends online. It offers a fun and interactive way to discover and discuss information among friends.

Friendster (www.friendster.com)

Friendster is focused on helping people stay in touch with friends and discover new people and things that are important to them.

Getsigned.com (www.getsigned.com)

This is a site that allows undiscovered artists to share their music and any advice they might have while learning from veterans of the music business and growing independent music careers.

iLike (www.ilike.com)

iLike is a social music discovery service available as a music application on the Facebook®, Orkut, hi5 and Bebo platforms. With more than 45 million registered users, iLike helps people share music recommendations, playlists, and personalized concert alerts.

Imeem (www.imeem.com)

Imeem is a social network that enables users to discover, interact and express themselves with media, including music, video and photos, and form connections based on shared tastes and interests.

Indaba Music (http://www.indabamusic.com/)

Indaba Music is an international community of musicians, music professionals, and fans exploring the creative possibilities of making music with people in different places. It makes finding other people, and working on recording, mixing, or mastering projects easier. For fans, Indaba provides unprecedented access to artists and to the creative process.

Jamendo (www.jamendo.com)

Jamendo is a community of free, legal and unlimited music published under Creative Commons licenses. Share your music, download your favorite artists!

JamNow (LightSpeedAudio) (www.lightspeedaudiolabs.com)

Lightspeed Audio Labs is built on the idea of creative collaboration where music, the Internet and social networking converge to allow musicians and enthusiasts to create audio content online in real-time. Unlike sites that allow users to "post and listen" to audio content, JamNow's platform enables real-time music collaboration and creation, linking musically oriented communities of interest.

JamRoom (www.jamroom.com)

Jamroom specializes in building web communities centered around media producers such as musicians, photographers, and video enthusiasts. Jamroom can be setup as an "open" signup system, invitation only, subscription based or closed system for authorized users only.

Kompoz (www.kompoz.com)

Kompoz is a social workspace for musicians and songwriters. Got an idea for a song? Record a track. Upload it. Then invite others to add drums, bass, vocals or anything else!

Linkedin (www.linkedin.com)

LinkedIn is an interconnected network of experienced professionals from around the world, representing 170 industries and 200 countries. You can find, be introduced to, and collaborate with qualified professionals that you need to work with to accomplish your goals.

Linked Musicians (www.linked-musicians.com)

Linked Musicians is a multilingual music industry social networking website, targeted at musicians, bands & orchestras, professionals & amateurs, and products & services providers in live music, like booking agents, recording studio's, instruments & equipment suppliers, music schools, media, theatres, etc..

Midomi (www.midomi.com)

Midomi is a music search tool powered by your voice. Sing, hum, or whistle to instantly find your favorite music and connect with a community that shares your musical interests.

MTracks (www.mtracks.com)

mTraks is a social network and digital music store for independent bands. All the tracks available on the site include 800,000 top independent songs from over 3,500 record labels.

MusoCity (www.musocity.com)

Muso City is a music oriented, online community for music fans, bands and artists, musicians, music venues and music retailers. Their aim is to help connect users, not only allowing bands, artists, venues and retailers to promote themselves, but also helping people form bands and make friends.

Muziboo (www.muziboo.com)

Muziboo is an audio sharing platform that helps you reach a significant percentage of the online audience by enabling embeds of your uploads in blogs, websites and most social networking sites. Muziboo features include enabling you to automatically tweet your upload, allowing public and private sharing of your uploads, giving the option to

enable download of original file, enabling interaction within the community through groups, discussions and comments and weekly stats on the number of play-counts and downloads and many more metrics.

MySpace (www.MySpace.com)

MySpace is a social networking website with an interactive, user-submitted network of friends, personal profiles, blogs, groups, photos, music. MySpace has a large community of artists and bands and has evolved to allow artists to sell their music, and merchandise from their profile pages. Be sure to check out MySpace Music.

Ning (www.ning.com)

With Ning, you have the freedom to create and customize your own social network experience online at no cost.

Ourstage (www.ourstage.com)

This is an online community where music lovers, industry professionals, and emerging artists discover and share new music. Ourstage utilizing a system of "Judging" where fans listen to songs and indicate which ones they like the most. Popularly ranked music/artists benefit from numerous opportunities offered through Ourstage partners.

Plaxo (www.plaxo.com)

Plaxo is a dashboard for seeing what the people you know are creating and sharing all over the open web. You can hook your account up to all the places where you create or share stuff, such as your blog, Flickr, Twitter, and more than 30 other sites. With Plaxo, you have fine-grained control over what you share with whom. They are dedicated to the notion that your address book, your friends list, and your content belong to you, not to them.

Ping.Fm (www.ping.fm)

Ping.fm is a simple and free service that makes updating your social networks easy.

Project Opus (www.projectopus.com)

Project Opus™ is a free online music community designed to support artists, and fans. It is a single point of contact for discovery of new music.

They make it easy for bands to self-publish music, find their audience and then get paid for the sale and licensing of their music, while making it easy for fans to find music they love and support the artists that make it.

Project Playlist (www.playlist.com)

Playlist.com is an information location tool similar to Google® and Yahoo!® but devoted entirely to the world of music. Their purpose is to help you find and enjoy music legally throughout the web in the same way that other search engines help you find web pages, images, and other media, but with a social networking twist.

Rock You (www.rockyou.com)

RockYou is a creator and distributor of widgets and applications on the social web. They offer customized branding and advertising opportunities on Facebook and can deploy applications across any social network, including hi5, MySpace, Bebo and Friendster.

Spotify (www.spotify.com)

Spotify is a new way to enjoy music. There are no restrictions in terms of what you can listen to or when. Spotify allows you to share songs and playlists with friends, and even work together on collaborative playlists. Unfortunately, due to licensing restrictions they are not yet available in all countries.

Tumblr (www.tumblr.com)

Tumblr lets you effortlessly share anything. Post text, photos, quotes, links, music, and videos, from your browser, phone, desktop, email, or wherever you happen to be.

Twitter (www.twitter.com)

Twitter is a free social messaging (microblogging) utility for staying connected in real-time. Users are limited to expressing themselves with 140 characters or less. Numerous Twitter applications have been developed in keeping with the growing popularity of Twitter. A few are listed here.

Twitter Tools

- o **Bubbletweet (www.bubbletweet.com)**

  A BubbleTweet is a short video (up to 30 seconds) that plays in a floating Bubble video player over your Twitter page and when it is over, it pops and goes away. Designed to be both simple and fun to use, it let's you to step out from behind your text-only Twitter page and say 'hello' to your followers in very personal and engaging way. You might want to use them to inform your followers about things that might otherwise be very difficult to do with text-only updates.

- o **Group Tweet (www.grouptweet.com)**

  Group message broadcasting for Twitter that allows individuals in groups/teams to send messages via Twitter that are instantly broadcasted privately to only the team members.

- o **HootSuite (http://old.hootsuite.com/)**

  HootSuite allows you can manage multiple Twitter profiles, add multiple

editors, pre-schedule tweets, and measure your success. Creating an account is easy. Enter your Twitter username and password, and add a profile for each Twitter account you wish to manage. Got more than one tweeter per profile? Add multiple editors

o **Monitter (www.monitter.com)**

With this tool, you can monitter the twitter world and see what people are saying by using a set of keywords.

o **Mr. Tweet (www.mrtweet.com)**

A personal networking assistant for Twitter, helping you identify relevant followers, recommending you to other users and regularly computing your Twitter usage statistics.

o **Musebin (http://musebin.ws/)**

Musebin lets you share your favorite albums and artists over Twitter using exquisitely tiny URLs made possible by using a domain with a non-standard character: http://♫.ws/. The shared URLs link to a simple page about the artist or album that includes information about the year of release, record label, cover art, links to additional info, and a stream of tweets about the artist.

o **SongTwit (www.songtwit.com)**

SongTwit is a free service that lets artists and fans share music on Twitter and see what friends are listening to. With Songtwit you can search Imeem and YouTube for songs, point to MP3 links, or upload an MP3, M4A, WAV, WMA, OGG or ACC file. You then log into Twitter,

add a message in the remaining ~115 characters, and send your tweet. Your message should probably include the song's title, since SongTwit doesn't automatically include it.

- **Twitbizcards (http://twtbizcard.com/)**

  To send a Twitter Business Card, simply add #twtbizcard to a @reply!

- **Twittonary (www.twittonary.com)**

  The Twitter Dictionary, aka Twittonary, provides explanations of various Twitter-related words.

- **Twitter Alerts (www.tweetbeep.com)**

  Keep track of conversations that mention you or anything else, via hourly email updates

- **Twittermail (www.twittermail.com)**

  Users can post to their Twitter account by sending a message to their own unique email address.

- **Twitzu (www.twitzu.com)**

  Use Twitzu to promote your business, special offers, promotions and events.

- **Twuffer (www.twuffer.com)**

  Twuffer allows Twitter users to compose a list of future tweets and schedule their release.

- **Tweetlater (www.tweetlater.com)**
- This app allows you to post Tweets at a later time and date. A free trial is
- available but at the end of this period, account holders must upgrade to a

Tweetlater Professional for US$29.97 per month.

- o **Straw poll (www.strawpollnow.com)**

  StrawPoll is a cool way to follow the opinions of people on Twitter. Use this application to create your own poll.

- o **Twtcard (www.twtcard.com)**

  Send a greeting card, a surprise message or an invitation on Twitter.

- o **Twittertise (www.twittertise.com)**

  Twittertise allows you to advertise on Twitter and track the success of your branded communications.

- o **Twitwall (www.twitwall.com)**

  With TwitWall, you can embed your favorite videos and widgets and upload your photos, MP3s, podcasts, you name it to your Twitter profile.

- o **Twitterless (www.twitterless.com)**

  Twitterless tells you who stops following you and graphs your follower history over time, displaying the info in a variety of useful views.

- o **Twitter Grader (www.twittergrader.com)**

  Twitter Grader measures the power, reach and authority of a twitter account. In other words, when you tweet, what kind of an impact does it have?

- o **TwInfluence (www.twinfluence.com)**

  TwInfluence is a simple tool for measuring the combined influence of Twitterers and their followers, with a few social network statistics thrown in as bonus.

- **Tweetdeck (www.tweetdeck.com)**

  TweetDeck is your personal browser for staying in touch with what's happening now, connecting you with your contacts across Twitter, Facebook and more. TweetDeck shows you everything you want to see at once, so you can stay organized and up to date.

- **Tweet Volume (www.tweetvolume.com)**

  Enter a few words or phrases and see how many times they appear on twitter.

- **Twitpic (www.twitpic.com)**

  TwitPic lets you share photos on Twitter. You can post pictures to TwitPic from your phone, the TwitPic home page or your Twitter account.

- **Twitstamp (www.twitstamp.com)**

  TwitStamp allows you to use your current Twitter status anywhere - in the form of an image. This means you can post your status on blogs, forums, websites... wherever you want!

- **Twiturm (http://twiturm.com)**

  Twiturm (the "urm" stands for "ur music") is really aimed at artists looking to share music with their fans. The site lets users upload MP3 files, or point to existing MP3 links on the web, then share them directly on Twitter via a shortened URL that links to a Twiturm player page. The player page allows visitors to play, download, or retweet the tracks, and keeps stats on how many plays and downloads each song gets.

- **Twitdom (http://twitdom.com/)**

  Twitdom is a database of over 1000 Twitter applications.

- **Twt.fm (http://twt.fm/)**

  Twt.fm connects to your Twitter account then recreates your Twitter
  page, including your background and avatar, to store your playlist of
  music tweets, each including a Flash-player. The site allows you to
  search for tracks, or add direct links to MP3s, YouTube music videos,
  SoundCloud, or Imeem. You can then tweet those songs directly from
  the site using a Twt.fm short URL.

- **Twhirl (www.twhirl.org)**

  Twhirl is a social software desktop client that connects to multiple
  Twitter, Friendfeed and Seesmic accounts, displays notifications for new
  messages, shorten long URLs, cross-post your updates to sites like
  Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, post images to TwitPic, automatically
  find tweets mentioning your @username. Twhirl is based on the Adobe
  AIR platform and runs on both Windows (2000/XP/Vista) and Mac OSX
  system

- **Tweet Scan (www.tweetscan.com)**

  Get email when your keywords are mentioned on Twitter.

- **Tweet Visor (www.tweetvisor.com)**

  Tweetvisor performs updates to your Twitter account based on your
  confirmed actions on their website. Your Twitter user credentials are not
  stored on their servers so you will need to authenticate to your Twitter

account every session you need to perform actions that updates your account.

- o **Twibs (www.twibs.com)**

  Twibs was created by a small group of people with one purpose: to give twitter users a place to find businesses on twitter.

- o **Tweepler (www.tweepler.com)**

  Tweepler is an easy way of processing your new Twitter followers. View a list of new followers and classify them in one of two "Buckets" Follow (meaning you wish to follow them back) and Ignore (meaning you don't wish to follow them and want to archive them out of the way, reducing clutter).

- o **Twtpoll (www.twtpoll.com)**

  Twtpoll is a feedback tool that helps you to create and distribute polls on Twitter, Facebook and other social media sites.

- o **Twitturly (www.twitturly.com)**

  Twitturly is a service for tracking what URLs people are talking about, as they talk about them, on Twitter. Twitturly tracks the URLs flying around the Twitterverse and provides a quick, real-time view of what people are talking about on Twitter. Each time someone tweets a URL to their followers on Twitter, Twitturly takes note of it and applies it as a vote for that URL. The more votes a URL has in the last 24 hours, the higher it ranks on Twitturly's Top100.

- o **Twitterfeed (www.twitterfeed.com)**

  Post your RSS feeds to Twitter automatically.

- o **Wefollow (www.wefollow.com)**

  This is a user powered Twitter directory. Add yourself (using your twitter account information) to Wefollow and find people who share similar interests (this is something you cannot do on the twitter site.)

Reverbnation (www.reverbnation.com)

ReverbNation.com is a Music 2.0 company that is responding to the changing music business paradigm. It serves the needs of artists, fans, venues/clubs, labels and managers.

Oomix (www.oomix.com)

Join free as a musician, a band or a record label and begin to meet people like you, securely upload your tracks and begin mixing them with others in the free studio, master your song and choose the ownership percentages of all tracks and production. When all musicians agree to the song and their ownership publish it to the shop and make money from sales.

PureVolume (www.purevolume.com)

PureVolume is a website for the discovery and promotion of new music and emerging artists. Each artist has a profile that typically contains basic info, updates, photos, shows and music for streaming. Artists have the option of making each of their songs available for free download. Listeners and fans can also create profiles to interact with artists and each other, as well as track and share music they like.

Stickam (www.stickam.com)

Stickam.com is a free live video service and social network that allows you to stream live video over the Internet.

TICKETS AND EVENTS

Nowadays, online promotion is a great way to compliment traditional promotion strategies for events. Take a look at some of the more popular websites that offer online promotion services.

Eventsbot (www.eventsbot.com)

Eventsbot provides functionalities to support online promotion of your event. Not only to make it SEO friendly but to make it more accessible to public. They provide E Tickets, online promotion opportunities for your event, reporting system, a unique URL Address for your event which can be linked to your website, attendee reports and ticket balance status. If your event is a paid one Eventsbot offers instant payment via PayPal and Google Checkout, multiple currency options, sales reports, and customized tickets. Eventsbot.com Basic Service is absolutely free but premium services are also available for nominal charges that may be added to the ticket value.

Eventbrite (www.eventbrite.com)

Eventbrite is the leading provider of online event management and ticketing services. Eventbrite is free if your event is free. If you sell tickets to your event, Eventbrite collects a small fee per ticket. Their service includes many features and tools intended to let you perform three basic tasks really well, publish, promote and sell.

Eventful (www.eventful.com)

Eventful enables its community of users to discover, promote, share and create events. People use Eventful to track and share events with their friends and community in many ways including to import iTunes and Last.fm performer lists and keep track of which artistes are coming to town, keep track of what's happening at favorite venues and customized weekly email event guides.

Eventful's unique Demand service empowers users to influence where their favorite performers, candidates and other celebrities appear by creating viral grass-roots campaigns to 'Demand' them in their town. Tens of thousands of musicians, comedians and political candidates use Eventful Demand to engage with millions of their fans and supporters to find out where they are in Demand. Performers are able to use Eventful Demand to make informed decisions about where to appear and can communicate with their Demanders via highly targeted email tools.

Iggli (www.iggli.com)

Iggli's invite service provides a new way to invite your friends to ticketed events.

InTicketing (www.inticketing.com)

Since 1999, In Ticketing has been providing ticketing and e-commerce solutions for bands, venues and festivals. In Ticketing is an official green business adopting such practices as using soy ink with hemp/flax ticket stock, tree-free envelopes, bio diesel and hybrid event vehicles, and the first ticketing agency to develop tree planting initiatives - resulting in the planting of hundreds of thousands of trees since its inception. In Ticketing gives it is band clients the ease of using online ticketing, box office software, on demand ticket printing, access control and e-commerce solutions. It

is free to sign up to sell your tickets. Their convenience charge varies depending on the price of the ticket. They charge about US$3.75 for a US$20 ticket.

IslandStubs (www.islandstubs.com)

Island Stubs Holdings Limited is a comprehensive ticketing company providing a full suite of ticketing services for Caribbean events. Tickets to the biggest events in the Caribbean are available now at IslandStubs.com: Jamaica Jazz & Blues, Sting, Reggae Sumfest, Reggae Boyz, Turks & Caicos Music & Cultural Festival & more. With Island Stubs you can buy and sell tickets for parties, concerts, sports, arts, theatre & family events across the Caribbean.

LiveKick (www.livekick.com)

Livekick is a live concert search engine and recommendations web site that lets you know where and when all your favorite artists are playing. Automatically. Just tell Livekick where you live and who your favorite artists are and Livekick will recommend upcoming local concerts by favorite and similar artists. It is a free service that helps you find the cheapest tickets for upcoming local concerts from up to 10 included tickets web sites.

SongKick (www.songkick.com)

This is a live music database that acts as a single place where you could see an artist's entire tour history and see all the gigs a legendary venue has hosted. It is also a place for you to share your personal gigography (all the gigs you've ever done) and add upcoming tour dates and venues across the US, UK, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.

Stubhub (www.stubhub.com)

StubHub is an eBay owned company that enables fans to buy and sell tickets to tens of thousands of sports, concert, theater and other live entertainment events.

TicketLeap (www.ticketleap.com)

Ticket Leap allows you to set up a free account to sell tickets directly to your fans from your website for venues you can control the tickets. They charge a $1 handling fee for tickets under US$10 and US$2 plus three percent for tickets above US$10.

Ticketmaster (www.ticketmaster.com)

Ticketmaster Entertainment consists of Ticketmaster and Front Line Management Group. As the world's leading live entertainment ticketing and marketing company, Ticketmaster operates in 20 global markets, providing ticket sales, ticket resale services, marketing and distribution through www.ticketmaster.com, one of the largest e-commerce sites on the Internet with approximately 7,100 retail outlets; and 17 worldwide call centers.

Upcoming (www.upcoming.org)

Upcoming is a community for discovering and sharing events. Artists or promoters can add events using their Upcoming login information or Yahoo! ID and password. Upcoming is a Yahoo! Service, therefore events listed on Upcoming will appear on Yahoo! Search engine results.

Xumanii (www.xumanii.com)

Xumanii launched in Feb 2009 with a way to broadcast your live show in real time thru the Internet and either makes it a public viewing for anyone to see or a private (charge for the event). You can use the service for free if you have your own video camera with

a fire wire to your computer. If you want to go with a wireless set up and/or multiple cameras you can buy a Xumanii backpack (around $200), which consists of the hardware to make this happen. The site goes into detail on how it works and what you need.

WEBSITES *'YOUR VIRTUAL LIVING ROOM'*

The increasing shift across the music industry towards digital (what Gerd Leonard refers to as Music 2.0) has no doubt placed more power into the hands of the artist, who is now able to utilize various channels including social networks and personal websites to connect with fans. Although having a presence on social networks such as MySpace, Imeem, Beebo, and Facebook is excellent for an artist, I would recommend that artists also focus on maintaining their own .com as well so that they create a sort of hub for touring information, artist updates, merchandise, free downloads, etc.. Essentially creating your own virtual living room for the sole purpose of connecting with your fans. Here are some resources to take advantage of when building your virtual living room.

Bandzoogle (www.bandzoogle.com)

Bandzoogle lets bands build great websites in minutes. All the stuff you need (like an online store, mailing list, forum) are built right in. No web design skills needed, Sell music and band merchandise with no fees. The store lets you sell from your band website without a middleman. Bandzoogle bands have sold US$1,332,324 and counting! Grow your fan base connect with fans using powerful website features like a mailing list, forum and blog.

Bubblecomment (www.bubblecomment.com)

A free service that enables you to share video comments with others on virtually any web page.

Bubbleguru (www.bubbleguru.com)

A subscription based video service that enables you to directly engage your web site visitors and improve web-based communications.

Bubbletestimonial (www.bubbletestimonial.com)

A subscription based testimonial service that eliminates all the time-consuming aspects of gathering, organizing, and posting of customer testimonials.

Domain Registration of America (www.droa.com)

Domain Registry of America is a Registration Service Provider that, registers, transfers, and renews domain names (web addresses), in conjunction with accredited registrars.

Fanbridge (www.fanbridge.com)

This is a service built especially for musicians that offers both email and mobile fan-list management in one place for free. Fanbridge allows account holders to access advanced features such as the ability to create custom signup forms (for your website, MySpace, Pure Volume etc..), and schedule campaigns to be sent on future dates, geo-targeting (by zip, etc..).

FlowPlayer (www.flowplayer.com)

Flowplayer is an Open Source video player for the Web that allows you to use to embed video streams into your web pages.

Free Servers.com (www.freeservers.com)

Freeservers offers free webspace, website hosting and professional web hosting services. Freeservers' shared hosting services provide quality service to literally millions of private and business websites of all types and sizes. Once you've chosen the web hosting package that's right for you, visit the Web Hosting 101 guide to learn the tips and tricks of creating your own website.

GoDaddy (www.godaddy.com)

A popular domain name registrar that offers a complete product line, including comprehensive hosting solutions, Web site creation tools, Secure SSL certificates, personalized email with spam and anti-phishing filtering, e-commerce tools and more

Google Adsense (www.adsense.com)

This is a free program that enables website publishers to display relevant Google ads on their sites and earn money while doing it.

Google Analytics (www.googleanaltyics.com)

Google Analytics is a free service that allows website publishers to learn more about where their visitors come from and how they interact with their site. This is a must have!

Host Baby (www.listbaby.com)

Internet hosting service for musicians. Use Host Baby to instantly create your own website.

Network Solutions (www.networksolutions.com)

Another popular domain name registrar that offers comprehensive services including hosting packages, and website creation tools.

Ow.ly (http://ow.ly/url/shorten-url)

Shorten your URL address

Square Space (www.squarespace.com)

This is a fully hosted, completely managed environment for creating and maintaining a website, blog or portfolio. Sign up for US$8 a month or try it out using their 14 free trial offer.

Tripod (www.tripod.com)

Use Tripod to design your website on a budget. If you're just starting out and don't mind ads on your page, use their free service plan which offers a basic introduction to site building. If you want to build your site on your terms, without banner ads or other restrictions, try Tripod Plus.

Tiny URL (www.tinyurl.com)

Shorten your URL address

Weebly (www.weebly.com)

Weebly is a free service that allows you to create a website and blog using a drag and drop interface. No technical skills required.

Webs (www.webs.com)

This is an ad supported platform that allows you to create your own website. You can personalize your domain name if you'd like by purchasing premium services.

Widgetbox (www.widgetbox.com)

Widgetbox is the leading self-service web widget platform. They help millions of people express, connect, create, and inform using web widgets - mini, portable-

applications that can be added to any web page to add dynamic content to the site while reaching new users across the web.

Yola (www.yola.com)

This site allows account holders to create personal webpages for businesses or individual purposes. Yola does not impose banner ads or throwing up pop-up ad windows everywhere.

OTHER RESOURCES

I wasn't able to organize these sites into a specific category but being familiar with them is important.

Abbey Road Online Mastering (www.abbeyroadonlinemastering.com)

Abbey Road Online Mastering offers an innovative method of getting music mastered utilizing Abbey Road's mastering facilities via the Internet. Clients upload their tracks onto our secure server and select products and services as required. These tracks are then mastered by one of their experienced engineers then returned to the client either as a download via the same website or by post for physical items. Additional copies can be produced on CD or Vinyl format.

All Access (www.allaccess.com)

The All Access free music and radio news website was developed originally in 1995 for the purpose of keeping the radio and music news industry informed. The website is free to the general public and allows account holders access to new music, artist information, radio programming tips, show prep, and station playlists for all the major

radio entities across North America and Canada including Mainstream and Rock Top 40, Alternative, Urban/UAC, Gospel, Alternative, etc..

Artist e card (www.artistecard.com)

ArtistEcard.com is a full-featured Electronic Press Kit (EPK). Their goal is to help artists present and promote themselves and their creations through a professional image. With the help of ArtistEcard, you can save time and money, and control your own content with powerful admin tools. The EPKs are very simple and easy to use and customize. A 15 days free trial available. Accounts start from US$5.95 a month.

ArtisthouseMusic (www.artistshousemusic.org)

This site provides informational support, guidance, and expert resources to help persons in the music industry navigate challenges and maximize the opportunities available to them.

BandMetrics (www.bandmetrics.com)

Band Metrics is for musicians, bands, labels, managers, booking agencies, venues, A&R Representatives, promoters, music supervisors, publicists, marketing agencies, analysts and anyone interested in measuring artists and music. Use BandMetrics to identify fans, measure social engagement, find hot markets, track radio plays, discover trends, gauge attitudes, and receive in-depth reports. Currently in beta testing.

BetterThanTheVan (www.betterthanthevan.com)

Better Than The Van is a unique way for bands and music fans to connect with each other for a practical reason while making touring a little easier. You can find a place to crash, look for bands to swap shows with or discover new music. Bands, fans, music lovers; all are welcome.

Big Cartel (www.bigcartel.com)

Big Cartel provides you with your own independent store to sell your stuff online.

Thousands of clothing designers, bands, record labels, jewelry makers, crafters, and

other artists use Big Cartel.

Canadian Recording Services (www.canadianrecordingservices.com)

Company offering free studio referral and project coordination services. Their mission

is to connect artists with producers, engineers, recording studios, postproduction studios

with ISDN and rehearsal locations across Canada, covering all budgets and all genres of

music.

Celebrity Access (www.celebrityaccess.com)

CelebrityAccess is a database containing profiles on over 35,000 performers, including

extensive contact information on musicians, comedians, lecturers, agents, managers,

record companies, talent buyers and venues. Information such as artist touring

schedules, box office scores, performance fee ranges, responsible agents and managers -

direct phone numbers and e-mail addresses, bios, and web site links, industry news, and

more - are all-available through CelebrityAccess. The database is accessed

electronically over the Internet and is sold as an annual subscription service to talent

buyers, agencies, management companies, concert support services, record labels,

media companies, performance venues, and other industry professionals.

Independent Distribution Collective (www.independentdistro.com)

Independent Distribution Collective is a type of music distribution association that also

offers licensing, promotions and marketing services. Independent Distribution

Collective began with a group of nine record labels with average sales between 1,000

and 50,000 units per title, who joined together to create a larger market impact, and to compete with other larger independents and the major labels. Through the use of grassroots marketing, and a pool of assets from each label, and by the end of 2007 will distribute over 200 artists and labels.

Songsalive (www.songsalive.com)

Songsalive! is the largest international non-profit membership organization dedicated to the nurturing, support, promotion and education of songwriters and composers worldwide. Founded in 1997, by songwriters Gilli Moon and Roxanne Kiely in Sydney, Australia, Songsalive! is run by volunteer songwriters for songwriters and has reached the far corners of the globe with over 25 chapters worldwide. They provide a "home" for songwriters and composers through programs, resources, and community support, all focused on the art and business of songwriting.

The Music Registry RecordXpress (www.recordxpress.net)

RecordXpress is a web-based application that "serves" you with updated, live contact information from everyone in the music, film and TV industries. Every company and contact is listed with email addresses, phone and fax numbers, address, website, assistant contact information, style, distributor, credits and more. The product is fueled by the industry leader in contact list management, The Music Registry, a company that supplies the record industry with the most comprehensive and accurate list of A&R reps, music industry executives, film and television personnel, and more. All records are updated live so if a person purchases the A&R Directory in on August 8th, and changes on the 9th or 10th are automatically downloaded to that user's directory. The following is a list of monthly fees for each optional directory:

A&R Directory: US$29.95/month Film & TV Guide: US$39.95/month Publishers

Directory: US$29.95/month Legal/Attorney: US$35.95/month.

MSS Vision (www.mssvision.com)

MSS exposes the artist and their music through the music video viewing experience.

While watching your video, he/she will see your photos too, know your name, have

links to your site, links to buy your CD, learn the band's history, know about your gigs

and everything you have to say to him/her. All of this without having to browse

between pages and pages and pages of information. Everything comes alive from the

player window. They also notify every registered user when your video is on, notify the

labels you've submitted your demo to, and that your video is played and when.

Pollstar (www.pollstar.com)

Pollstar is the only trade publication covering the worldwide concert industry. They

have been supplying in-depth information to every professional concert promoter,

booking agent, artist manager, facility executive and every other entity involved in the

live entertainment business for more than 25 years. They produce a weekly print

magazine for professionals and publish that information daily to the web via a paid

subscription site at PollstarPro.com. The free Pollstar.com website is for live music fans

and contains the same high quality information that industry professionals use daily to

route their tours. Pollstar tracks major touring acts around the world. Artist

representatives are always welcome to submit itineraries to their data processing

department - tour_dates@pollstar.com.

Powerpresskits (http://www.powerpresskits.com/)

Power Press Kits offers electronic press kits for everyone from garage bands to

international touring performers, renowned composers, major-market on-air personalities, Billboard chart toppers, dancers, models, American Idols, actors, guitar legends, Grammy-winning artists and engineers to Rock and Roll Hall of Famers, and top management and promotional agencies across six continents! There are no setup costs, per-use fees, or upgrade fees. No HTML knowledge is required with Power Press Kits and you can set up your press kit in minutes. They offer more than 100 graphic-rich themes, unlimited free sending, unlimited streaming video, uncompressed streaming audio, and more. For the cost to produce and mail one physical press kit.

Music Connection (www.musicconnection.com)

Music Connection gives you the inside edge on all the latest opportunities for musicians. Whether it is a songwriting contest that has just announced its submission guidelines, a TV show that's suddenly looking for fresh music, a new band battle, an upcoming compilation CD that needs new songs, or even an important career seminar to attend, you can find that late-breaking info at Music Connection.

MusicToday (www.musictoday.com)

Musictoday® provides behind the scenes services to hundreds of clients including artists, labels, venues, promoters, athletic events, colleges and entertainment companies. Services include online stores, digital downloads, web ticketing, fan clubs, CD replication, list management, web design & hosting, and wholesale fulfillment. Musictoday.com is also a music lover's community with access to live event information, merchandise, tickets, fan clubs and general music-related content.

Paypal (www.paypal.com)

The service allows members to send money without sharing financial information, with the flexibility to pay using their account balances, bank accounts, credit cards or promotional financing.

Nielsen SoundScan (www.soundscan.com)

Nielsen SoundScan is an information system that tracks sales of music and music video products throughout the United States and Canada. Sales data from point-of-sale cash registers is collected weekly from over 14,000 retail, mass merchant and non-traditional (on-line stores, venues, etc..) outlets. Weekly data is compiled and made available every Wednesday. Nielsen SoundScan is the sales source for the Billboard music charts.

SongU (www.songu.com)

SongU.com provides a unique opportunity to study songwriting with award-winning songwriters, make industry connections, and pitch your songs all from the comfort of your own home computer. You can choose from one of two recurring billing options: US$25.95/month or US$75/quarter. There is no obligation and you can cancel at anytime. Save the expense and hassle of traveling to a major music center and start working on your songwriting right from your PC.

Sound Exchange (www.soundexchange.com)

Sound Exchange is an independent, nonprofit performance rights organization that is designated by the U.S. Copyright Office to collect and distribute digital performance royalties for featured recording artists and sound recording copyright owners (usually a record label) when their sound recordings are performed on digital cable and satellite television music, internet and satellite radio.   Sound Exchange currently represents over

3,500 record labels and over 31,000 featured artists and whose members include both signed and unsigned recording artists; small, medium and large independent record companies; and major label groups and artist-owned labels.

Topspin (www.topspinmedia.com)

Topspin is a media technology company dedicated to developing leading-edge marketing software and services that help artists and their partners build businesses and brands. They help artists manage their catalogs, connect with fans, and generate demand for music.

Uplaya (http://uplaya.com)

Uplaya provides market analysis intelligence and success rate predictions to record labels and music publishers, assisting in key decisions such as release order, promotional budgets, and market timing. They help labels address all of these issues by helping them look at their music and their market in new ways, helping them raise the bar for the standard of quality that makes in onto a given album, helping them to see that when promoting certain music is not likely to give them a return on their investment.

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