

The Strategic Integration of Music Branding and its Evolution in the past 10 years

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ABSTRACT

When it comes to brands, music reveals as a complicated area where long-maintained myths hold fast: like music is only relevant to a youth audience; music is 'too subjective' to be quantifiable or converted into metrics; music is only relevant to TV advertising. In my opinion music business has to differentiate and innovate in order to stay alive financially which could be fostered by the phenomenon of 'music branding'. But why is strategic integration of music so essential for brands? Music provides not just a personal relationship, but a long-term loyal behaviour as well by offering emotions, experiences, exclusivity and engagement. Music is able to differentiate the brand itself from the competitors through developing a Lovemark (Roberts, 2004) and providing real value for all shareholders. The research is based on qualitative research methods by conducting interviews with experts in the field of music industry and music branding, focus group interviews with customers besides secondary research and case studies. The main goal of this paper is to reveal the growing importance of music branding from a marketing strategy point of view and to build a practical model depicting its value creating mechanism.

Keywords: music branding, music, branding, brand equity, Lovemark, value creation, strategy

1. Introduction

Music plays a crucial role in our life intuitively – after our first heartbeat we are already attached to its enormous power. In the 20th century a whole industry was developed based on the distribution of the essential media, the music, where publishers, artists and management built a media kingdom to sell their cultural artefacts.

But all of this is changing. Thanks to a variety of factors but most prominently the Internet, we are witnessing a radical shift in consumption of music, consequently in the business of music industry as well. So, the question arises how best to navigate this digital and musical space and how it is possible to get up from the ‘digital coma’?

Indeed, the creative industry, especially music and film industry endured from digital coma the most intensively. There is no general and transparent business model in practice, which could satisfy in the matter of financial resources both industrial figures, artists and customers. Here comes the illegal downloading into the picture, which has developed its monarchy due to the late response of digital revolution in the music industry.

In present, music is everywhere around us: we can simply carry it on different devices, so we do not have to feel what it means to be ‘musicless’. Music is universal. It can be experienced in thousands of different ways, through numerous means, anywhere on the planet. It can generate hundreds of emotions, raising listeners to a euphoric status or pushing them into abandonment. In the words of sociologist Dr. Simon Frith, “Music is what makes us human.” (Frith, 2007)

When it comes to brands, music reveals as a complicated area where long-maintained myths hold fast: like music is only relevant to a youth audience; music is ‘too subjective’ to be quantifiable or converted into metrics; music is only relevant to TV advertising in the form of background music. However, in Kotler’s (2010) Marketing 3.0 model a new dimension comes into the literature of marketing: the spiritual one, where music has a crucial role in forms of talent management and cultural mission.

In my opinion music business has to differentiate and innovate in order to stay alive financially which could be fostered by the phenomenon of ‘music branding’. Music branding is a freshly established branding strategy, which is applied in global and local plans as well according to several effective case studies in the multinational environment. In the age of changing consumer behaviour, music branding enables the emotional engagement of

customers by awaking associations, generating emotions and increasing the sympathy towards different brands. In this paper I strongly distinguish between the broad and narrow definition of music branding: the integration of music is in my understanding determined by the wide approach, involving the strategic long-term dimension. However, as an innovative branding strategy tool, music branding can offer a lucrative solution by creating genuine engagement between customers and brands.

But why is strategic integration of music so essential for brands? Music provides not just a personal relationship, but a long-term loyal behaviour as well by offering emotions, experiences, exclusivity and engagement. Active community and fan building is encouraged through music branding; furthermore, creativity enhances the invention of new relevant contents, applications. Music is able to differentiate the brand itself from competitors through developing a Lovemark (Roberts, 2004) and providing real value for all shareholders.

Since this area is highly untouched by academic studies the methodology of research is based on qualitative research methods by conducting interviews with practitioners in the field of music industry and music branding, focus group interviews with customers besides secondary research and case studies. The main goal of this paper is to reveal the growing importance of music branding from a marketing strategy point of view and to build a practical model depicting the strategic integration of music and its value creating mechanism.

2. Literature Background

Branding has its historical development through the last decades, which have different perspectives and it heads us to the definition of Lovemark (Roberts, 2004). However, through branding several values are enabled which are the basis of value creation of music branding as well. But what is music branding and how can it create value? In the following I will depict the concepts of branding, brand equity building and music branding in order to place the topic in a theoretical approach.

2.1. Branding – from product to Lovemark

The definition of brand and product is mixed in our common language, so it is necessary to draw a line between them from an academic point of view. According to Kotler (1998, p. 40) „people satisfy their needs through products. So a product can be anything which is suitable for satisfaction of the given need.” According to Bauer, Berács (1998, p. 186) product is the sum of physical, aesthetical and symbolic characteristics with the objective to satisfy

customers' needs. This theory suggests the definition of brand which is formulated by Keller as the following: eventually brand is a product that has differentiating characteristics, dimensions from other products satisfying the same customers' needs. (Keller, 1998. p. 4)

Kapferer (1997, p. 30) states that a brand has several functions for its customers. A brand helps to identify, recognize, besides differentiate the product in customers' mind-set, moreover in routine purchases user spares time and energy by the shorter decision making process. A brand is a guarantee itself for quality, meanwhile it confirms the self-concept reflecting the wish image of a reference group. Brands are able to create engagement on a long-term basis, so it satisfies its customers by avoiding the phenomenon of cognitive dissonance.

For a company brands offer crucial benefits in the form of increasing loyalty. A brand is able to compete with products satisfying the same needs, but it is less sensitive for economic imbalances, when consumer price elasticity is decreasing. Marketing communication will have a unified image through brand management. (Keller, 1998. p.53)

Achenbaum (1993) applies a totally different understanding of definition of brands. In his esteem what truly differentiates a brand from the unbranded mass products and what gives a unique value for it, is basically the sum of consumer feelings and senses about the product's features, brand name and meaning itself, moreover the associated company as well. (Achenbaum, 1993)

Achenbaum's approach is developed further in the concept of Lovemarks (Roberts, 2004). Lovemarks are mostly focusing on relationships and not on the fact whether the brand is well known by building a likable personality, which builds a personal linkage with customers by generating emotions on a long-term basis. Thus, personal experiences are given to the customers; meanwhile brand stories are fuelled with real content, which uses not just narrative style to make the story remarkable. These stories are usually enhanced by mystery mediating spiritual values for customers applied by think tank companies.

In my opinion in order to differentiate a company itself it is necessary to apply the approach of Lovemark, so a new generation of brands are evolving through emotional features and emotional branding. Lovemarks are icons in my understanding telling a unique story in order to build a unique and long-term relationship with its customers.

2.2. Brand Equity Building

By the definition of brand equity several aspects have to be taken into account, since the process of brand value creation is especially complex containing different financial and accounting indexes as well. In this paper I will ignore the financial dimension of brand value in absence of official quantifiable data. Thus, brand equity is valued from different perspectives from which I will demonstrate a few in the following.

According to the financial dimension in Simon and Sullivan's opinion (1993, p. 29) brand equity may be defined as the incremental cash flow which generates extra profit compared to the unbranded products and services. Nevertheless, Lassar, Mittal and Sharma (1995) suggest that consumer brand equity is another reasonable dimension that can be distinguished through five dimensions: appearance, value, social image, trustworthiness and engagement.

Aaker (1996, p. 9) differentiates consumer brand equity through other dimensions, namely: brand loyalty, brand awareness, perceived quality, brand associations and benefits to brand property. Brand loyalty helps the company to work effectively on lower cost levels, meanwhile brand awareness supports the improvement of a reputation in minds of the population, since people have positive attitudes towards well-known products because of the risk-avoidance behaviour. (Aaker – Joachimsthaler, 2000, p. 17) Perceived quality is the most critical point, because it gives the item of differentiation, diversification and purchasing as well. Furthermore, brand associations are able to manipulate customers by generating positive attitudes towards the company or the product, as long as the benefits to brand property build a competitive advantage on the market.

Brand equity is demonstrated in different models in marketing and management literature. For instance, Keller (2000) developed the customer-oriented brand equity pyramid that shows the added values (either individual or organizational) by enhancing the basic needs (either physical or psychological) of customers have to be satisfied, the main emotions associated towards the brand and the intensive relationship between the brand and the company. The starting point of the model is brand awareness and brand image embracing all fields of unique associations, information and visualization of the product or service. Personal experiences and word-of-mouth marketing are more essential according to this model than other marketing activities. (Keller, 2003, p. 70) So in Keller's model emotions, opinions play a crucial role, which is respectable for value creation in music branding as well.

Davis and Dunn (2002) depicted in the brand equity pyramid the main ingredients of the brand. First of all, the generic characteristics like price, functional benefits improve the brand value. The bottom of the pyramid is easy to copy, so it is not the most unique and powerful part from the brand's point of view. On the top of the pyramid emotional and self-expressive characteristics are difficult to copy through engagement between customers and products by defining personality, reference group and status of the individual in a community. A good example for that is Nike running shoes: customers purchase the lifestyle accompanied by a cross-branded iPod enjoying freedom and fresh air in a comfortable and secure way by listening to their favourite music.

During this paper I will apply the different perspectives of brand equity building through music branding, synthesising them with the results of primary research in Chapter 6.

2.3. Music Branding

The definition of music branding is necessary, since we can associate from the expression to different dimensions and concepts. Relevant literature has been found only among practitioners, so in the following I will focus on depicting my understanding applying the marketing gurus' opinions.

Music represents the design function of music in the marketing communication of a company according the narrow aspect by being applied as background music in commercials, signals or in store music. In my opinion music is just a supporting function according to the narrow dimension that has only a design function, not a strategic focus. Consequently, artists are chosen for brand promotion usually by personal preferences, not after conscious and complex decision-making process. As a disadvantage the brand applying music cannot reach its target group(s) in the planned direction and volume, so usually unconscious usage of music branding will result in unsuccessful marketing campaigns.

However, I will apply the strategic point of view in this paper, which includes the broader approach putting music into the centre of branding strategy. In this definition music branding means not just advertising songs or signals, but builds a competitive advantage from the symbol of the artist. In this approach music embodies all strategic elements functioning as a centred one, so the music profile is revealed during the online and offline strategy and the strategic concept of event marketing.

In addition, music branding helps brands to identify and differentiate themselves, moreover to go beyond conventional marketing and brand concepts. Music establishes loyalty through

exclusive contents offering real experiences via music concerts. The personality of music icons is essential in the engagement process of customers for the brand and band itself, which reveals as an intangible asset nowadays in financial evaluation of brands as well.

3. Strategic integration of music branding

Music is able to reach its fans through different channels: *digital platforms* including all online service (social media sites, blogs, online music platforms), *event platform* including concerts, fashion shows, holistic events exploiting the power of live performances, and even the *artist* itself appears as a genuine platform whose personality traits influence the company's personality and reputation as well. But how can music communicate through these channels? What strategic approach can be stitched into the dimension of music branding? This chapter will give the answer by depicting the 4 Es' model of music branding (Heartbeats, 2009) and different cooperation strategies of musicians and brands according to case studies based on Heartbeats (2009).

3.1. Music is able to offer customers...

As in every field of marketing sciences there are several practices in the area of music branding as well that evolve different strategic principles. Experts improved the conventional value system of 4 Ps related to luxury (Greenhill, 2011) and music branding. According to the literature instead of 4 Ps, 4 Es describe the music branding principles. (Heartbeats, 2009b) In the following I demonstrate four different topics suggesting that the main objective of today's branding for companies is to form an emotional and exclusive brand offering experiences for customers by different engagement activities of the target audience.

3.1.1. ... Emotions

In a purchasing decision consumers can apply *different assumptions* based on rational facts by analysing prices or product features; on *cultural aspect* favouring the products of a given country; or on *emotional feelings* where associations play the most important role using a slogan, a product design or a music connected to a brand. Consumer behaviour suggests that the formerly most usual rational decision-making is suppressed through impulsive buying and *emotional decisions* nowadays by demonstrating a real connection between brands and customers.

Emotions are generated when an event is evaluated relevant either in a positive way by helping to the user or in a negative way when it blocks the customer. So emotions are the

phenomenon of a mental situation, which is accompanied by different gestures, expressions and activities. (Oatley - Jenkins, 2001)

In Gobé's view (2001) the emotional aspect of brands is the main indicator of differentiation in the minds of customer. People purchase emotional experiences nowadays through iconic brands, so brands should exploit the Lovemark-effect in order to engage customers in a long term. According to Gobé (2001) sensual experiences should be enhanced, not just emotional ones. Imagination has to be used for designing product development, packaging, the store or web pages, meanwhile a long-term vision has to be established for real success. Through the personal relationship between brands and customers emotional satisfaction is evolved in consumers.

The decision process may not be depicted as an easy one, since several factors reveal due to the emotional decision making process. The most important decisions of our lives are made based on an emotional level: we chose friendships, profession or our partner with a high involvement of our emotions. Emotions are highly subjective, irrational or impulsive when we buy a chocolate at the cashier because we are seduced by its package and the urge of the impulsive emotion.

However, nowadays we are engaged to a brand on an emotional level rather than on a rational one. Brands appear as Lovemarks (Roberts, 2004), which are not anymore unreachable subjects, but 'friends' who are trying to care about our fears, happiness and urges. Furthermore, differentiation is enabled by music branding when people associate from the music to a given brand or conversely. Nevertheless, today's competitive advantage for corporates is the phenomenon of emotional commitment, since emotions are not easy to copy or produce in a cheaper way.

3.1.2. ... Engagement

Engagement is a hot topic nowadays when *advertising avoidance* revealed as a consumer behaviour trend. According to the research of SIFO Institute (2008) it was concluded that 75% of people avoid advertising actively independent on whether it is broadcasted in television, on the Internet or in the radio.

However, advertising avoidance is still a crucial phenomenon on social media sites as well. Kelly, Kerr and Drennan (2010) analysed how social media sites are endangered by advertising avoidance, moreover Cho and Cheon's (2004) built a model how online advertising was avoided because it was disruptive or cluttered. The results of these research

show that previous negative experiences or stories of negative experiences had some impact on advertising avoidance. However, important reasons were uncovered for advertising avoidance in online social network sites, such as relevance and credibility. Advertising avoidance is mostly due to scepticism according to Obermiller, Spangenberg and MacLachlan (2005), whose study suggests that consumers are not motivated to process information when they are sceptical of the message. Evidence in Kelly's study showed that social networking sites represent an "anything goes" communication channel where little control occurs; anyone can post anything, discrediting the platform of social media sites.

In order to broadcast the message to the target audience the most effective way is to establish *engagement* between individuals and corporates. The power of word-of-mouth and social media sites are able to deliver those messages as a virus, but despite its easiness and effectiveness the message and the activity has to be revised from the credibility and relevance point of view. Otherwise, the spam effect may happen to evolve, which will bring not just a company's message, but also the company itself into the virtuous cycle of avoidance and ignorance.

How is a company then able to create such an engagement between customers and corporate? The firm has to offer an *exclusive and relevant value* for consumers, which may have an impact on their social lives as well. That is why music branding can be a helpful strategic tool, since according to the study of Millward Brown (Brandamp, 2009) music is the medium, which is more important in people's lives than Internet or television. In another study by Entertainment Media Research (2009) it was concluded that through music content people could establish a dialog with their friends and acquaintances either in an online or in an offline environment.

The best practice applying music in the marketing mix is the Coca-Cola Company. There are several digital or offline platforms developed by the corporation, which are focusing on enhancing a conversation between customers as well. In Hungary Coke Club is the musical place platform of Coca-Cola where social media and music branding played a crucial role. Several exclusive content was offered for customers in forms of virtual games, news connected to music and social media activities, moreover free concerts and DJ performances.

3.1.3. ... Experiences

Pine and Gilmore (1999) expressed the fact that companies do sell not just products and services anymore, but *experiences* connected to brands. In the experience economy people no

longer buy a service, but an experience, which provides memories or sensations engaging individuals in a personal way. Some business management specialists have identified “Experience” as a new source of value, distinct from services. For instance, the report of best brands by Interbrand in 2009 enhanced the dimension of brand experiences by evaluating brand values.

Lash and Urry (1994) showed “what is increasingly produced are not material objects, but signs which can be content and informational goods or they can have primarily an expressive (aesthetic, symbolic or social) content (post modern goods). This ability is a strong feature of culture-based creativity as it is capable of generating emotions, values and vision.” Thus, *artistic creativity* will become a key driver of the experience industry – whether it comes from tourism, entertainment or the arts.

In the digital age people search for *credibility* either in their personal or in their work relationships or in their connection to brands. The best practice is according to Gobé’s (2001) four pillars when all five senses are involved into the strategy, not just the eyes which are the most obvious ones in every product communication. In my opinion the brand should have a smell, a voice and a taste as well in order to build an overall and long-term loyalty among customers. According to the research of Sounds Like Branding (Heartbeats, 2009a) hearing is the second most important sense after seeing in the process of branding. Without any music a true experience cannot be created: just think about TV commercials, any kind of events or a pleasure grounds. So it is an essential step of music branding to identify the music identity of the brand that can be a differentiation element in the competitive environment.

3.1.4. ... Exclusivity

Music enables generating *exclusive contents*, although the core products are mostly available online for free by illegal downloading sites. Consequently, in order to price the different cultural goods, exclusive merchandising products and social media activities are needed supported by the means of iconic and personal branding. Through exclusive contents fans can feel themselves appreciated and special, which will be manifested in future purchases on a long-term as well.

Personal branding is a necessary phenomenon in the concept of music branding. There are numerous examples of people who become brands. Personal brand is a personal identity that stimulates precise, meaningful perception in its audience about the values and qualities that person stands for (Montoya, 2010). Internationally, several names across industry sectors

(especially in media industries) and occupational profiles come to mind including Madonna, Armani, Michael Jackson, Tiger Woods, Michael Jordan and so on. In the business area the phenomenon is altered just as the dynamic CEOs of a company become intrinsically linked to the companies they represent (Steve Jobs – Apple, Bill Gates – Microsoft etc.).

In the music scene Lady Gaga mastered in personal branding nowadays, who imploded into music business only in 2008 becoming a superstar in scarcely a year. She clearly defined her identity by starting her career in pop culture, being stamped as *outré* (unusual, different), but accordingly a creative pop diva accompanied by a professional management team and stylist group. Furthermore, she uses the power of viral media extraordinarily by building an exclusive community for 'Monsters', for her fans who are willing to be labelled like that.

3.2. Process of Music Branding

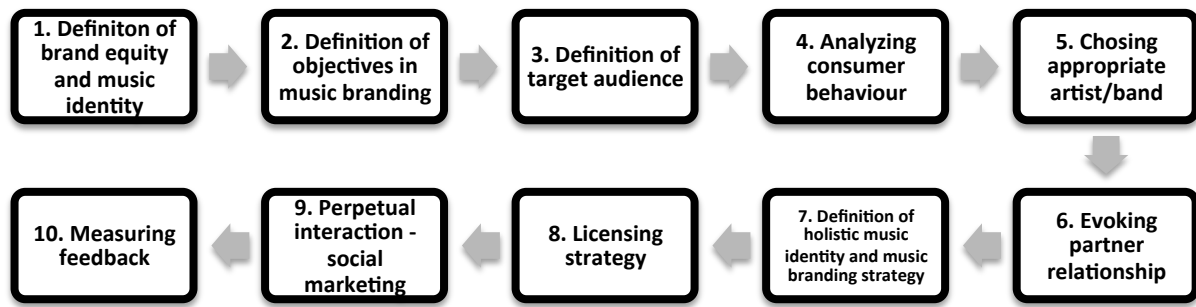
For applying music branding the following processes have to be considered by corporate management depicted on Figure 1.

First of all, the *definition of brand equity and music identity* is crucial in order to define the future objectives of music branding. Thus, the traditional STP strategy of a brand is needed, where target audience will be analysed by creation of different segments according to consumer behaviour.

The most critical part of the process comes into the picture in the next step: *the choice of an appropriate band or artist*. It is essential that not just financial resources have to be taken into account, but the possibility for building a fruitful partner relationship between the two actors. After that *holistic music identity* is defined involving all related areas of music (fashion, sport, theatre, film etc.) and the *music branding strategy* has to be designed on an operative level as well by deciding which cooperation strategy the brand would like to chose in a case of a particular artist. In addition, *licensing strategy* has to be built into the music branding strategy, since in today's music business artists gain their income mostly from royalties.

When all of these areas are set up, an *online social marketing strategy* has to be developed where perpetual interaction and participation is needed. In the end, *feedback measurement* is necessary, and due to the online aspect of music branding supported by different online tools this action is more and more expressed in quantitative terms as well.

Figure 1. The process of strategic music branding

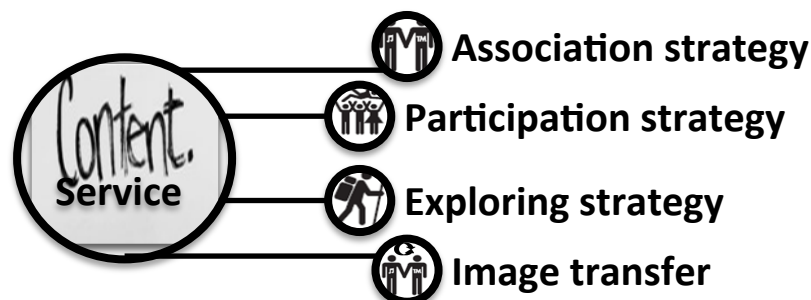


Source: Author's edition

3.3. Strategic models of music branding built upon case studies

In the literature of branding there are several case studies available where music plays a crucial role in the branding strategy process. In the following the different cooperation strategic aspects of music will be depicted according to their objective in the branding strategy.

Figure 2. Cooperation strategies according to the long-term goal in music branding



Source: Author's edition and understanding based on Heartbeats, 2010

3.3.1. Association strategy – connection to the fan base of the artists

The best practice for a brand to strengthen its brand equity and to build a strong emotional relationship with its customers is the *association of a special artist* where the brand is able to get connected to the fan base of the artist.

One of the best examples for *association strategy* is Groove Armada and Bacardi's cooperation (Bold, 2008), where Bacardi represented the role of a recording company and provided fans with exclusive content on online platforms. On social media sites Bacardi offered free content to fans, but they had to share this opportunity by exploiting the snowball effect of diffusion. So not just positive reputation and association was evolved in case of Bacardi, but through the viral effect both the artist and the company could widen the group of fans, so their cooperation resulted in a great success. (Bold, 2008)

3.3.2. Participatory Strategy – „social music” revolution

Two different aspects in the topic can be considered. First of all, ‘*everyone is an artist*’, which created the popular permeation of UGC content (User Generated Content) involving a high level of social interaction. (Lainson, 2010) The other perspective is *participatory culture* that can be defined as the following: a culture and media platform with relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement, strong support for creating and sharing one's creations with others, where members believe that their contributions matter by some degree of social connection with one another. (Jenkins, 2006)

Nowadays there is an unavoidable trend in *social media*: not just individuals use its benefits every day, but more and more brands apply different social media tools during their marketing communication strategy. So it is not anymore surprising when we find companies with music branding on social media sites. One of the most often form of music branding in a social media environment is remix competitions or communities based on musical activity like MySpace or Sound Cloud. These occasions offer outstanding opportunity for fans to express their creativity and for brands to establish interactivity, since customers are more open-minded in a community connected to music by showing their artefacts and remixes to other fans and to the artist itself. This solution can be perfect for targeting an artist group or die hard fans reaching a wider audience.

This strategic method is applied in the case of *online streaming music* service, Spotify as well. Spotify is already integrated into the biggest social media site, Facebook in a form of an application which always shows your playlist. Furthermore, there are occasional campaigns where fans can upload their music mix as well to Spotify, or to play each other's' playlists enhancing further interaction between customers and brands.

3.3.3. Exploring strategy – the way to new musical experiences

Exploring strategy means that customers can discover new music genres or less popular artists through music branding applying the long-tail effect by Anderson (2006). Anderson (2006) states that via Internet there are content available, which have only a marginal target group. However, through an accurate digital marketing strategy niche content from the supply side can find its demand on a lower cost. This music branding cooperation strategy can be applied by introduction of a new artist (in case of Sony Bravia José Gonzales was a special guest in commercial in 2007 or in case of Dreamgirls Jennifer Hudson was introduced at the beginning of her career) or organizing talent shows (in case of X-factor for instance in Hungary).

As another example Procter and Gamble created the project Ramp Music for Duracell establishing an online platform for unsigned artists. This online platform provided a talent competition, where audience could vote for their favourites. This campaign was predominantly successful: Duracell could position itself for artist target groups and it could increase its awareness among this special group. (Heartbeats, 2009b)

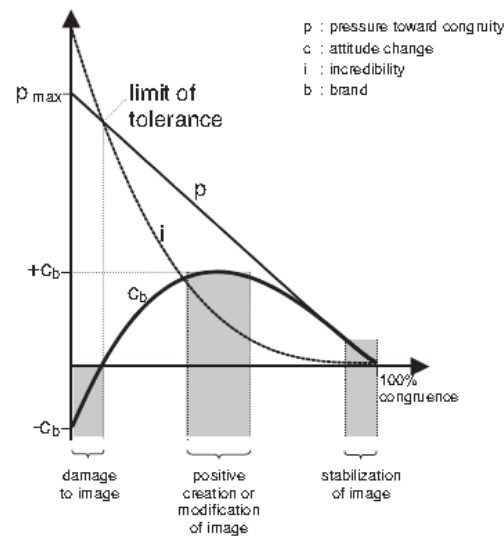
3.3.4. Image transfer from pop stars to brands (Ringe, 2009)

The relationship between pop stars and brands are suited for creating a positive image, boosting the reputation of a brand or in the other way round. According to the objective of image creation three different categories can be differentiated:

- *Creating image*: when the brand is in the beginning phase of its product lifecycle, usually there is no strong association or image in the target group's evaluation, the relationship between brand and bands are crucial from the generation of a mutual unique brand equity, which can be translated into financial numbers as well in the increasing sales of the product.
- *Image alteration*: when the present image is not the same with the wish image, cooperation with artists can be used for improving the reputation. Although it is important to note that in this case radical changes have to be avoided in order not to confuse the customers' perceptions.
- *Image stabilization*: in this case perpetual attention is of crucial importance, even if the brand has a well-positioned brand image. The supportive function is strong in the image stabilization phase, when different associations with the artists are supporting the brand image itself.

In the following figure I demonstrated how music is able to influence brand image with the cooperation of the right artist.

Figure 3. The effects of cooperation between brand and artist



Source: Ringe, 2009

Consequently, where the congruence is weak and negative attitude alteration is enabled towards a brand, image damage is evolved, as long as where middle or strong attitude change is fostered, positive image creation or modification has been noticed through the partner relationship. Image stabilization is revealed only when congruence is almost 100 %, but the attitude change is modest.

Image transfer in a positive way is only accessible when brands and bands are able to work as a team. They have to align values, agree on objectives, respect and understand each other and they have to find their mutual way how to focus on their core competences. It is not reachable without genuine commitment, flexibility to experiment and good communication skills where creativity is well respected. For a smooth relationship the brand has to evaluate and identify its music identity in order to find the best fitting musician for this aim.

3.3.5. Content Service

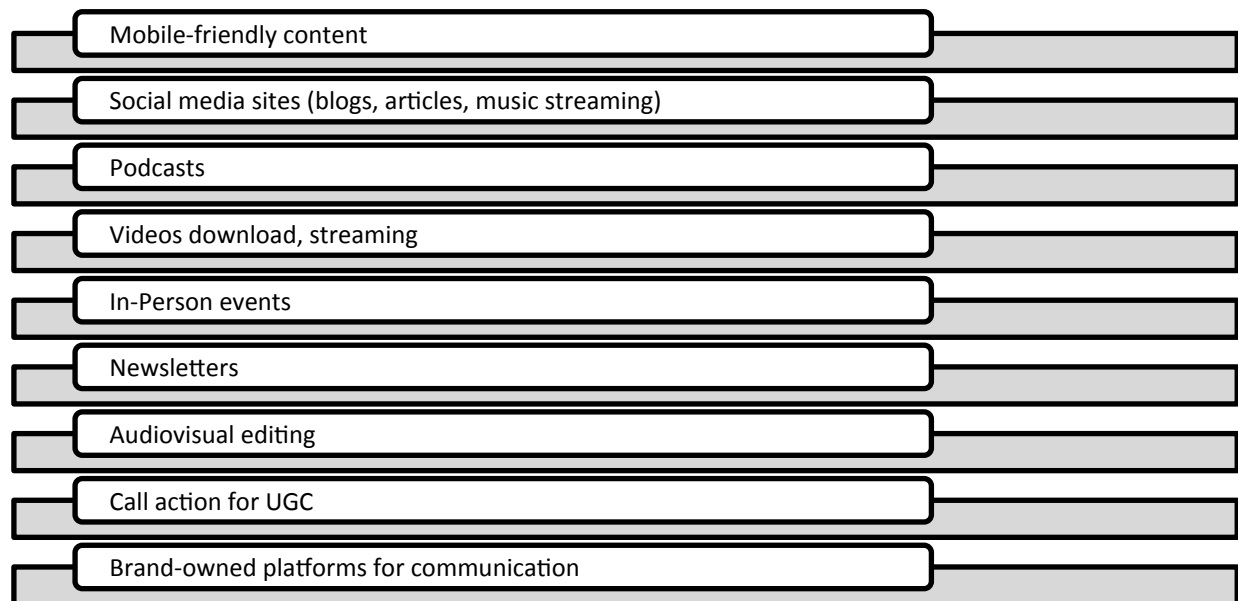
Content is a sum of relevant information either in an artistic or general way, which creates value for its users. Content service is a crucial definition in music industry as well, since besides events (concerts, shows), recorded or other physical products connected to music enable an emotional bond with fans.

The main objective of several companies especially related to creative industries is to offer *relevant and quality content* to its customers. In my opinion the overall strategic tool of music branding is content service appearing in every cooperation strategies as a supportive approach. "Content marketing is a marketing technique of creating and distributing relevant and valuable content to attract, acquire, and engage a clearly defined and understood target

audience - with the objective of driving profitable customer action.” (Content Marketing Institution, 2012. Available: www.contentmarketinginstitute.com. Retrieved: April 2012) In the white paper of Content Marketing Institution (2012) the B.E.S.T. model suggests that content is able to bring into the branding strategy a Behavioral, Essential, Strategic and Targeted perspective.

Without attempting to be comprehensive, the following musical content can be implemented during the music branding strategy:

Figure 4. Music Content Services



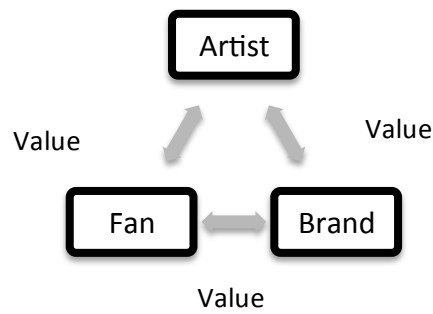
Source: Author's edition

For content service several business models arisen where ‘free’ gained a new understanding according to Anderson (2009). Furthermore, Freemium models make it possible to offer some content for free, where genuine fans can access exclusive content for a subscription fee.

4. Value creating mechanism

As it was depicted, music branding has different faces and distinguished strategic aspects as well. The brand personality, brand identity and the objectives of the brand define the strategic way of music branding, however, all processes create value for the three actors of music branding: musician, brand, customer. In this chapter I will depict the value creation mechanism of music branding and all effects, where from a brand perspective the most important value is the one created for customers.

Figure 5. The model of simplified value creation through music branding



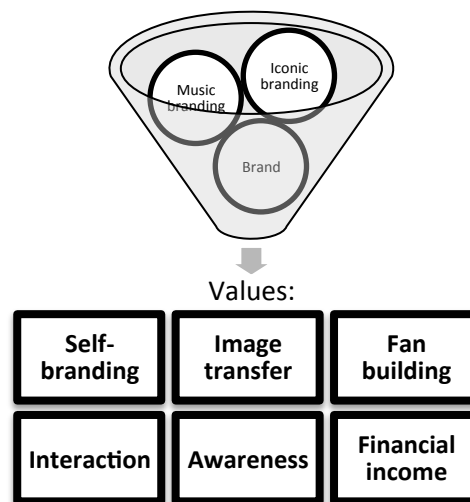
Source: Author's edition

In the following I will demonstrate the value created for artists, brands and consumers in different visual forms and I will highlight the main conclusions of them.

4.1. Value for artists

For an artist/musician/band value creation seems to be simple through music branding, since their efforts are resulted in financial income. As it was already mentioned before, the financial dimension of value creation is not considered in this paper, so I had to scrutinize this topic on a higher level. After the in-depth interviews with musicians the picture of value creation for artists was already cleared, depicted in Figure 6.

Figure 6. Music branding value for artists



Source: Author's edition

Musicians are able to increase their awareness through music branding widening their fan base; moreover, their brand image could alter in a positive way as well through the image transfer effect. From the in-depth interviews further values were considered as well: interaction with fans is supported and musicians extremely value the dimension of fan building. As one of the musicians said: „Brands are not ‘cows’ for us representing a financial

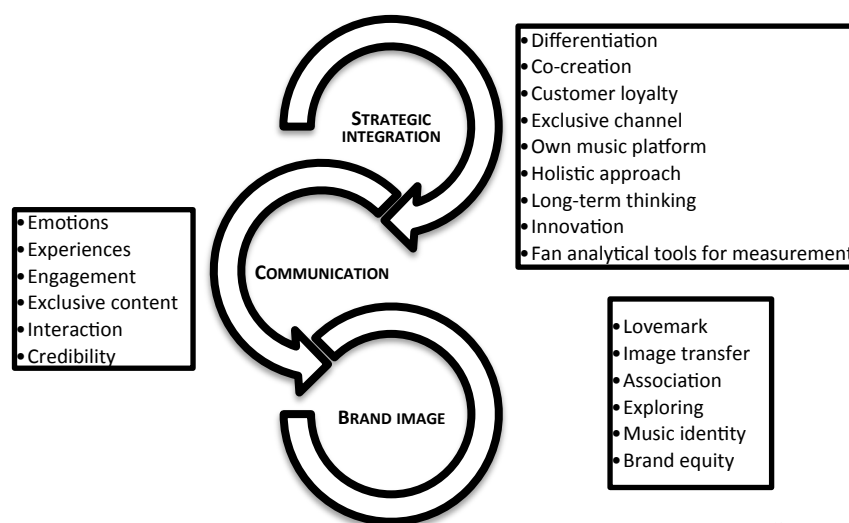
resource – we need them for improving our tools and story, and to give some exclusive content for our valued fans. Without them we would no one.”

4.2. Value for brands

In case of brands the value creation mechanism is much more complex. Firstly, three main steps are enabled: the **strategic integration**, **communication** and **brand image**.

Strategic integration of music branding requires a holistic approach, since its implementation can be used in a wide variety of platforms. Practitioners have to identify the main unique factors in order to achieve the ultimate goal: *differentiation* from competitors. *Co-creation* is built on equal partnership relations, since in a successful relationship (so in music branding partnership as well) equality is the most important factor. As the representative of Red Bull said: *“Trust and two-sided communication are essential, because no one knows from whom exactly the creative and successful ideas are coming and this attitude improves the quality of cooperation and its results.”* From the customer point of view **cooperation** and **co-creation** are buzzwords, since customers are respected by getting involved in the decision-making process of introducing a new version of a product for instance. Music is a perfect tool for this value, because of the social power of music – a whole community can be involved through music along different segmentation characteristics. By identifying these fans different fan analytical tools were evolved where not just demographics, but in innovative ones lifestyle traits are examined too.

Figure 7. Value for brands through music branding



Source: Author's edition

Innovation is another dimension for value creation during music branding which is of crucial importance acknowledging the fact that innovation is a competitive advantage in today's

economy. (Schumpeter, 1934) Companies who are able to foster innovation activities can engage their customers on a long-term basis. (Porter, 1996) On the other hand, concepts gain influence stating that **social dimensions of technical innovations** should no longer be neglected, but special qualities of social innovations also have to be taken into account (Howaldt – Schwarz, 2010).

Long-term thinking is the basis of a strategic plan. Successful innovations and businesses think not just on an operational level for a year, but at least in a 5 years term. (Porter, 1996) In case of music branding it long-term thinking is an essential factor to be understood, since it requires a longer period to establish a genuine relationship between brands and bands.

For strategic integration, music could seem to be a subjective element of a brand, which cannot be measured on an objective base, but there are different mechanisms to convert music branding into quantifiable data. For instance, the **online fan analytics application** of Next Big Sound (Available: www.nextbigsound.com. Retrieved: April 2012) makes it possible to monitor the behaviors of fans and consumers. The site provides stats that include data for thousands of musicians and bands in real time, so brands can chose the most applicable one for their music branding strategy. The number of new fans is depicted on a line graph along with a list of popular social networks including Last.FM, My Space, Facebook, YouTube, Rdio and Twitter, moreover combined stats of specific online communicates can be viewed as well.

In the **communication dimension** besides the abovementioned 4 Es, brand representatives among depth-interviews mention credibility and interaction. As we could see in the case studies there is a wide variety of possibilities how to interact positively with customers like remixing competitions etc. **Interactivity** is becoming an entrance barrier for communication of brands and customers nowadays, where music appears to be a genuine platform.

Credibility is essential for achieving the targeted goals – message is mediated to the customer in quality, which means that both the brand and band cooperate in a genuine way. Musicians are opinion leaders who are able to translate the message of a product in a much more genuine way in the form of WoM. According to Nielsen (2007) the source of opinion leaders (like musicians) seemed to be significantly more credible source of product evaluation than commercials. Kotler's (2010) Marketing 3.0 already pointed out that customers expect more than just functional products, but exclusivity and spirituality from the company as well – the cultural mission of music branding can cover this dimension of value creation as well.

On the judgment of **brand image** music branding has a powerful effect by the phenomenon of iconic branding, Lovemark (Roberts, 2004) and emotional branding. All these are resulted in the above mentioned strategies, where the reputation of a brand is involved as well. Iconic branding as element of Lovemark (Roberts, 2004) and all the abovementioned association strategies help to improve the brand image. The brand itself can find the music equity, which may be applied during emotional branding as well (Gobé, 2001) resulting in an increasing consumer loyalty and higher level of involvement. Iconic brands address acute contradictions in society. Iconic brands have strong cultural roots that tap into society's values, sometimes even inspiring a shift in those values. They possess physical or symbolic features that make them instantly recognizable. They have a compelling story and manage to remain true to their original values while reinterpreting them in light of contemporary culture. (Millward Brown, 2007)

4.3. Value for customers

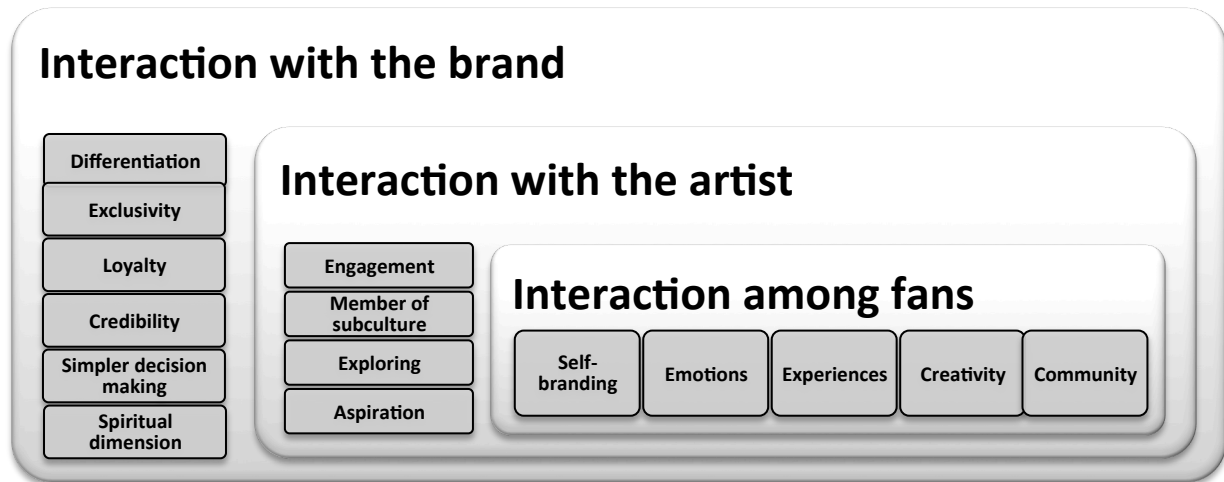
Customer-centric value is analysed by three different dimensions: *interaction between brand, musician and other customers*. The brand is more likely able to differentiate itself through music branding where exclusive content or channels are applied as well, so customer loyalty increases. When the customer is loyal, the decision making process (especially evaluating different alternatives for satisfying a special need) is much easier and shorter, sparing time for other activities. According to the approach of Marketing 3.0 (Kotler, 2010) some customers need not just smattering relationships, but real connections to brands through the spiritual dimension as well.

Through the **interaction with the artist** a strong emotional attachment and engagement to the music icon is evolved. So a fan can be a valuable member of a music subculture. Another interesting point turned out to be important during the focus group interviews: the *phenomenon of exploring*. There is a group of consumers who just like to explore new bands and music branding could give a relevant platform for it. Not just new icons, but new music goods and branded products are developed through this stage forming the aspirational emotions towards the brand and the bands too – they are not just attached, but already aspire to be valuable members of this exclusive group.

But customers use music for building their own personal image as well, so they unconsciously use the method of self-branding. In the experience and sharing economy (Pine – Gilmore, 1998), emotions and different experiences change hands through different concert

experiences. These events are depicted in social web sites, where comments and posts can build interaction between fans; moreover, they can generate their own content as well, demonstrating their creative potential in a given online community.

Figure 8. Value creation for customers through music branding



Source: Author's edition

5. Primary research

For the deep understanding of the topic it was necessary to conduct a primary research besides the analysis of international cases. The results of the primary research are demonstrated in this chapter under the notice that the research is not representative, mainly focusing on qualitative methods. Considering my resources, Hungarian experts and inhabitants were involved in the primary research, which supported to finalise the theoretical model about value creation through music branding.

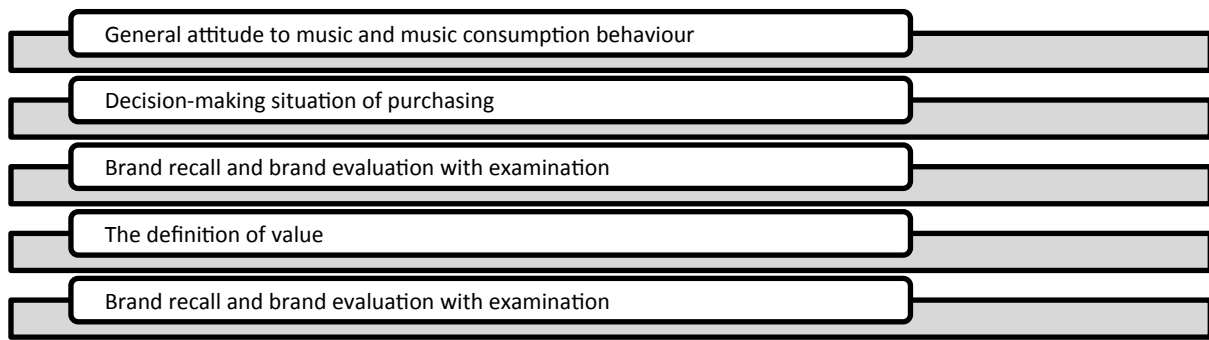
5.1. Methodology

During the primary research phase I applied the approach of **exploratory research**, which helped me to define the problem. During the focus group interviews I asked four groups – three Hungarian groups and one international (the last one was conducted online because of the geographical distance). As a result I conducted 12 in-depth interviews with music experts and four focus group interviews with 6-7 inhabitants in each group using projective methods as well.

5.2. Focus Group Interviews

The main questions of focus group interviews covered the following topics:

Figure 9. Question blocks of Focus Group Interviews



Source: Author's edition

Due to the filter questionnaire I could distinguish between ‘dedicated’ and ‘neutral’ groups according to their music consumption behaviour. ‘Dedicated’ group listens to music more than one hour per day determining music as *„the most important thing in my life, I could not imagine a day without music”*. In the meantime, ‘neutral’ persons noted, *“... music does not play a special role in my life. Usually I listen to music in my father’s car in the weekend.”* During the focus group interviews there was a perpetual distinction in answers and behaviour as well among those group members.

Consequently, the **meaning of music** was different among groups. ‘Dedicated’ group mentioned emotions, love, mood, dance and expression of their identity (in my interpretation it is a phenomenon of music branding). These groups mentioned that: *“I usually post a video music on my Facebook site every day, because I want to let people know, what kind of person I am. So music is a way to express myself in a larger community”*. The ‘neutral’ group was not that enthusiastic about music, although they mentioned that through their offline social life (parties, events) music is unavoidable and “makes the mood” – concluding that they are passively involved in the relationship between music and consumers.

In **decision making process** of purchasing people surrounded by respondents play a crucial role in forms of opinion leaders as family and friends: *“family and my friends are the most important actors in my life and their opinion about a product is essential for me”*. However, during the conversation I could conclude that most of them have an aspiration group where they want to suit, so different subcultural traits are over valued in their life. One of the respondents said: *“I usually check the underground music scene and if there is something different offered (new music video or new fashion store), I will probably click on it.”* In addition, the influencing effect of their icons like musicians, actors or sportsmen were mentioned in terms of purchasing decisions – *“I like to be updated about the lives and*

professional work of my favourite artists or sportsmen. I already have liked their Facebook site or their blog activity.”

Defining value was a challenge first for respondents, since too many approaches came to their mind. Firstly, different spontaneous associations were expressed like ‘family’, ‘friends’, ‘travel’, ‘hobby’, ‘mobile phone’ and ‘music’ and other relationships. All different dimensions were detailed as the following: human relationships are the factors, which provide the basic social needs like emotional bond or safety. The most important elements were intangible assets such as experiences with friends that can form relationships. Material factors were mentioned for hard factors such as safety and wealthfare. *“Without money, you cannot really provide yourself with relevant values, since you have to eat, you have to live somewhere.”* Furthermore, due to the sample of students knowledge and life-long learning even in case of hobbies were mentioned as crucial determinants in their personal identity and development. So the value is summed up as the following according to respondents: relationships, experiences, self-expressive and self-defining activities and lastly as a material source, but significantly dominant factor for basic needs: money. This result enhances the importance of emotional branding of Gobé (2001).

About **purchasing motivation** associations with impulsive purchase were mentioned, where impressions, emotions played the biggest role. One of the respondents stated: *“Usually I go to the supermarket for basic products like milk and bread, but when I came out from the store, I realize that I have Haribo, Coca-Cola in my basket as well...”* In case of electronic goods besides functional expectations, the brand and prestige accompanied by lifestyle characteristics were essential. For instance, regarding Apple the brand personality provides added value for customers: *“Apple is a cool brand which reflects your personality as well, not just your status”*.

Perceptions of brands were ranked on a wide variety of scale: design, commercials and slogans were top allusions, meanwhile functionality and social media applications were second. As I asked about any examples of social marketing activities they mentioned one of the social campaigns of Nike: after a post on social media site the first arrivers to the shop could win a pair of shoes.

Music branding as a theory was still uncovered for respondents, although they visualized a picture about it in their mind. Respondents could associate music in commercials towards the mention of Coke Club, which are obvious manifestations of music branding fields in Hungary and internationally as well. *“Coke Club (previously Coca-Cola Beach House) was the venue*

of summer parties in a summer city of Hungary – everyone knew if something was organized by Coke Club, the event was successful and on a high level.” In their perception music is an essential part of advertising, although sometimes they could not perceive the relationship between a brand and a musician like in case of Beyoncé and Pepsi. Another example was mentioned regarding music branding: a Sony Bravia commercial accompanied with the music of José Gonsales. *“The audiovisual elements of the ad totally fascinated me: the bouncing balls and the background music were just a perfect match”* One of the respondents enhanced the phenomenon of exploring: *“... and I loved the fact that I could get introduced to a new artist in that way. Usually I am surfing on the internet to check out new bands and it was such an easier way to listen to something new.”* Although, when I asked about the further career of the musician, respondents were perplexed, since they have not followed his career in the last few years. This can show a short-term approach of music branding which is not beneficial for value creation in a strategic sense.

As a creative element I played different audio music parts asking whether the subjects can associate to a brand. The technique was the following: after playing 15 sec from the given song I asked about the associations and when there was no correct answer I gave some answer possibilities until they find out the right brand. The following music songs were played matching the given brands:

Table 1: Ranking of Brand and Music Relationships according to Time Spent on Task

Company	Musician	Song	Rank (Hungarian)	Rank (International)
Túró Rudi (for Hungarians only)	Quimby	Láss ezer csodát!	1	-
Coca-Cola	Natasha Bedingfield	Shake Up Christmas	2	1
Sony Bravia	José Gonzales	Heartbeats	3	8
Chrysler	Jay-Z	Heart of the City	4	2
Microsoft	Madonna	Ray of Light	5	7
Absolut	Cee Lo Green	Distilled	6	4
Coca-Cola	David Guetta		7	3
Blackberry	U2	Blackberry Loves U2	8	9
Google Chrome	OK	Pilobolus	9	5
Nokia	deadmau5		10	6
Kodak	Lady Gaga	Poker Face	11	10

Source: Author's edition

‘Neutral’ persons could not match any of the brands to bands mentioned, they usually said: *“I do not know, please take the next question”*, meanwhile ‘dedicated’ persons wanted to find out the results. According to the time subjects spent on finding the right answer the ranking is depicted in Table 1. The results were the same among international and local groups. In

general, it can be noted that respondents could not connect brands with music spontaneously. Coca-Cola was associated with bands the most successfully, which might be a result of emotional branding strategy related to music. Among Hungarian groups the local brand Túró Rudi was the most well-known sonically where patriot feelings and consumer ethnocentrism could play a crucial role. (Herskovits, 1948) Some of the respondents said that one of their favourite bands is Quimby played in the commercial of Túró Rudi that is why they could recall the commercial easier as well.

5.3. In-depth Interviews

For drawing the model of value creation through music branding, in-depth interviews conducted with practitioners were essential for getting deeper insights for the subject. I have successfully managed to interview people from the artist area (4 musicians), from the media sector (journalist, radio speaker) and from management perspective as well (corporate and music management persons). Overall I reached 12 practitioners and in average I spent one hour for an interview. For the representatives of different fields of music branding I designed more interview guidelines.

Through the in-depth interviews I could gain relevant and deeper insights in the field of music branding, moreover about the Hungarian music scene. The Hungarian and international music trends were uncovered, where the approach of music branding and its value for musicians, brands and consumers were touched followed by future opportunities as well.

Interviewees all mentioned the **same tendencies** regarding the development of **music industry**: innovative and mobile strategies can be successful in the changing music industry. They enhanced the role of social media (YouTube, Facebook, MySpace), which are suitable for sharing music videos creating musical communities and experiences. All of them evaluated the Hungarian music scene underdeveloped compared to Western-European countries by 4-5 years.

During the interviews the **definition of music branding** had to be grounded in the first moments even in case of experts as well, since there is no general definition in the literature or practical area. However, several examples appeared confirming the relevance of the wider approach of music branding. One of the management thinks that *“music is applied by intuitions in branding strategy nowadays”* and in his opinion it can be the root of many unsuccessful attempts: there is no strategical thinking behind the activities. For instance, he mentioned a Hungarian experiment of Jack Daniels, which had the aim to shot a movie

connected to the brand with rock stars. The movie was removed from cinema programmes after two weeks. The fail of the movie was not clearly defined, but the respondent mentioned the weak marketing communication and weak association of brand and musicians.

Another example was enhanced as a **strategic approach of music branding**: Unlimited Music service of Vodafone, which enables to subscribe for legal music downloading. Furthermore, Coke Club as a music branding phenomenon was mentioned in the context of music content service and marketing campaigns. One of the interviewees highlighted the “*age of instant music brands and artists*” – the so-called shooting stars, which will be famous through a talent show or any commercial music, but their fame lasts only for a short period. These kinds of musicians should be avoided in music branding strategy, since it is not successful on a long-term basis.

Regarding **the social goal of music branding** another opinion appeared: through music education and improvement of musical culture brands are able to connect genuine value through music branding. In Sweden the quality of music education is positively different from Hungarian one. According to one of the interviewees: “*I was astonished when I had faced with the fact that schools in Sweden are well-equipped with different instruments, separate music rooms and teachers are well-educated musicians as well.*” Another management perspective enhanced the field of music management: “*the supporting approach and music management education is still missing in Hungary*”, which could teach experts how to use music branding as a strategic tool. In her opinion the cooperation between brands and artists cannot be conscious until there are well-educated experts who are able to identify the identity of a brand and choosing the best fitting artist to it.

If a brand chooses the way of **cultural mission**, it is able to create value for music education and traditional values. The Culture Manager of Red Bull Hungary enhanced the importance of music in Red Bull’s branding strategy demonstrating this aspect. He described the **music strategy of Red Bull** standing on three pillars: *events* organized by Red Bull (not sponsored), targeting *opinion leaders* and *third party* which is not so relevant during the “*egoist marketing*” by creating original Red Bull platforms instead of sponsorship. In the strategic alliance of musicians it is important that their personal characteristics are in harmony with the characteristics of Red Bull (creative, entertaining, extreme), moreover to build a trustful partnership with artists: “*Trust and two-sided communication are essential, because no one knows from whom exactly the creative and successful ideas are coming and this attitude improves the quality of cooperation and its results.*” In addition, during the “Made in Garage”

concept Red Bull supports new bands to create their first music video by “*giving them wings*”. Several beginner bands turned out to be popular after a partnership with Red Bull and the main aims of the brand is to support local music scenes within global branding strategy.

What platforms did Red Bull use in the implementation of a successful music branding strategy? **Local traditions and cultural heritage** gave an outstanding opportunity for invention of events called ‘Liszt Remix’ and ‘Pilvaker’ where traditional artefacts from Liszt and literature poems from 1848 were redefined. “*The objective of these events was to create value by respecting Hungarian roots offering relevant content for audience and for musicians as well*”, so they could identify with the event and indirectly with the brand easily. The culture manager suggested he would have never believed that after the unexpected hit of Liszt Remix he could revive another success story, but the history did not just repeat, but surpass it in numbers at least: more than 300 000 people watched the intro video online in three weeks. Red Bull improved the Hungarian music scene by giving artists an opportunity to be different and make difference. In the interpretation of Balázs Fehér, the soloist of Carbonfools (one of the bands participated in ‘Liszt Remix’) the objective was reached, since Balázs said: “*It was such an honour to take part in this event. We enjoyed so much to work with Liszt’s art and the venue – Uránia theatre – was a great choice as well to lift the event to a higher level. Furthermore, the partnership with Red Bull is beneficial – our fans share the same values and we try to find the best ways to satisfy them. It is good for the brand, since our band can lend them credibility, as long as we can merge with Red Bull’s platforms and strategy*”.

Talent shows were of crucial importance from a management perspective as well, like in case of Borsodi, the Hungarian beer. The brand used exploring strategy in order to embrace unknown talents and the brand association was significantly better reaching the group of opinion leaders, the musicians. However, the strategic toolset and its implementation were not undoubtedly perfect, since financial support is not enough for exploring strategy: a mentoring program should developed in order to find their way in the highly competitive music market. According to one of the musicians climbing on the career ladder: „*Brands are not ‘cows’ for us representing a financial resource – we need them for improving our tools and story, and to give some exclusive content for our valued fans. Without them we would no one.*”

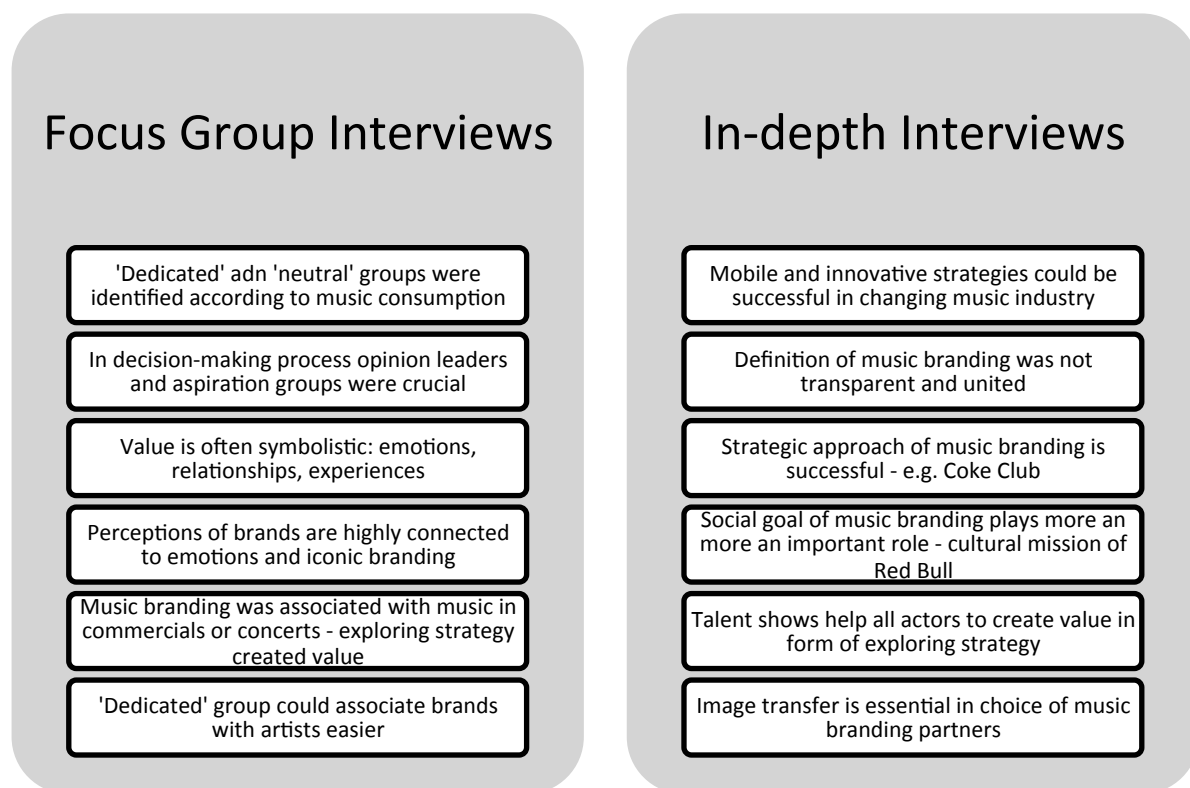
In musicians’ opinion “*bands need any kind of Maecenas, but still artists have to carefully chose brand partners, because musicians are able to lose their fans as a result of a bad partnership with a brand*”. If the musician has its own unique style, it cannot be formed according to the goals of brands, it is more likely suggested to find another matching brand to

the musicians' portfolio enhancing the relevance of the image transfer dimension of cooperation strategies.

Overall, all interviewees agreed on the presumption that **music branding** besides a new financial source for musicians, **appears as a strategic tool** for creating genuine value and unique content for customers. In the opinion of interviewees, music branding will be more and more important in brands' life, accompanied with improved music management education as well.

5.4. Summary of Primary Research

Figure 10. Summary of Primary Research



Source: Author's edition

6. Conclusion

Music and branding has had their cross-section over a long time ago, but the strategic approach of music branding is still in its infancy according to experts. However, the positive effects and wide variety of music usage was described in forms of cooperation strategies (association, participation, exploring, image transfer, content service), the popularity of music branding is still very low, which can be a cause of subjective efficiency measurements. Nowadays, due to different online analysis tools, this aspect can be more and more quantified, which is a desired characteristic for a management leader.

Music is a fundamental element in our lives – as according to the dedicated group of my primary research revealed. Although, we experience music in different ways, one basis idea is the same: music evokes emotions and helps to understand a message through its global language. Therefore, music appears as an essential marketing and branding tool, but it can give more than just a means to the goal. A whole branding strategy can be built on music where music branding can offer customers emotions, experiences, exclusivity and engagement. (Heartbeats, 2009)

As a result, it can be stated that all actors benefit from music branding in a different way. The value creation mechanism of music branding is complex, since there are three main actors interacting with each other. On one hand, musicians are able to increase their awareness through music branding augmenting their fan base, moreover, their brand image could be altered in a positive way as well through the image transfer effect demonstrated in several case studies. From the in-depth interviews further values were considered as well: interaction with fans is supported and musicians extremely value the dimension of fan building.

In case of brands the value creation mechanism is much more complex. Firstly, three main steps are enabled: the **strategic integration**, **communication** and **brand image**. Strategic integration contains differentiation, innovation, loyalty and long-term thinking as most important values for brands. Communication is improved in an emotional and genuine way – brands are able to develop their brand image to a Lovemark offering exclusive content and iconic branding.

Customer-centric value is analyzed by three different dimensions: interaction between brand, musician and other customers. Through the interaction between brands the purchasing decision is much easier for customers, since the perceived quality and emotional bond provides a certain level of trust. Due to the interaction with musicians customers can be a member of an aspiration group or a musical subgroup supporting the communication with other fans as well. Customers can use music as a personal and self-branding tool – music branding can give the means for this objective in forms of exploring and participatory strategy as well.

7. Summary

The theory of branding has been developed from a rational approach of the product functions until the more subjective dimension of perceptions where emotions play a crucial role. So, the definition of Lovemarks (2004) was born, which contain the phenomenon of iconic branding as well.

After I defined the main definitions in the Literature Background, the strategy focus appeared in this paper. I showed how music is able to get involved in the branding strategy, how its process should be implemented idealistically. As a result, I differentiated ten steps for process of music branding strategy and four methods of cooperation between brands and artists combined with content service marketing in an overall perspective.

Before I demonstrated the primary research, the value creation mechanism of music branding was concluded providing value for all actors: musicians, brands and customers. All three areas were depicted in distinguished figures in order to analyse the value creation mechanism of all segments. As a result, it can be stated that all actors benefit from music branding in a different way. Musicians can increase their awareness and fan base besides financial advantages. The value creation mechanism of music branding is much more complex for brands, where the strategic integration is the most accentuated one besides affecting the communication of a brand by influencing the brand image as well. For customers, not just musicians and brands appear as an actor in the music branding process, but other customers as well, which they can interact in real time due to an effective music branding strategy. As a result, through the **interaction with the artist** customers can build up to the community of loyal fans, where strong emotional attachment and engagement to the music icon is evolved. So a fan can be a valuable member of a music subculture supported by the phenomenon of self-branding through music.

After depicting the value creation mechanism of music branding I demonstrated the primary research of this paper. As an exploratory research I conducted four focus group interviews with customers and 12 in-depth interviews with practitioners. The results supported the theories of music branding, especially the importance of shift in branding practice. Music branding can provide added values for all shareholders, which can result in a better customer experience and loyal fan base accompanied by a better brand and band image.

As we could see, engagement towards music is present from ancient times when people find their musical instruments in forms of stones or other objects. This basic instinct is still inside our behaviour and spirit according to Brandamp (2009, p. 54.): “Music is able to evoke the instinct of subconscious and happiness avoiding any logical methods by affecting emotions”. The question is still on whether brands will recognize the importance of music branding and whether they will integrate into their branding strategy. This paper gave the answer, but its possible implementation is still the music of the future...

8. Future Research Opportunities

In the future the focus from qualitative research could be shifted to quantitative one where quantifiable data could be collected in order to analyse the topic on a descriptive level uncovering statistical correlations and indicators.

Furthermore, the music branding phenomenon should be analysed from an advertising agency's point of view as well. Although, in Hungary there is no such an agency being expert in music branding strategies, there are several examples abroad (UK, USA) where campaigns connected to music branding are the central activity of these kinds of agencies. With a reliable database of companies it is possible to measure the attitude toward music branding and the quantity of practical examples as well.

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