

THE PROMOTION OF POP MUSIC IN FRANCE: THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to discover if social media are the new way to promote pop music in France. In order to examine this, this research tends to highlight the main changes that occurred in certain elements of the marketing mix of the pop music industry in France, but also to show what are the impacts of social media in the pop music industry, to explore how social media are used by music marketers, musicians and the audience to promote and discover pop music in France, and finally, to show if social media are the only way to promote pop music in France.

INTRODUCTION

The research question is: are social media the new way to promote pop music in France? And the research objectives are to: highlight the main changes that occurred in certain elements of the marketing mix of the pop music industry in France; discover what are the impacts of social media in the pop music industry; explore how social media are used by music marketers, musicians and the audience to promote and discover pop music in France; find if social media are the only way to promote pop music in France.

This proposed research seems to be interesting because since 1999, the Internet and new technologies have drastically altered the production, distribution, and consumption of music (Molteni & Ordanini, 2003 in Vaccaro, V. and Cohn, D. 2004). Indeed, the marketing mix has evolved in the music industry: the product is not physical anymore, physical retail stores are more and more replaced by online distribution services, the price is no longer dictated by record labels, the traditional sales orientation philosophy toward promotion has evolved and companies are more focused on maintaining long-term and profitable customer relationships. In fact, people take a very important place in today's music industry so music companies have to be more focused on the customer. Moreover, according to Dewan and Ramaprasad (2014) 'social media are increasingly used for sharing information about music albums and songs - and also for the sharing of the music itself'. In fact, it seems that the best way to discover and share music today is on the Internet, so it shows why the promotion part has changed in this sector and why it is now mostly conducted on the Internet. Moreover, the Internet allows music companies to have a unique relationship with the customer (Drubay, D. 2007). People are more and more important and companies should communicate more through the Internet. To put in a nutshell, the Internet has changed how promotion is done for pop music and it is interesting to discover if the social media are the new way to promote pop music in France.

METHODOLOGY

This dissertation is an exploratory study, which has a grounded theory strategy and which employs a mixed-method choice of research using both quantitative and qualitative data. This research studies a particular phenomenon at a particular time so it is a cross-sectional research. The data have been gathered within an interpretivist research philosophy and used an inductive approach. The quantitative data have been collected through a questionnaire and the qualitative data via semi-structured interviews. The population of the quantitative research is composed of 120 students from ISEG Bordeaux and the population of the qualitative research is composed of 4 people who worked in the music industry in France: a music programmer and communications manager of a concert hall in Bordeaux, a director of an independent label in Bordeaux, a project manager of an online platform that help musicians in their digital practices and, finally, a music band from Limoges.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The Internet has drastically changed the pop music industry, all the marketing mix elements are touched and the promotion part is the one that is the most affected. Plus, the intensive use of social media has changed the way in which the music is diffused and promoted because people discover, listen, consume and share music through those networks. Thus, social media are now mainly used by French music marketers, musicians and the audience to promote or discover pop music, and the part of traditional media has decreased. But there are still limits in conducting music promotion on social media and traditional media are still used for music promotion in France.

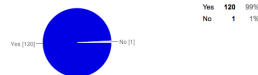
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RESULTS

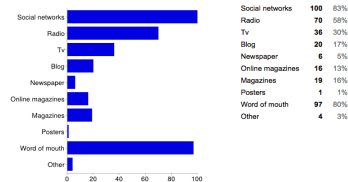
Questionnaire:

Are you present on social networks?



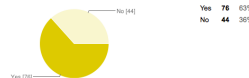
120 respondents on 121 said that they were present on social networks.

How do you discover new artists / music?



83% of the respondents said that they were discovering new artists and music thanks to social networks.

Do you follow your favorite artists on social networks?



63% of the respondents said that they were following their favourite artists on social networks.

Interview:

The music discovery, either for a musician, a music programmer or a director of label is mainly made through the word of mouth, and social networks. The Internet and social media have changed the ways to promote pop music in France. It is now essential for an artist to be present on those networks but they also have their limits and the digital presence must be controlled and mastered.