





THE FUTURE OF VENUE COMMUNICATION

Study Results & Action Plan:

Audience Development for Venues & Festivals



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Music Cities Network (MCN) is a public/private network dedicated to improving communication and cooperation, sharing research and knowledge, exploring policy and advocacy, and networking for policy makers, city leaders and all other music city stakeholders. Its current members are Aarhus, Groningen, Hamburg and Sydney.

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September 2017

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1 GENERAL OVERVIEW

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1.1 APPROACH

The term 'Audience Development' has received much attention lately, but it has been practiced by music operators for a long time. It is a collective term that describes strategic, dynamic and interactive processes that encompass all aspects of promotion, publicity, marketing, public relations, programming, membership, community engagement, communications and educational programmes aimed at making the arts widely accessible and addressing the needs of existing and potential audiences.

What makes a person decide to go to a concert nowadays? Music venues and festivals¹ have always had an interest in reaching out to new audiences and strengthening bonds with existing ones. The Music Cities Network is hereby starting the first international Audience Development Knowledge Exchange Program between the venues and festivals of the participating music cities to investigate best practice models of marketing strategies, audience development and experience in the music sector and look into the future.

What tools do venues use to attract new audiences? How can venues in cities collaborate to enhance audiences? What are the best tools to empower your existing audiences for festivals and venues? What role will venues/festivals play in the future society?

The focus is connecting different venues in the participating cities and to share their knowledge in the field of audience development.

Key sectors that are investigated

- Target audience groups existing and potential
- Cultural diversity
- Online and offline methods
- Resources
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Co-operation and joint projects
- Data collection
- Action plans

How it works

- 1. 4 venues and 1 festival were suggested by each MCN member city to take part in the programme.
- 2. The audience development strategies of these venues and festivals were investigated and categorizing the results into sub-groups.
- **3.** The report will be provided to the venues with the aim to connect them and intensify the communication in the above key sectors and identify further ways for future exchange.

¹ Please note that, for ease of reading, we will refer to both venues and festivals collectively as 'venues' throughout this document, defined as a place which provides live music performances.



1.2 METHODOLOGY

This report, its recommendations and the terms of its resulting exchange program are determined through a combination of three methods.

- 1. The core of the findings are pulled from the results of a Google Form survey, which was sent to a selected variety of 4 venues and 1 festival suggested by each MCN member cities Aarhus, Groningen, Hamburg and Sydney. Its questions are categorized in each one of the key sectors identified above. The audience development strategies of these venues and festivals were thereby investigated, identifying their strengths and we aknesses and categorizing the results into sub-groups. When pulling the findings from the survey, some of the questions require respondents to rate elements on a scale of 1 to 6, thus eliminating the option to choose a completely neutral stance. Please note that, when collating the answers, some were grouped for legibility. For example, when using the term 'frequently' as a collective, we included anything that fell at a 5 or 6 on the scale.
- 2. A short, but detailed amount of desk research additionally lays the groundwork of identifying trends and general audience development theory with the aim of setting the stage for effective strategies in the modern market.
- 3. These two methods are punctuated with results from individual interviews in order to provide more detailed responses on the perceived states of local live industries. Therefore, the MCN member cities suggested 1-2 music scene experts who have been contacted. As many results are reflective of the global state of the industry, these interviews provide examples and first-hand accounts on which to base recommendations and plans for action.

1.3 GOAL

The programme connects the venues in the participating cities and establishes relationships between them, aiming to support the venues and festivals, reach new audiences and make them more sustainable in the long term.

Limitations of the study

Music Cities Network is a growing body, and therefore the experiences on which the recommendations are based are representative of the network's current members. This is not to imply that further cities or countries are not valid or beneficial to the study, but that our current reach does not extend to them.

Similarly, as the network and its membership expands, it contains a larger variety of venue and festival sizes, particularly in terms of their physical capacities and audience demographics.

2 INTRODUCTION & RESULTS

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2.1 INTRODUCTION TO AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT

Audience development can be defined as 'attracting diverse people at scale towards a social object'². It can be targeted at a specific demographic of customer under the hope that it will spread throughout the niche audience via word of mouth, or it can operate as a catch-all to drum up a variety of business under the hopes of appealing to any and all interested parties.

According to Music Network Music Network Audience Development Strategy three elements of audience development can be identified: marketing, outreach and programming³. Marketing ensures audience awareness and outreach ensures demographic appeal and inclusion, while programming works with both artists and promoters to ensure a high-quality season of shows.

» It's a delicate balance of exciting programming, passionate audiences that are willing to pay for music, a mature and professional industry that collaborates and works together and supportive governments (we have three tiers in Australia). «

Emily Collins, Managing Director, MusicNSW, Sydney (AUS)

Audience development must consider existing audiences while appealing to new ones, thereby expanding audiences rather than substituting them.

» It starts with research and making sure you have the expertise and facilities to attract the audience you want through credible programming, efficient marketing efforts and a deep knowledge of the competition. «

Jesper Bay, Manager, Consultant & member of The Music Committee, Aarhus (DEN)





2.2 RESULTS & FINDINGS

Below are the results and findings of the questionnaire, which is the basis for this report. A copy of the full questionnaire can be found in the appendix. We know any large sequence of numbers and statistics can make the reading a bit dry, so we've tried to make it as amusing as possible and included a lot of graphs to make things easier to remember.

² Correa (2012)

³ Music Network (2007

I. HARD FACTS ABOUT THE VENUES AND FESTIVALS

Questions 1.1 & 1.2: The following venues and festivals were interviewed

Venue	City/Country	Capacity	URL
De Oosterpoort & Stadsschouwburg	Groningen (NL)	Main hall (1800), Small Hall (750), Playhouse (700)	http://www.de-oosterpoort.nl/
Eurosonic Noorderslag (a non-profit organisa- tion/stichting)	Groningen (NL)	35 stages between 150-3000	https://www.eurosonic-noorderslag.nl/en/
Fonden VoxHall	Aarhus (DK)	Atlas (300) and Voxhall (700)	http://fondenvoxhall.dk/
Kukuun	Hamburg (GER)	199	http://www.kukuun.com/
Mojo Club (limited liability - GmbH)	Hamburg (GER)	2 stages at 150 and 800	http://www.mojo.de/
Molotow Club	Hamburg (GER),	3 stages at 350, 150 and 80	http://molotowclub.com/
Oxford Art Factory	Sydney (AUS)	Main stage (400) and Gallery Bar (100)	http://oxfordartfactory.com/
Paradigm VOF (Para- digm Festival)	Groningen (NL)	3 days at 7000 per day	http://www.paradigm050.com/
Simplon (foundation)	Groningen (NL)	Main stage (350) and small stage (135)	http://simplon.nl/
SPOT festival (foun- dation)	Aarhus (DK)	14 stages, total capacity 12,000	http://spotfestival.dk/
Radar (self-governing institution)	Aarhus (DK)	300	http://radarlive.dk/
Resonanzraum St. Pauli / Resonanzraum UG (limited liability entrepreneurial com- pany)	Hamburg (GER)	250	http://www.resonanzraum.club/
Reeperbahn Festival (GbR - a partnership with unlimited liability)	Hamburg (GER)	Over 70 venues around Hamburg's Reeperbahn; daily capacities at 6000 (Wed), 9000 (Thur), 13000 (Fri) and 14000 (Sat)	https://www.reeperbahnfestival.com
TAPE	Aarhus (DK)	240	http://www.tapeaarhus.dk/
TRAIN	Aarhus (DK)	1000	https://www.train.dk/
Venue 505	Sydney (AUS)	160	http://venue505.com/
Vera (association)	Groningen (NL)	Main hall (510) and small hall (70)	http://www.vera-groningen.nl/

Figure 1: Hard facts about the venues and festivals

1.3 Programming

All venues offer concert programming of some kind. 75% clarify this as performances, just over half (56.3%) programme talks, just under half (43.8%) host conferences and 25% host discourse, meaning for example panels about current topics of society. Other programming had minimal representation, with only one venue responding for each category of film, club nights, cinema, stand-up and arts/film/literature/workshops/food.

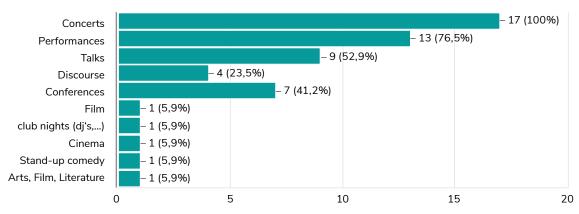


Figure 2: What kind of program does your venue offer?

1.4 Genres

11 venues host rock frequently. Hip-hop was more varied, with a quarter of venues hosting it very frequently, and a quarter falling just below the midway point.

Soul was at the lower end of the spectrum, with only two venues hosting it frequently. Although jazz had slightly more even representation, it still leaned towards the lower end of the spectrum as well.

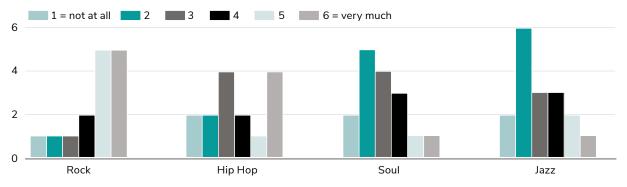


Figure 3a: Which musical genres are presented in your venue/at your festival the most?

Electronic music was slightly more common; a quarter of respondents host it very frequently, and half of respondents fell either just below or just above average.

Experimental music, like hip-hop had varied representation that leaned towards under-representation with a notable spike of being very frequently played by just under a quarter of respondents. Pop had above-average to frequent representation.

Alternative music is played frequently among respondents, with over a quarter playing it very often had half playing it often.

Underground music fell evenly across the spectrum. Many venues also noted performances of an 'undefined' genre, although these were less frequent.

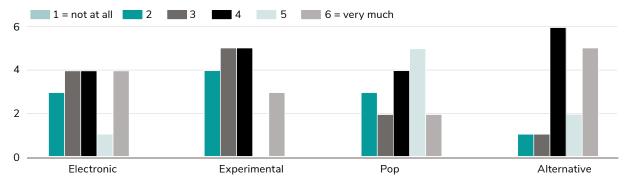


Figure 3b: Which musical genres are presented in your venue/at your festival the most?

Notable trends among these findings are that electronic, experimental, pop, alternative, underground and 'other/undefined' genres are all played to some degree by each of the respondents. Rock, pop, alternative and underground music had the strongest representation. Notably, underground and hiphop seem to be genres that either aren't played often or are played very much, suggesting dedicated audiences. Soul and jazz music were the least popular genres among respondents.

1.5 Financing

Over half (62.5%) of the respondents are financed by a combination of funding and tickets. Some venues or festivals were sponsored by government funding, funding from arts foundations, commercial sponsorships, supplementary gastronomy sold onsite, renting the venue space to third parties and private donations.

1.6 Curfew

Three respondents have no curfew, and one has an occasionally-enforced curfew. Those subject to a curfew have a range of closing hours from 2am to 5am (although one venue answered that they are not allowed to accept more people after 2am, but they are permitted to serve alcohol until 3am). One respondent, a festival held in multiple locations, noted that any outdoor shows must be finished by 22.30/23.00 and most performances held in non-traditional venues have a curfew between 23.00/00.00, while any clubs within its program are not issued a curfew.

1.7 Disability Access

A quarter of respondents have accessible restrooms, and over a quarter have lifts or ramps for disabled access. Just over half have disabled parking. Only two respondents have induction loops for hearing aids, and less than a quarter had dedicated viewing platforms or seating areas.

II. KNOWLEDGE ABOUT YOUR AUDIENCE

2.1 Employment Status

Most venues would identify their audiences as university students or full-time workers. 6 venues said university students were 20-40% of their audience, and another 6 noted them as 40-60%. 8 venues noted full-time workers as 20-40% of the audience, 2 venues said they comprised 40-60% of the audience and a quarter of the venues said they made up 60-80%. Almost half of the venues estimated that freelance employees made up 20-40% of the audience. Only three venues had an audience comprised primarily of schoolkids. These estimations are derived from their own audience surveys and feedback strategies, their incorporation of educational programmes and the demographic of their content.

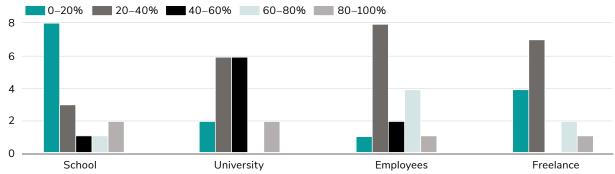


Figure 4: What is the employment status of most of your venues audience?

2.2 Age Percentages

Quite reflective of employment figures, the most prominent age brackets of the audiences was 25-34 and 35-45. Those aged 16-24 and 45+ were noticeably underrepresented. 25 to 34-year-olds comprised between 20-40% of half the venues and 40-60% of almost all of the remainder (one venue even noted at least 80% of its audience fell within that bracket). 35 to 45-year-olds made up 20-40% of just under half the respondents, and 40-60% of just under a quarter.

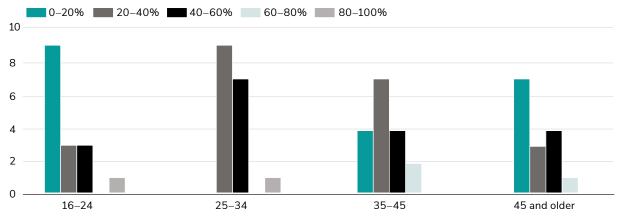


Figure 5: What percentage of your audience does each age bracket comprise?

2.3 Reasons for Visiting

The programming was considered by all venues the most common reason for attending a show. The discovery of new music was either a very common reason, or a small but prominent motive for its audience. Some venues also held their legacy as motive for attending a show, with almost half saying it was a high motivator and only one noting it was not a factor at all. Festivals, when extracted, fell more evenly across the spectrum, and did not consider their legacy as important, although it still registered as a factor.

2.4 Who Is Not Visiting Yet

Many venues expressed a desire to broaden their audience demographic, noting particular difficulties in appealing to school-aged children (which corresponds with the current audience compositions reported earlier), women and international visitors. Only two venues expressed satisfaction that they had reached their target audience. Although few listed the reasons they could currently broaden their audience, one mentioned budget restrictions and another noted that the large size of their venue wasn't conducive to the environment favoured by mid-twenties club-goers.

» Just big names doesn't work in Groningen. It's about making special parties and making the audience feel special. «

Merlijn Poolman, Popstad BV Groningen & Subciety, Groningen/NL

III. EVALUATION AND DATA COLLECTION

3.1 Evaluation

Every respondent noted that they evaluate their programming, although not everyone specified any formal tactics. One venue issues a questionnaire, though did not specify to whom the questionnaire is sent. Another compiles information into an annual report, which is presented to their management for improvements. One interesting strategy that was mentioned was the use of beacons, which are devices that connect to smartphones' bluetooth signals and are able to anonymously track customers. Many venues, from their vague but affirmative answers, seem to generally check that their capacity is filled and welcome feedback from both artists and audience members.

3.2 Finding Out Who is Visiting

87.5% of respondents use data from ticket sales to determine the statistics and demographics of their audience. 81% use Facebook analytics, and 50% of the respondents use Google analytics. On a smaller, but still notable, scale are visitor questionnaires, used by 37.5% of respondents. Only one venue noted that they evaluated their newsletter and marketing tactics.

3.3 Using Data

Despite the minimal newsletter and marketing evaluation claimed in question 3.2, many respondents use this data to strengthen marketing and promotion tactics. 62.5% strengthen their current appeal to their target demographic, while 68.8% are trying to expand their audience reach to bring in diversity. It is notable that the respondents feel it is more important to strengthen marketing tactics than programming, with only half of respondents strengthening programming for diversification and a quarter trying to promote to existing audiences. Finally, just under a third of respondents use this data to appeal to third party sponsors.

IV. PR AND MARKETING METHODS

4.1 Online or Offline Communication

Online communication is strikingly popular for marketing campaigns, which can explain why many venues track Facebook and Google Analytics but rarely do on-site evaluations, as expressed in 3.1. Offline marketing is less popular, though not unheard of, and every respondent uses such methods to some degree.

4.2 Preferred Communication Channels

Every one of the venues/festivals has a website and all but one use it frequently, with 88% using it very frequently. In terms of social media, Facebook is the most popular method of communicating with audiences, with every single respondent marking their Facebook homepage and special events pages at the top end of use. Half the respondents also used Facebook ads very frequently, but their popular quickly tapered out with the remaining half. Instagram was hit or miss, with just over half using the platform frequently and the remainder using it intermittently.

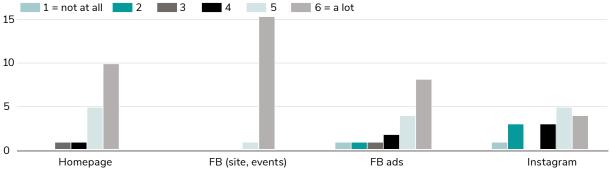
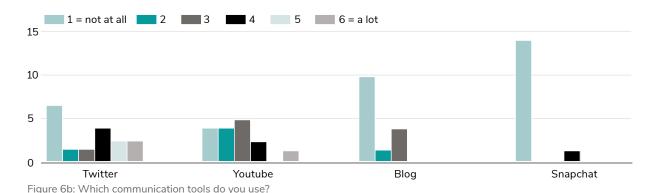


Figure 5: What percentage of your audience does each age bracket comprise?

Twitter and Youtube were less popular options, with most respondents using the platforms infrequently to not at all. Rounding out online platforms, blogs and Snapchat were the least popular methods. 87.5% of respondents did not use Snapchat at all, and 62.5% did not use blogs at all.



Newsletters, such as through email, are also utilized by many of our respondents, with just over half

Physical advertising is still a steady, if less used, way to reach audiences. Street posters and flyers fall towards the lower end of the spectrum, but they are used occasionally. Ads in magazines are even less frequent, with a quarter of respondents not placing such ads at all.

>> When talking about Marketing it's more flyers and posters again than five years ago. But it's mostly Facebook. «

Merlijn Poolman, Popstad BV Groningen & Subciety, Groningen/NL

using them frequently and only one not sending them out at all.

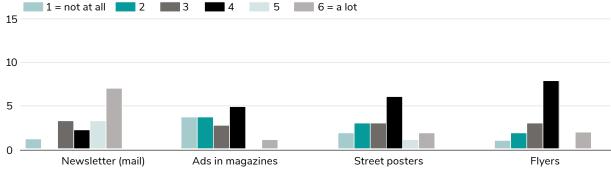


Figure 6c: Which communication tools do you use?

Finally, radio advertising is an unpopular option among our venues/festivals, with 37.5% not using the platform at all and another 37.5% using it very infrequently. Classic PR (media content) fell across the spectrum, with some venues using it very frequently and some not using them at all.

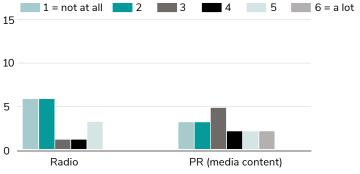


Figure 6d: Which communication tools do you use?

4.3 Most Effective Communication Channels

The effectiveness of the advertising platforms was reflective of their popularity among respondents. The Facebook homepage and special events pages were deemed the most effective methods to reach audiences, with Facebook ads falling closely behind. The venue/festival website is considered reliable, but with a less overwhelming spike in perceived effectiveness. Instagram marked a general indifference among respondents, with one believing it to be highly effective, and the remaining split evenly along the scale.

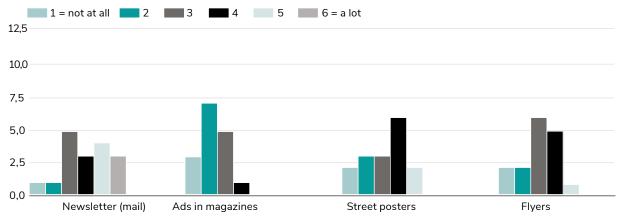


Figure 7: Which communication channels are the most effective?

Again, Twitter and Youtube fell towards the lower end of popularity, with blogs and Snapchats deemed completely ineffective by 68.7% and 81% of respondents, respectively. Newsletters received healthy feedback of reliability, and street posters and flyers are also steady, if not highly effective. Ads in magazines and on radio are perceived as fairly ineffective, with just over half of respondents marking them as barely effective to completely ineffective.

One notable difference was that of PR methods; despite their underwhelming popularity (even falling slightly towards the lower end of the scale), most respondents marked them at the higher end of effectiveness.



4.4 Communication Channels To Reach Future Visitors

In keeping with earlier responses that most of the venues/festivals would like to diversify their audience, many use social media to reach those which are not frequent visitors. In fact, every single respondent mentioned either Facebook directly or social media in general as their specific channel to reach audiences. Street posters and flyposting are also popular methods specific to pulling new faces. Three respondents actively network among audiences by reaching out to organizations, artist associations and members of their target market to gain first hand insight into trends and demands.

4.5 New Communication Channels

When asked which methods of marketing the venues/festivals were not using five years ago, Instagram was the most popular answer, marking a notable rise in popular in the last few years. Although Facebook was mentioned a few times, its absence, coupled with its popularity in 4.2, shows that most venues/festivals have been using it for longer than 5 years. One respondent admitted they felt they were missing out on newer social media platforms, though they did not specify which ones these were.

V. COOPERATIONS AND JOINT PROJECTS

5.1 Cooperations (in the city, with other venues and festivals)

There is a large amount of cooperation between venues in the same city as well as those in the same country. 37.5% even cooperate with venues/festivals abroad. Only one respondent noted they worked with trade unions or hotels in their region. This cooperation appears in the form of knowledge exchange and collaborative ideas generation. Existing venue associations, such as those elaborated on in 5.3, often organize events in which their member venues/festivals can meet in person and network among each other.

5.2 Education Projects

Half of the respondents offer some education programming or workshops oriented towards youth, including DJ academies and summer schools. One respondent combines their classic repertoire with urban and contemporary influences to reach younger audiences through a specialized concert series, and there are several dedicated collaborations with local schools, although the specificities were not listed, as well as a youth choir. Another festival is co-partner for a Music Business Summer School as part of its programming, this year divided into two initiatives: one focused on music publishing and the other on live entertainment. Curriculum subjects include everything from navigating the digital market when releasing music to legal considerations when organising a festival. The multi-day events are open to seasoned professional and independent creatives and give attendees plenty of opportunity to hone their networking skills.





5.3 Further Associations

Just over half our respondents noted they work with other venues or associations to some degree. One venue is in early stages of a scheme to share data from ticket sales with other venues. Several Danish respondents work with Dansk Live, and the Dutch respondents are members of VNPF. In Germany, several respondents mentioned IHM (Hamburg Music Business Association) in Hamburg. Other names which appeared include Yourope, VDKD (Verband der Deutschen Kozertdirektionen e.V.), Clubkombinat and Innofest. There was no indication that these collectives as a whole work together, but rather focus on collaboration between their own venues, offering network events for their members to meet with promoters and other club managers in the collective. Dutch and German venues in particular had strong support from associations, while it was expressed that Sydney venues distinctly lacked such an official system, with many venues operating entirely independently spare a few friendships.

VI. PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

6.1 Future Plans for Programming & Audience Development

Most development plans include a general desire to broaden audience demographics while maintaining the appeal to current audiences. One venue is in the process of creating a 'virtual room' to present their concerts and thus expand immediate audiences beyond their physical capacity. Another respondent is focusing on membership programs and corporate alumni programs, as well as beginning work partnering with hotels.





6.2 Interest In Further Education

69% of respondents are very or extremely interested in learning more about marketing and audience development. A quarter of respondents were interested to a degree, falling central along the spectrum. Only one was not interested in further education and best practice exchange.

6.3 Formats Of Knowledge Exchange

The most popular form of knowledge exchange that our respondents would be interested in is a workshop, held at an industry conference or festival. Online courses and conference calls fell about even in terms of their popularity, with respondents rating them across the spectrum. 50% of respondents marked both conference calls and online courses on the positive end of the scale. 31% of respondents are quite interested in both formats of knowledge exchange.



2.3 SPOTLIGHT INSTAGRAM

The questionnaire shows that the responding venues have a general desire to broaden audience demographics. Facebook is frequently used by all participants of the poll, but social media marketing is still not used to its full potential. Take, for instance, Instagram, which is used either frequently or passively by respondents.

Instagram is now regarded as the most relevant and fastest growing social media platform when it comes to brands, marketing and also sponsoring, which is why this report wants to set a special focus on this tool and expand the horizon for its opportunities.

Cracked: 6 Tips to Improve Your Instagram

For more than 500 years, the written word was the most important medium of the Enlightenment, the means of discourse. Since the advent of the Internet and smartphones, words are being slowly replaced by images. Instead of pure text messages, photos and short videos are sent, as on Instagram. They are as easy and cheap as ever to spread, at any time and almost everywhere. The fundamental relevance of Instagram lies in its future viability. It is more than an app for editing and distributing photos and videos, more than just one of many social networks. It is simultaneous mobile, social and visual communication, and, like Snapchat, it represents the changing media usage and communication behavior of people.²

The results of the survey showed either a strong or intermittent use of Instagram, showing that it's still growing in popularity as a business tool. Globally, it has really taken off as a platform. Many venues have taken advantage of its marketing capabilities, especially music festivals, but others are still hesitant to use it and perhaps don't see the benefits of it yet.

After a deeper analysis of the Instagram accounts of the involved venues and festivals, it became clear that there is still a lot of untapped potential, as determined by engagement rates and the most successful posts. These posts were either the ones where something was raffled or contained content with no direct link to the venue or festival (for example, posts about the bad weather in the city). Also, the use of growth hacks such as hashtags can be expanded.

Instagram presents a plethora of opportunities to reach younger audiences while pulling fans outside your physical reach. The problem with using social media is often a matter of knowing how to do it, so this section will provide a simple but effective map for how to maximise your Instagram campaigns. Through widespread research and an analyses of channels from music and other sectors, we collected 6 tips to improve your instagram channel. #handson



1. General Page Setup

- a. Visitors should see immediately that this is the official venue account, the font should be clear and not too small and the profile picture should match with other social media platforms.
- b. The Username should be clear and simple.
- c. The Bio is the place within Instagram where you find all the action. This is still the only place where a link can be placed.

¹ Heuser (2016)

² Kobilke (2017)



2. Content Strategy aka general questions to be clarified for your venues account

- a. Which content is interesting for your target audience?
- b. What do other venues and festivals do?
- c. Quality content with good pictures and clear messages usually work best, as simple as it sounds.



3. Growth Hacks

- a. Timing: Track the best time for you to post your content, when are your users online the most. For this check Instagram Business, or apps like for example Prime to find out when is the best time to post.
- b. Constant posting: Pages with a lot of growth post up to 5 posts a day. The mighty Instagram algorithm rewards constant posting. A thing with Instagram still is, that the process of posting needs still be done by a person and can not yet me timed like on Facebook.
- c. Hashtags: Hashtags offer the means to reach out to new followers. Think outside the box and know your target audience.
 - i. How many hashtags are good? 30 is the maximum Instagram allows. More hashtags create more engagement, but using too many can also seem a bit 'spammy' #middleground.
 - ii. Hashtag research: How much reachout does the hashtag have? Hashtags like for example #festival have over 18 Mio contributions.
 - iii. Use local or international hashtags, depending on who your audience is
 - iv. You can post the hashtags directly in the photo caption or as part of a comment underneath. Try out what works and what not. Instagram is often a lot of try and error. Just try it out.
- d. Communication with other accounts:
 - i. Followers react to clear Call to Actions (CTA):
 - 1. Good pictures with a clear CTA have a much higher reach out
 - 2. Comments are important for the algorithm ranking; they show active engagement.
 - ii. Competitions
 - 1. A good tool to get more engagement.
 - 2. Prizes can be for example free tickets to a concert, an album, merch or drinks vouchers.
 - iii. S4S Strategy
 - 1. Share for a share or Shout Out 4 Shout Out. Make sure to coordinate any of these behind-the-scenes, though. Using the popular hashtags (#f4f, #l4l or #followback, among others) can look unprofessional on a business profile, budding or not.
 - iv. Direct communication
 - IG is a easy way to communicate directly with your audience. Like and reply to comments, keep an eye on your direct messages (and requests) and comment on posts by followers or musical guests. The more involved you are, the more fans will be encouraged to engage.



4. Creating content

a. Quotes

 i. A quick an easy way to create content, provided that they are good ones (i.e. Quotes from artists playing at a venue/festival, or staff about their experience).

b. Videos

- i. Videos are the marketing trend of 2016 and, with Instagram pushing their reach, they will be even more important in the future.
- ii. Instagram's time limit is 1 minute, but 30 seconds to 1 minute is ideal. Consider film trailers when creating promo videos: high quality, with many clips (montage) and large fonts portraying simplified, direct messages.

c. Telling Stories

- i. Everybody likes a good story and everybody wants to know the end
- ii. With stories such as 'Shortly before the concert' or your head of booking explaining his daily business, you can intensify the engagement of your followers.

d. Instagram Stories

- i. With Instagram Stories stories can be told quickly via short videos or photos lasting 24 hours (similar to Snapchat).
- ii. 'Verified' accounts can posts links for viewers to 'swipe up' into an external tab
- iii. Instagram stories pulls on people's FOMO (fear of missing out), by forcing them to watch right away or else miss the video entirely.
- iv. Stories are great for broadcasting events or the lead-up to an event. The immediacy of the content gives a sense of authenticity and involvement

e. Keep engagement up towards events.

- i. Easier said than done, as somebody needs to be dedicated to this role
- ii. BUT, people will check your IG account more frequently before events and it raises the excitement.
- iii. This means increase the amount of posts per day in the days leading up to events in your venue or festival, and be on the lookout for comments or messages asking for more information.

f. How to find pictures?

- i. If your venue or festival works with professional photographers, utilize those.
- ii. Some acts have their own photographers (even amateur acts can bring friends to take a few shots). Ask them if you can use their photo (and always give credit).
- iii. It can also be pictures from other users which you repost (through a separate reposting app).
- iv. And it can also be pictures with content about something completely different #thinkoutsidethebox and relate it to your stories.

g. Account clean-up.

i. Posts which have not performed as well can easily be deleted so that your account doesn't seem 'spammy'.



5. IG Advertising

- a. A part of Instagram which is possible since the beginning of the year and already more than 1 Mio users are using.
- b. Instagram advertising campaigns can be run on a pay-per-engagement or on an impression (CPM) basis. How much you can expect to spend on your ads will vary based on the objectives you set for your campaigns and the demographics you're targeting.
- c. Video, Carousel or Stories ads and you can target the Location (eg; city, state, country, etc.), Demographics: Basic demographic targeting that includes gender, age, or language. or Behaviors: Pinpoint an audience based on the way users behave on Instagram and Facebook.
- d. Ask yourself if this form of advertising is the right one for your venue or festival.



6. Analytics

- a. IG Business Account.
 - i. With the IG Business account it's possible to gain some insight into your page, such as the demographics of visitors and post performances.
 - ii. A business profile also lets you add one-click contact details (such as a 'call' button or an address which will link to the Maps app) and business hours.
- b. You can see even more information via free apps like INK361, Social Blade, or Prime
- c. Tracking Bio Link.
 - i. Link-shortening apps like (Bit.ly) lets you track who clicks on your link. This information can be used to improve your marketing strategies.



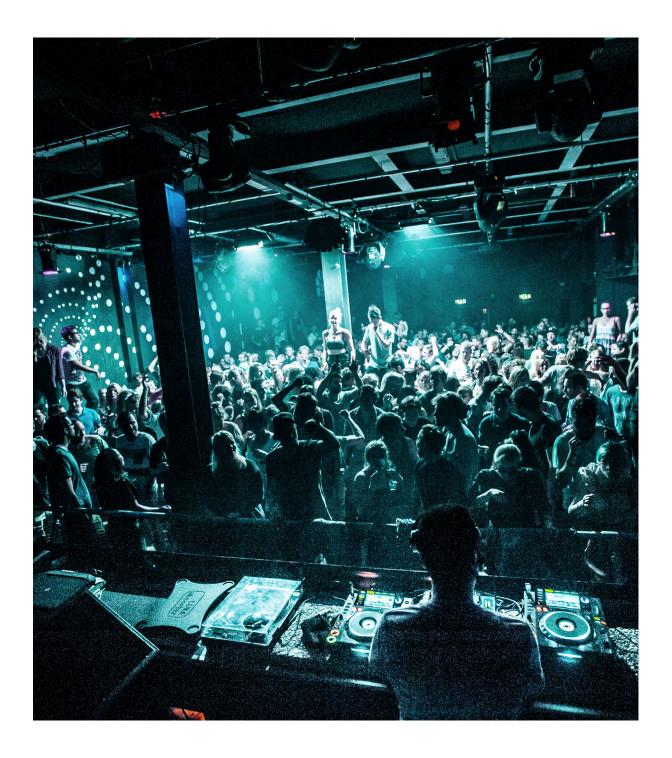
7. Workflow

Sidenote: We are talking optimum frame for the social media work now. If time, staff and money are there, then this could be a good way to do it, there should be:

- a. Staff
 - i. Strategist for an overall Social Media Strategy.
 - ii. Various content contributors, this can be booker, promoter, culture managers working in the venue or at the festival.
 - iii. Social Media Manager (pulls the strings together, and schedules the posts)
 - iv. 1-3 media archives where you get your content from.
- b. Content plan
 - i. Ical works as well as Trollo or an Excel sheet.
- c. Communication of Social Media staff
 - i. Via WhatsApp, Slack or simply email.
- d. Content archive, for texts and pictures
 - i. Notes, Google Drive or Dropbox.
- e. Working Area
 - i. With scheduling and conglomerating apps like Later, Hootsuite, IFTTT or Buffer. Here it's possible to have multiple users who can access the same IG account, additions and edits can be seen by all users.³

³ Ct. Pro Photo (2017), Schwensfeger (2017), Shaoolian (2017)

We know, a lot of you will think, 'I don't have time for this' and you don't see the outcome of this right away. BUT, the social media world is as a holistic pool of diverse possibilities to be in contact with your existing and potential new audiences. It is definitely worth looking into this with more detail and with a more strategic approach, if you haven't done it already.



3 ACTION PLAN & RECOMMENDATIONS

3 ACTION PLAN & RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the survey represent a global picture: venues wishing to expand their demographics and find a place within the world of digital marketing. Tourism is a mass market to tap into, and social media expands market reach to create long-term brands and global reputations.

I. VENUE COMMUNICATION IN GENERAL

1. Recommendation: Utilize Online Platforms

Online platforms are interdependent and should be used simultaneously, even if it means posting the exact same thing on each profile (more on the simplicity of doing that later!). This enforces the consistency of a branding marketing campaign and not only ensures you reach your audience from multiple angles but also gives you access to some users which may prefer one platform over another and therefore be more engaged with it.

1.1 Facebook

With over 1 billion daily users, Facebook is well-used by every one of our respondents, and wisely so. This is no surprise, as it has the most extensive business profiles, offering integrated contact details and business profiles, including a map showing the location (things Instagram has only recently, and minimally, incorporated). Facebook is a great tool because your content is very likely to appear on a third party's newsfeed simply by association; if someone 'likes' a 'public' post, that action and the post shows up on the newsfeed of each one of their friends. Therefore, the promotion by association rate is high. Facebook is good for both long-term and short-term campaigns, and their events pages are highly useful tools to get an idea of attendance numbers before events and encourage people to invite their friends. Facebook analytics allows the admin of a 'Page' (different from a personal profile) to track post performances, the demographics of engaged users and even shows you by percentage your level of engagement compared to previous periods of time. Because of the amount of information the site allows its users to enter, some demographic information, such as education level and employment, can quickly be obtained through your profile. You can also pay to have your post promoted on the newsfeeds of your followers (with different rates for different levels of promotion).⁴

1.2. Instagram

Instagram is used by most of our respondents, having grown in popularity over the years. Its focus on photographic and video content has made it very popular with aesthetic-based industries such as fashion, makeup and yes, even music. This is due to the shift in brands promoting a 360-degree 'lifestyle' despite its core product. Whether you are a performer, fitness expert, baker, or business order, you create an image of your environment based on the aesthetic of your profile, inspiring followers to get involved in your activities. The introduction of Instagram Stories, short videos or photos which disappear after 24 hours, has also pushed the sense of immediacy and authenticity by appealing to consumers' FOMO (fear of missing out), as it permits them to feel more involved with moments as they happen. The platform and its tricks are explored in more detail in section 2.1 Spotlight Instagram.

⁴ Facebook (2017)



1.3. Twitter

With posts limited to 140 characters and page bios limited to 160, Twitter is the social media equivalent of an elevator pitch. Its fast-paced use of hashtags and trending topics is perhaps even more pronounced than on other platforms, with a list of national and global trends appearing in a sidebar for every user. This means it's more important than ever to make yourself a part of the conversation and be timely with your own announcements. Content-wise, your feed should consists of self-authored tweets promoting your venue or festival's activity blended with retweets of statuses by other industry players (did an artist tweet about their upcoming performance with you? Retweet it!). Tweets can be enhanced with the use of photos, which jump out in people's feeds and catch their attention. You can also shorten any external links to bit.ly format to conserve character use. Google offers a URL shortening device at goo.gl. Utilize trending topics to jump in on conversations. Users often click on the topics as a news source, which they can organize by 'top' or 'latest'. The more you tweet about it, the more you'll be seen on the 'latest' feed.

Choose who you follow carefully. Twitter closely monitors 'aggressive following', so although you can utilize a #followback strategy, it's best to stick to following business partners, potential clients and sponsors, artists and bands and general industry professionals. This keeps your newsfeed informative to your operations and shows followers and customers that you are engaged with your environment.

Finally, like most platforms, Twitter also has built-in analytics for business profiles. It displays the reach and engagement of your posts as well as any ad campaigns you choose to launch through the platform. Importantly, it also gives insight into the demographics and interests (key) of your followers.

1.4. Spotify

Take, for instance, Spotify. Venues and festivals act as tastemakers when they compile playlists of the artists featured at their venue or their current favourites around the world. This gives followers an idea of the genres and acts that can be found live throughout the week and helps emphasize the identity of the venue or festival. Because Spotify can be connected to Facebook accounts (as almost everything can), this should be another tool you use to connect with and track online analytics, such as finding out where your fans are from and what their ages are.

1.5. Youtube channel

Youtube is a great way to maintain a catalogue of longer, high-quality videos of live performances or promotional trailers for your club nights or festival - like a digital archive. Unlike other platforms, you are unable to share other content or tag other profiles (although you can mention them in the video description and comments). All uploads will be from your own database and refer directly back to your profile. Youtube does not have the sense of immediacy of other platforms, and videos can be longer and more elaborate. Smaller fonts with more writing are acceptable and videos should be 3-5 minutes, ideally. Again, tags can be used and should be selected carefully for search engine optimization (in this case, appearing in the results of the Youtube search bar).

1.6 Hootsuite

Hootsuite amongst others is a social media management platform that allows you to combine all your profiles into one interface, thus creating a single hub where you can check your stats. Hootsuite allows you to set notifications on certain hashtags (giving you a live feed of when those hashtags are used), incorporate multiple profiles on the same platform (three Twitter accounts, for example) and schedule posts. Scheduling posts is particular useful as it allows you to plan your social media campaign in advance and not have to worry about attending to it for a while. Hootsuite offers several pricing tiers depending on your needs and budget and is a useful organizational tool for when your social media engagement really picks up.



2. Recommendation: Identify and Engage Your Most Dedicated Fans

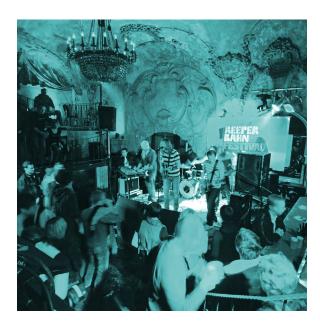
When asked why audiences visit their venue or festival, music discovery was a small but significant motive. For some, it was the most common reason its audience came. This highlights the handful of dedicated music fans, those who act as tastemakers within their friend groups and greater fan groups. These fans should be identified and rallied. Communicate with them. Ask them where their other sources of new music are and what they look for in new acts. Rally them to 'tag' you on social media, or maybe even hire one to run YOUR social media. Which leads us to our next recommendation...

3. Recommendation: Hire or train a Dedicated Social Media Manager

Social Media Editor, Digital Strategist, Online Marketing Officer. Call it whatever you want, the world of online marketing has become so significant that it would be silly not to have a dedicated person for the job. No matter your resources, this needs to be made a priority, whether you have a full-time social media manager or assign an existing team member to add it to their responsibilities. They will be in charge of utilizing photos taking on the night (or even taking them), coordinating online press releases and event announcements and tracking social media insights.

4. Recommendation: Prioritize Feedback Sources

Collecting and utilizing feedback includes anything from tracking interaction on social media platforms and homepages to gauging audiences on the night and sending out feedback forms with e-newsletters. Of course, this last one requires recipients to engage in the newsletter and actively click the link - a difficult task these days when people already get several emails per day. One useful option is to host feedback workshops, inviting patrons to attend debates and voice their opinions. Offer free entry to a gig as an incentive to attend. This allows you to discuss feedback in person and chase any loose ends or questions that may arise. Another way to get feedback is to use an online feedback form as a portal to access wi-fi in the venue or at festival hotspots (many hotspots require guests to watch a video or fill out a demographic questionnaire).





II. ENGAGING NEW AUDIENCES

5. Recommendation: Diversifying Audiences

Although most venues express a strong desire to expand and diversify their audience, few actively pursue direct streams of feedback with customers, choosing instead to gain a generalized idea of their existing audience. A very mixed audience is achieved through mixed marketing methods to reach the different target groups. In order to get an idea of what's desired by the audiences you're seeking, it's important to communicate with them. This can be done by working with venues who have a slightly different audience base, especially those catering to the demographic you're trying to get. See what they're doing, what they're programming and which ways they market to their audiences. Offer

collaborative opportunities, such as cross-promoting online (sharing each other's statuses or featuring in each other's newsletters) or having another venue/festival distribute your flyers (and returning the favour). However, remember to continue marketing to your existing audiences while also diversifying your market, lest they feel alienated. Remember: you're looking to expand, not substitute.

6. Recommendation: Diversifying Programming

Few of the venues surveyed include broader programming such as stand-up and club nights (or comedy stages at festivals), which are also alternative ways to expand audiences. Other suggestions include slam poetry events, comedy nights or themed nights (60's night, hip-hop night etc.). These can all also be portrayed as 'stages' at festivals, which often include alternative programming through comedy tents or silent discos.

Another very interesting suggestion was 'active listening'. Many venues are now introducing evenings during which audience members must put away all distractions (yes..that means mobiles) and actively, quietly listen to the music presented to them. One example of this is the Bridge Music Hall currently being developed in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, which promotes itself as a 'listening room' in which audience members are not allowed to speak during performances.

» Outside of presenting great shows there has to be a focus on educating the audience in proper behavior. More and more shows are being disturbed or ruined by audience members, who are on the phone, talk, or just in general show no respect for the musicians and the rest of the audience. If this trend worsens it will start to dissuade people from showing up. «

John Fogde, Spokesperson and Booker, NorthSide Festival, Aarhus, Denmark

7. Recommendation: Workshops and Education Programmes

Many of the respondents already host some form of community involvement or after-hours education programme. This is a great way to engage the audience between gigs and carve the venue or festival's place in the community. This can be done through either workshops, which by nature feel more inclusive towards a wider age range, or educational classes, which can be coordinated with schools and youth clubs. While most festivals do not have the convenience of a dedicated physical venue in which to host frequent extra programming, they can organize events at dedicated venues, which will maintain their profile and provide an amount of income outside festival season.

» Simplon and Vera are very active in educational programmes, and [you'd be] surprised how creative and innovative their ideas and solutions to problems are. These education programmes aren't really supported in essence by the government. They are more of a by-product of the fact that a lot of volunteers work in these venues and the staff would love them to become professionals. The money comes out of the regular funding the venues have, mostly the Foundation for Performing Arts (Fonds Podiumkunst) and the local municipality (in Groningen for the most part). «

Merlijn Poolman, Popstad BV Groningen & Subciety, Groningen/NL

7.1 Workshops

Workshops, either part of a series or freestanding, can be a great way to engage the broader community and boost programming during off-peak hours. Suggested topics include: technical skills (lights, sound, etc.), DJ workshops, songwriting workshops, home recording and marketing/promotion seminars. This offers a range of services to attendees, from networking and ideas collaboration to

education and business skills development. Programmes can be led by local experts or guests, and present a great opportunity for performers to cross-promote by leading a workshop before their show (and offering discounted tickets to those who attend!).

7.2 Education Programs

Regular evening education programs allow you to reach more people on a steady basis and are often a good way to involve families and youth under 18 (although they don't have to be, and they should be open to all ages). The music education sector heavily caters to classical disciplines, and this is a market opportunity to incorporate pop, alternative, rock, electronic, hip-hop and other genres into education programmes available to all ages. The programmes should be part of a series to allow for maximum skills development, covering topics such as event management, promotion or even music theory and instrument lessons. These can be coordinated with local schools at various education levels (primary, secondary, university), employing local teachers or offering credit for the work undertaken. For example, you can also coordinate work experience or internships, either in an admin position to develop business skills or even as a sound/lights technician on the night.

8. Recommendation: Memberships

Creating member or loyalty programs can entice audiences to attend across events or come back during the next festival instalment. You can choose the platform based the benefits of the membership or customer feedback (how they value the offer). You can offer free membership, utilizing a points system where each ticket purchase awards the member a certain amount of points, which can be redeemed for free or discounted items. You can offer a paid tier, which will need to have a higher value of reward. Some suggestions for items offered to members include: access to ticket pre-sales, exemption from booking fees, early entry to the venue/festival, dedicated viewing area, VIP experiences, free or discounted tickets (free is only recommended for points systems), free or discounted drinks/food from onsite facilities or food vendors and free or discounted merch (from performers or the venue/festival itself). Membership sign-ups are also a great way to obtain customer email address for e-newsletters.



9. Recommendation: Discounts

It may seem silly, but even something as simple as a 2-for-1 drinks special can give people that extra push to attend if they're not familiar with the act. Discounted tickets can be given to increase attendance on days which typically experience low attendance levels, such as weekdays (think of cinema matinees). For festivals, price tiers can be integrated to encourage customers to purchase tickets right away (early bird specials, with prices going up at specified periods). Discounted tickets for the next year can also be offered to ticket holders when purchased in advance. Finally, discounts can also be offered as part of something else, such as the membership program, or price tiers for tickets, with higher 'VIP' prices offering discounted merch or food/drinks onsite.

III. COOPERATIONS, NETWORKS AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

10. Recommendation: Venue Exchanges

One way to build an international audience and market to customers abroad would be to create a venue exchange scheme. There are several artist exchange schemes in existence (for example, Songcircle or Excite), and even city exchanges (Austin-Toronto Music City Alliance), so why can't there be venue exchanges? Acting as a promoter to put on a night of your local acts in a foreign venue can market both the acts and your own venue name. Likewise, you could choose your favourite acts in the city of your chosen exchange venue, to act as a sort of tastemaker. In return, you will host acts of their choosing for a local event as well. Festivals can also get involved in this scheme by sponsoring stages at other festivals or nights at some of their favourite venues (and, likewise, venues can sponsor stages at festivals, such as King Tut's Wah Wah Hut's stage at TRNSMT in Glasgow). In this exchange scheme, you tap into an existing audience who will become familiar with your name and associate it with the good music you put on, which will in turn entice them to visit your venue when they are in your area or recommend it to friends.

11. Recommendation: Engage Music Tourists

This comes down to collaborating with other local business. Strike deals with local hotels and hostels to offer discounted tickets or be part of organized activities (hostels often organize trips for their guests). Festivals especially can offer hotel and travel packages with local hospitality and transport companies (again, think tiers: budget, moderate or luxury hotels and coaches or trains, if the site is rural). Create flyers or pamphlets to place in lobbies of transport hubs, hotels, hostels and tourist information offices. Advertise on Airbnb as part of the local experience, a new service offering organized activities promoted based on an intended holiday location.

12. Recommendation: Expand Network Locally and Internationally

It is important to have a good relationship with other venues and music associations in order to gain knowledge and experience. It's easier said than done, but those good relationships will have a positive effect on your own work. Furthermore, take part in industry networking events and conferences, and coordinate with venues in the area to communicate the demand for knowledge exchange and marketing skills workshops. The International Congress of Concert Venues, held annually as part of Primavera Pro (the conference portion of the Primavera Festival), is one such meeting, providing a platform for knowledge exchange and even compiling a summary of conclusions from the discussions. Other options to consider include Reeperbahn, Spot, Eurosonic and Big Sound, as well as WOMEX (the World Music Expo), the International Live Music Conference in London and Amsterdam Dance Event. These conferences have built-in networks of some of the most well-connected and experienced people in the industry, attending specifically to have their brains picked and to pick yours. They're the perfect places to build international contacts and exchange best practice knowledge. Many respondents mentioned being part of a network or local association, which offered them networking opportunities at dedicated members events and best practice exchange, but not many of those associations crossed paths between each other, meaning networks are limited to the members of your own association. Get in contact with your association and ask them to organize similar mixers or knowledge exchange programmes, this time including associations from other cities.



13. Recommendation: Cross-collaboration with Other Creative Economies

Innovative ideas grow from getting to know new perspectives brought by parallel or even completely separate sectors. You never know where inspiration will strike. Thinking outside the box will be necessary to maintain the current and future status of music venues and festivals. Cooperating with other sectors of the creative economy, such as film or fashion, can be one way to get new input and strategies. The fashion industry, for instance, is a notable leader in social media marketing, particularly through visual platforms such as Instagram and, of course, Facebook. Study them to see how they communicate with fans, through product placement and photo content (crisp images with many colours or colour schemes, tagging partners to access external audiences, etc.) to see what can be integrated into your own strategies. In person, you can work with local creative industries and artists to incorporate them into your programming. Utilize projectors for photographic or videographic slideshows behind performances (or during nights without live music). Tag fashion designers on Instagram when sharing a photo of your performers. Social media is all about interaction, whether you're holding a conversation with fans or giving some credit to partners (and competitors!): get talking.

4 END STATEMENT & OUTLOOK

4 END STATEMENT & OUTLOOK

This study is in early stages and will be expanded to include a broader range of venues and festivals as our network expands. Further data collection, observation and analyses are necessary tools for festivals and venues to develop their audience relationships. Maximising communication streams with fans ensures you hear and meet their demands - it tells you what to do. Utilizing industry networks and working with your competitors and friends tells you how to do it. As you begin to develop your strategy, ask yourself a few key questions:

- What societal role do you want your venue/festival to play in the future?
- Do you want to be recognised as a cultural/social value? If so, how will you achieve this?
- Which business models work best for a music venue/festival?
- What challenges and would you like addressed by city representatives?
- What role does your festival/venue play in the ecological, economical, social or cultural sustainability of your environment and how can you emphasize this?⁵"

"Venues will be successful 10 years from now if they are authentic and have the guts to do something, even if they fail. "

Merlijn Poolman, Popstad BV Groningen & Subciety, Groningen/NL

⁵ International Congress of Concert Venues (2016)

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6 APPENDIX

6 APPENDIX

Questionnaire

Music Cities Network // Marketing & Audience Development - Knowledge Exchange project

The term 'Audience Development' has received much attention lately, but it has been practiced by music operators for a long time. It is a collective term that describes strategic, dynamic and interactive processes that encompass all aspects of promotion, publicity, marketing, public relations, programming, membership, community engagement,

communications and educational programmes aimed at making the arts widely accessible and addressing the needs of existing and potential audiences.

Audience development is increasingly being discussed in the academic field. Music venues and festivals have always had an interest in reaching out to new audiences while strengthening bonds with existing ones.

The Music Cities Network is hereby starting an Audience Development Knowledge Exchange program between the participating cities to investigate best practice models of audience development, participation and experience in the music sector. The focus involves connecting different venues in the participating cities to share their knowledge in the field of audience development.

The Music Cities Network (MCN) is a public/private network dedicated to improving communication and cooperation and sharing research and knowledge between music cities around the world. The current members are Aarhus, Groningen, Hamburg, Melbourne and Sydney.

Please take 10-15 minutes to fill out the following questions. A report on the results will be sent to you within the next couple of months. Thank you for taking part!

* Erforderlich

1. General information about your venue/festival

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Apprenticeship Employees Freelance Other Unsure

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	We use Faceboo We evaluate dat We use entrance	ok analytics ta from ticket sale: e tickets scanners				

9. 2.2 What percentage of your audience does each age bracket comprise?

4. PR and marketing methods

15. 4.1 Which communication channels do you use the most?

Markieren Sie nur ein Oval pro Zeile.

	1 = not at all	2	3	4	5	6 = a lot
Online						
Offline						

16. 4.2. Which communication tools do you use?

Markieren Sie nur ein Oval pro Zeile.

	1 = not at all	2	3	4 5	6 = a lot
Homepage					
FB (site, events)					
FB ads					
Instagram					
Twitter					
Youtube					
Blog					
Snapchat					
Newsletter (mail)					
Ads in magazines					
Street posters					
Flyers					
Radio					
PR (media content)					
Other					

17. 4.3 Which of these are the most effective?

Markieren Sie nur ein Oval pro Zeile.

	1 = not at all	2	3	4	5	6 = a lot
Homepage				\bigcirc		
FB (site, events)						
FB ads				\bigcirc		
Instagram				\bigcirc		
Twitter				\bigcirc		
Youtube				\bigcirc		
Blog				\bigcirc		
Snapchat				\bigcirc		
Newsletter (mail)				\bigcirc		
Ads in magazines				\bigcirc		
Street posters				\bigcirc		
Flyers				\bigcirc		
Radio				\bigcirc		
PR (media content)						
Other				\bigcirc		

18. 4.4 Which channels do you use specifically to reach those who are not frequent visitors yet?

40

Co-operations and join	t projects				
5.1. With whom do you co-oporate Wählen Sie alle zutreffenden Antwo		er venues,	festivals)'	?	
Other venues/festivals in the ci					
Other venues/festivals in your	•				
Other venues/festivals abroad	Country				
Sonstiges:			_		
5.2. Are you involved in education younger/older audiences? If yes, describe them.					
5.3 Are you part of other organisa exchange knowledge and best prayes, please list.					
Plans for the future					
Plans for the future				lianaa dayalana	
	ture regarding pr	ogrammin	g and aud	lience developr	nent
Plans for the future 6.1 What are your plans for the fut	ture regarding pr	ogrammin	g and aud	lience developr	ment
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