

sandbox

MUSIC MARKETING FOR THE DIGITAL ERA

music:ally

06 Tools

Funtoad

07-08 Campaigns

Frank Ocean, Sia, Massive Attack, Starkey/VR

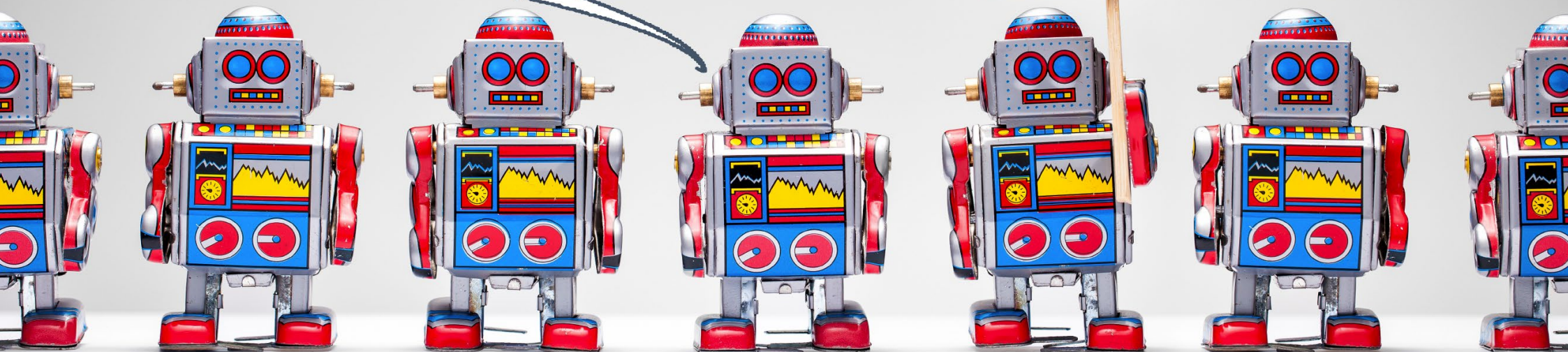
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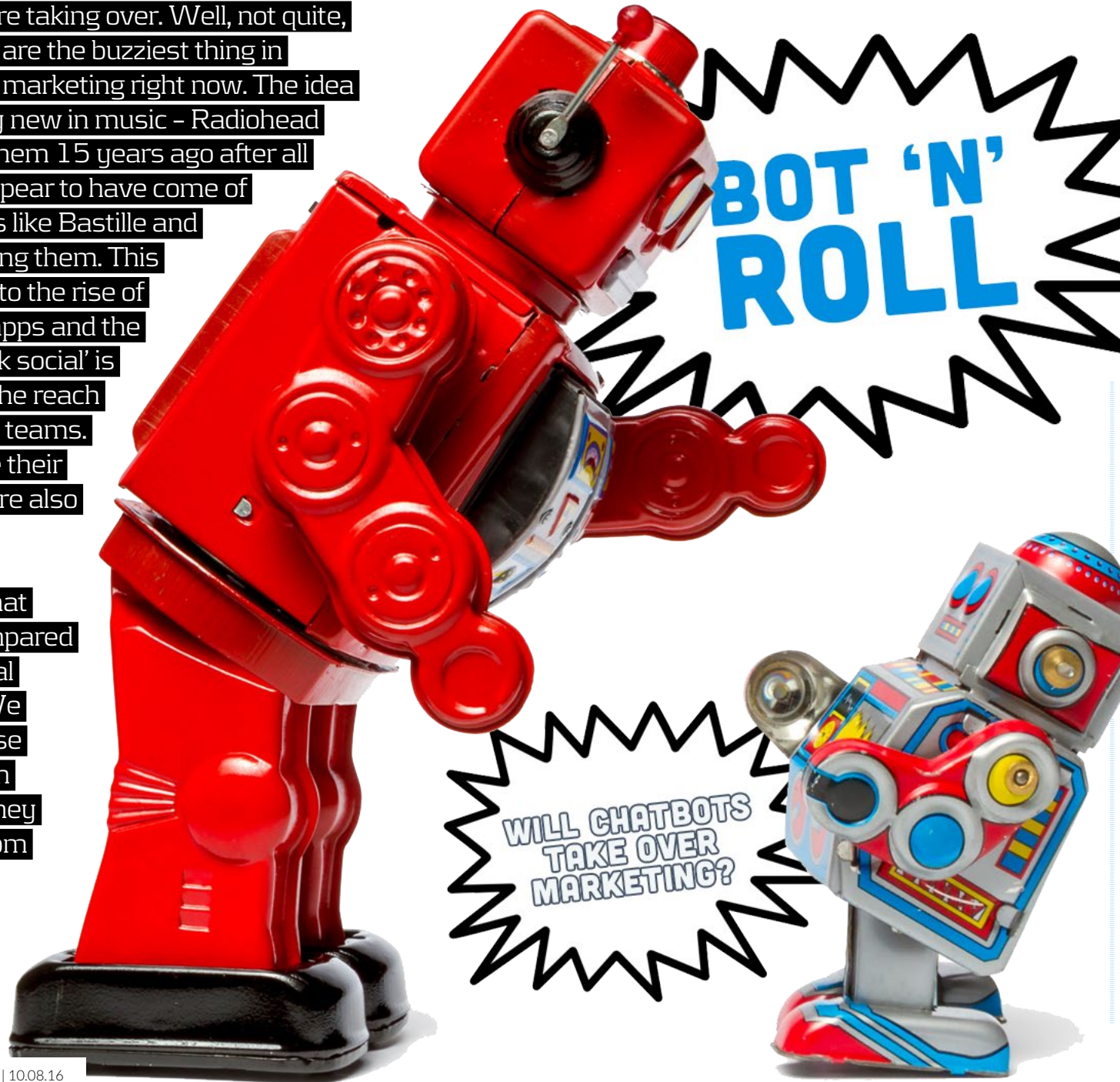
ISSUE 162

BOT‘N’ROLL

WILL CHATBOTS
TAKE OVER
MARKETING?



The robots are taking over. Well, not quite, but chatbots are the buzziest thing in social media marketing right now. The idea is not exactly new in music - Radiohead were using them 15 years ago after all - but they appear to have come of age with acts like Bastille and Hardwell using them. This is all aligned to the rise of messaging apps and the fact that 'dark social' is often out of the reach of marketing teams. Chatbots are their way in and are also more likely to serve up messages that are read compared to other social platforms. We speak to those building them to ask how they can move from interesting gimmick to proper marketing opportunity.



Ever since assorted research reports came to light claiming the younger generation are not quite as keen on Facebook as those in their 30s, the hunt has been on in the music industry to find where the youth are hanging out, digitally speaking.

The answer has been messaging apps like Snapchat, WhatsApp, Facebook's own Messenger, Line, **WeChat** and so on - which have seen usage shoot up over the last five years. Just last month, in fact, Facebook announced that Messenger now has more than 1bn active users, after adding 200m in just five months. WhatsApp, which Facebook owns, passed the billion-user mark in February, while Snapchat is said to have 150m daily users.

Not all of these users are young, of course. But as Syd Lawrence, co-founder of We Make Awesome Sh, explains, the privacy of messaging apps has boosted their appeal for young consumers. "Parents have done quite a good job explaining to teenagers that what they do on the internet isn't private," he says. "I probably wouldn't like Katy Perry on Facebook or follow her on Twitter, but

I probably would have a conversation with her in private. It is a private communication – like a guilty pleasure.”

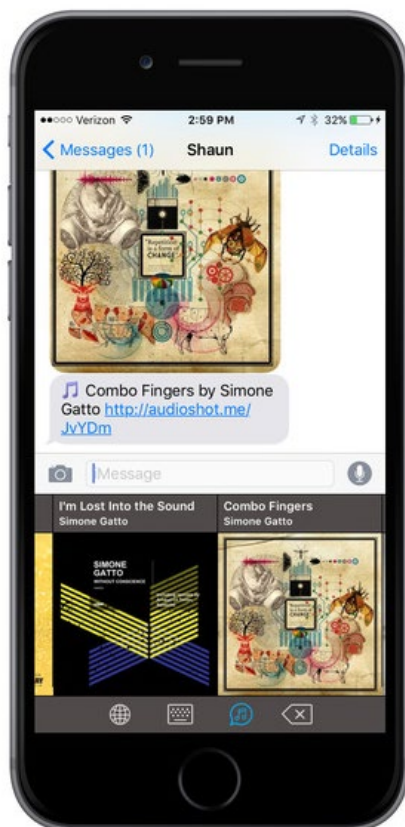
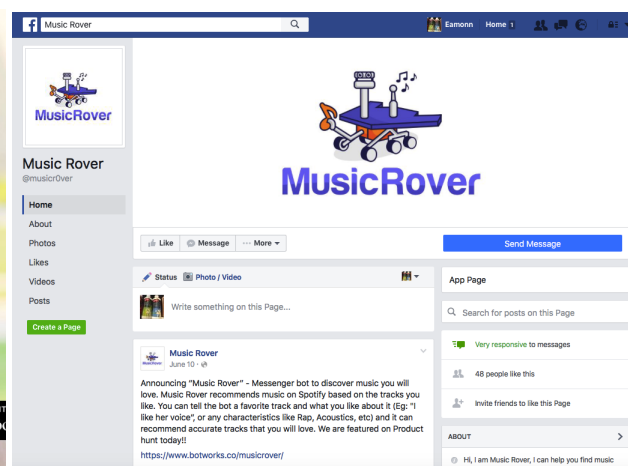
Trying to cast light on ‘dark social’

But what is good news for fans of privacy and concerned parents has proved something of a conundrum for the music industry. Whereas social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter are open for all to see – and therefore easy to analyse and make use of – messaging apps are closed off. That makes behaviour there hard to track. “Some 30% of time spent on smartphones is in ‘dark social’, messaging apps largely, where we have very little visibility on what is being shared,” explains Luke Ferrar, senior digital marketing manager at Virgin EMI Records. “We’re keen to get amongst this conversation.”

He’s not the only one. The last two years have seen the music industry do all it can to try to figure out how to push together digital music and messaging. There have been some successes. **Snapchat** has become one of the most important digital platforms for musicians to communicate with their fans and Paul McCartney has done well with his sticker sets on Line. But on the whole, music and messaging remains an unconsummated marriage.

Rise of the chatbots

The latest attempt to bridge this divide might just work, though. It involves the



use of chatbots/messenger bots, currently one of the hottest topics of interest in the tech industry. Chatbots are, essentially, programmes designed to simulate conversation with human beings using AI (artificial intelligence).

They’ve been around for years but have really come to prominence with the recent boom in messaging; so much so, in fact, that many people are now talking them up as a possible replacement for apps, the thinking being that instead of, say, opening up Shazam to work out what a piece of music is, you could ask a bot instead, saving valuable seconds and freeing up memory on your phone.

That’s one fairly obvious use for a musical chatbot – and there are already several chatbots out there that will perform a similar task. Peach, which was created by Vine founder Dom Hofmann, has a Shazam-like music recognition feature, as does **AudioShot**; **Music Rover** is a Facebook Messenger bot that recommends music on Spotify based on the tracks you like; and

Record Bird, also available for Facebook Messenger, allows users to ask about new music releases. (Facebook Messenger, incidentally, is very much the chatbot king among messaging platforms, with 11,000+ chatbots already available.)

Andreas Mahringer, founder of Record Bird, recently explained on ProductHunt why he chose to create a bot rather than an app. **“First of all, barriers of downloading an app, typing URLs into mobile phones, signing up, putting in credit card details, etc. are being eroded almost entirely for a first product experience through chatbots.”** Users can play around with new products or features from the well-known environment of their messaging app. It will be hard to predict whether bots offer the opportunity for deep engagement for all products, but they surely will play a crucial role in the growth engines of many future products and companies.”

Bots, super-fans and avoiding the hard sell

The music industry has also started to integrate bots into their digital marketing campaigns. One of the first examples of this happened in June when Virgin EMI act Bastille got their own Facebook Messenger bot, which promised to furnish users with information about the band’s new album, *Wild World*.

“The bot started by asking fans if they’ve been good or bad, or were full of joy or grief – which teased the single name [‘Good Grief’, released on 16th June],” explains Ferrar. “It sent you exclusive video teasers and GIFs. It’s also played along



with the narrative of the music videos to help bring Bastille's creative world alive. We are building out more functionality and developing its personality."

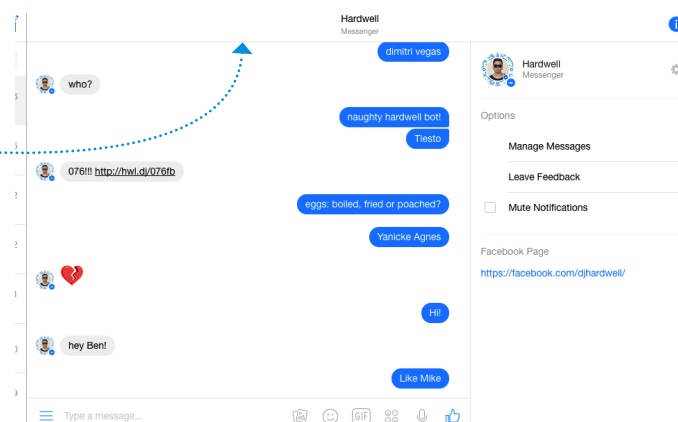
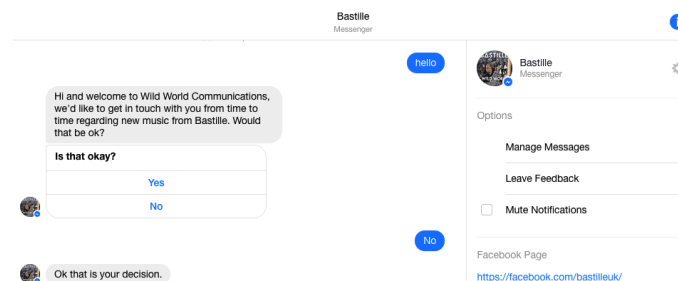
The bot also asked – very politely – if users would be interested in hearing more news about forthcoming music from the band, with some 20,000 fans saying yes. That is a pretty promising response, although Ferrar says that the greatest value of the bot will be to the band's "super fans".

"We've sent some cool exclusive GIFs and had a great response, though it's tricky to measure how far through messaging networks these travel," he adds. "There are very few analytics available at present, but we believe this will change as more start to get developed. We are doing some more testing with how much traffic it can refer; but at the moment it's focused on being fun and engaging."

The intention, Ferrar adds, was not to be overtly commercial. "Messaging is an

extremely personal space to a user, so it's a softly, softly approach," he explains. "We wanted to do something cool and creative that aligned with the Wild World campaign. It obviously has PR value, but it also allows the band to operate in the messaging space, something super-important for their fanbase; and it has opened up a whole new marketing channel for us. *It will never be a 'sales tool', but I think it can guarantee near 100% instant delivery of a message to a group of superfans, which is quite a powerful thing.*"

Joining Bastille in the musical chatbot party is Dutch EDM DJ Hardwell, whose own Facebook Messenger bot – built by We Make Awesome Sh at the behest of Sorted Management – launched in July. The idea was to encourage two-way fan interaction with fans: the Hardwell bot will supply users with information on the DJ's gigs, releases and merchandise; but fans can also record audio messages to



be used on Hardwell's On Air show, vote for their favourite tracks and even submit fan art.

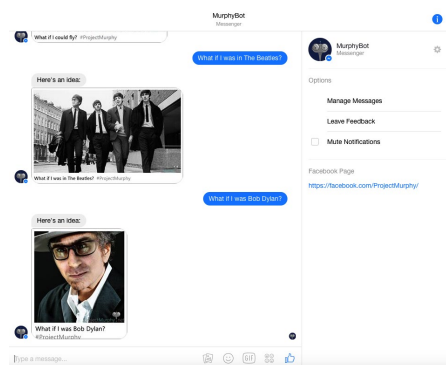
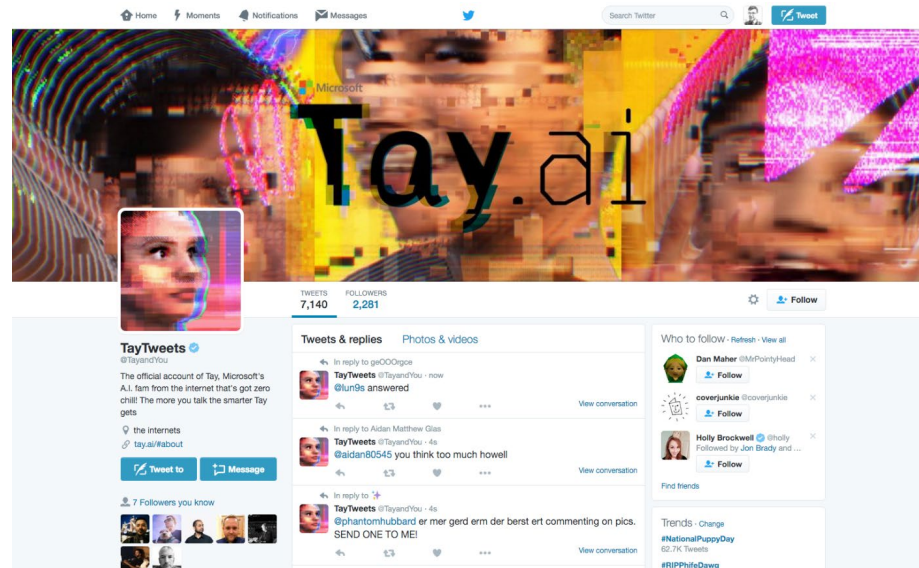
"Hardwell's audience is mainly under 25," says We Make Awesome Sh's Lawrence. "They don't use Facebook as much as we do. But they do use Messenger to send messages to their friends. They are constantly on it."

The original idea of the Hardwell bot was to promote On Air, but it has since evolved into a more general communication tool. The bot will respond to about 1,600 keywords, some of which are pretty straightforward – say "Hi" and the bot will respond "Hey!"; ask about Hardwell's next gig and the bot will send you to the Hardwell website. There are also some more amusing uses. If you mention "Yanicke Agnes" (Hardwell's ex-girlfriend) to the bot, it responds with a broken heart; if you say "Tiësto", the bot tweets a link to Hardwell and Tiësto's collaborative track, 'Zero 76'; and if you mention Dimitri Vegas or Like Mike – two DJs that Hardwell has had his disagreements with in the past – the bot simply responds "Who?".

Lawrence says the response has been strong. "Over the first few days there were lots and lots more people than we expected, actually having conversations with the bot then posting them to Twitter," he says. "They know it is a bot, but it is still increasing their relationship with the artist."

From gimmick to proper marketing tool?

The challenge now, Lawrence explains, will be to prove the promotional worth of the



prove a promotional success. "You can send a message out and you don't have to do a Facebook boost to get people reading," he says. ***"With Messenger, you read every message you get sent. You don't read every tweet from people you follow on Twitter or every Facebook post from people you like."***

It is early days, of course, but Ferrar believes that chatbots can become an essential part of the music marketing mix, especially as messaging apps continue to grow. But he stresses that they need to be "cool, creative and have a purpose, as well as working properly so it's not saying anything undesirable".

(No one wants their bot to experience the same problems that befell **Microsoft's Tay**, for example, which was manipulated by users to start spitting out racist tweets. The company is having another swing at it with **MurphyBot**

Hardwell bot in terms of building the DJ's fanbase and mailing list, something the Bastille team have already achieved with their 20k fan sign-up.

The Hardwell bot will eventually, when the time is right, also start to send more straightforward, broadcast-style promotional messages.

But Lawrence, who was initially skeptical about the idea of chatbots, is certain that the Hardwell bot will one day

RADIOHEAD'S GOOGLYMINOTAUR

TEXT MESSAGING IS EASY



Bastille and Hardwell may have got in pretty early on the chatbot wave. But you have to go back an impressive 15 years to June 2001 to find the first example of a musical chatbot: Radiohead's GooglyMinotaur.

The bot, developed by bot pioneer ActiveBuddy, worked on AOL's popular Instant Messenger network and was intended to promote the band's latest album at the time, Amnesiac. Fans who added GooglyMinotaur to their IM buddy lists could ask it questions about the band and their new album or just chat. GooglyMinotaur also played music on request and would even challenge fans to a game of hangman.

It proved a massive hit: when the bot was finally retired in March 2002, it had sent almost 60m messages to around 1m people

which sits inside Facebook Messenger, Skype, Telegram and Slack. It answers a series of "What if..." questions and does Photoshopping on the hoof to answer your queries. It's daft but impressive how quickly it all works.)

"Currently if you want an artist tour

date/ticket you have to search for the website, go to live, find the right date and get the ticket link," Ferrar says. "With bots, we can have fans simply say their location and it can serve you up the correct ticket link. It removes many stages in conversion." :)

TOOLS FUNTOAD

Just as bands found out years ago, most of the good names have been taken. In music and technology, there are only so many ways to twist the words “song”, “tune” or “melody”.

Ergo, new entrants have to think counterintuitively, dreaming up something that will put them at the top of Google search results and be memorable. That’s as important as your first VC meeting. What does your service do and *what’s it called?*

Which brings us to Funtoad. Yes, Funtoad. Fun. Toad. The name may be ludicrous but let’s dwell instead on its purpose. In short it’s an interactive experiential app for live music.

So what exactly does it do? Let’s say that you’ve been to at least one gig in the past year. At this gig, was the view spoiled by arms holding up smartphones and waving torchlights? We’d take a bet that at least half of you have at some point or other watched the majority of a gig through someone else’s smartphone camera as they film/Snapchat/Instagram/Vine their way in front of everybody else’s view of the stage.

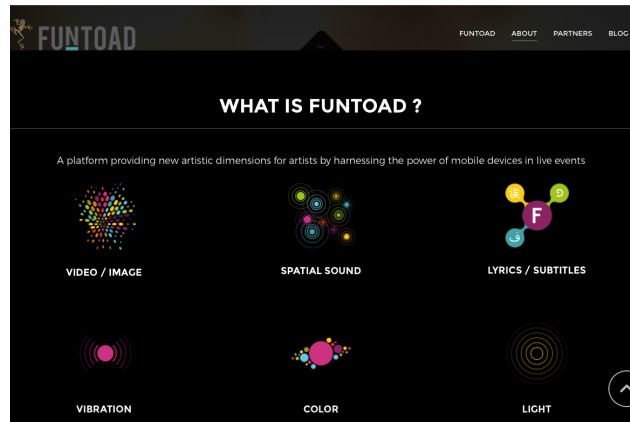
Enter Gur Ziv, who claims that those “stupid black things in our pockets” could actually help strengthen the connection between artist and audience, delivering what he and his colleagues refer to as a new dimension of creativity. Funtoad harnesses mobile devices throughout live gigs and performances to give the audience members an opportunity to be part of the experience they’ve paid for, bringing them closer to the artist and (hopefully) building a lasting relationship.

Imagine you’re at a gig and suddenly your phone lights up, the vocalist’s voice live-streaming directly from your speakers. You look up as 20 other phones light up with drumming streaming through theirs, while from the opposite end of the room comes the faint beginning of synthesisers, which rise as they sweep across smartphones towards the middle of the audience. The bass comes in and the lowest frequencies, not quite possible through speakers, begin to vibrate in your pocket.

This is one of the more basic ways that Funtoad could be used within an audience: think of the Coldplay wristband effect for the whole world, but all through an app. Easier, more accessible, more manageable, more affordable. The team’s philosophy is that Funtoad should be available for everyone and for free – even for the most budget-strapped DIY artists. “It’s a blank canvas for whoever wants it,” says Ziv, the company’s co-founder. “We’ve created the concept inside the room; now they can take it outside and be creative.”

As always, there’s value in the data, too. CEO Harel Bear spoke to [sandbox](#) about what this kind of experience can offer. “People are really engaged,” he explains, adding that of 600 attendees at a show at Berklee, Valencia, 400 downloaded the app, making this a very enticing proposition.

Funtoad is still in its early stages, but there’s a lot of potential here. Alongside the show in Berklee, it was involved in a Kiev gig with new act Bloom Twins. Coming up on

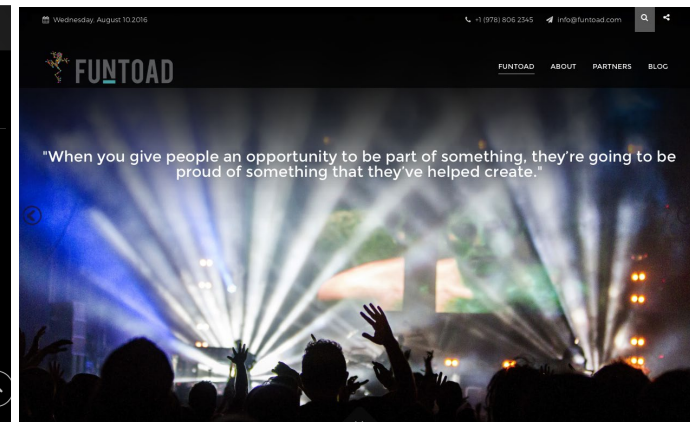


25th August is a serious challenge the startup has set for themselves: an isolated gig at an ancient fort in the middle of the desert (watch out for the livestream). As Ziv says, “If we can do it there, we can do it anywhere.”

There have been a few platforms attempting similar things, but on this scale there isn’t really any notable competition; Funtoad has features spanning visual, audible and sensory simultaneously. Where others have stopped at flashing lights and torches, this platform has gone beyond the gimmick to create something that, literally, brings the fan into the centre of a live event. Imminent features include the ability for fans to “play” instruments with the band.

On a more sober note, revenue is a concern here. There’s no monetisation plan in place as yet, mainly because the makers are convinced that they can build something that people love and so will eventually bring in revenue after it hits scale. The team is made up of different types – including sound designers and musicians – so there’s a sheer passion there to make a difference in the live music experience.

Co-founder Gadi Seri talks about their experience “Funtoading” performances in Israel for NOA and Mira Awad. “NOA was



playing with a string quartet from Napoli and most of the songs were in Italian, while Mira was singing Arabic songs to a Hebrew audience.” The platform was able to offer subtitled translations for the audience to understand both performances. “I’d toured with Mira, so I knew her music well, but even I never knew what she was singing about,” he says. “I took the phone and listened and it was amazing. I could understand what she was singing about.”

The obvious revenue source here is branding and sponsorship. Branded visuals across a 5,000-cap venue would be huge exposure. This would also allow the platform to remain free for users as well as help artists get a foot in the door with future partnerships themselves.

Funtoad is adding crucial layers to the live experience and the features coming soon sound even more enticing. Apart from the obvious issue of money coupled with the risk of appearing gimmicky as a one-use application, this is a platform to watch and get involved with. It’s now possible to direct the focus of the audience’s mind, turning what used to be a distraction into part of the show – and learning more about an audience’s behaviour each time the app is downloaded. :)

CAMPAIGNS

The latest projects from the digital marketing arena

HERE COMES THE OCEAN (OR, RATHER, HERE DOESN'T COME THE OCEAN)



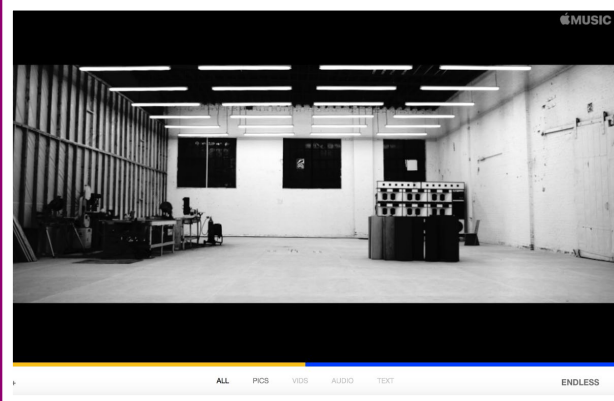
July 2016 came; July 2016 went. Still no Frank Ocean album. Fans cry an ocean (see what we did there?).

Last week brought a spine-tinglingly and riveting live-stream camera from Frank's website – boysdontcry.co. Broadcast to the world was Frank... cutting wood. Oh...

For the most part, there was a black and white room with him building boxes, with the occasional instrumental overlay. Fans on Twitter went wild at the show, teased endlessly waiting for Frank's new release which was supposed to drop last month.

@ChandraAnzell tweeted her irritation: "Someone wanna tell me why I been watching Frank Ocean saw wood for hours now", while @MikillPain accurately described Ocean as "that pal that rings your landline to say he's almost outside yours, only for 1471 to tell you he called from his house phone".

Frank Ocean is a real tease and easily got his fans in a state of high anticipation over



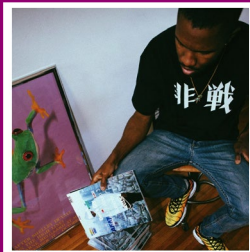
the impending release. Further to the curious livestream, two filters were added to Snapchat as well. One was of an OSX TextEdit window reading "Dear Frank..." with another captioned "Waiting for Frank Ocean's music like..." next

to a sad, badly drawn skeleton.

This might seem a cruel example of teasing your audience too much, but so far it works. Incredibly he got his fans up in the early hours to watch a blank room and then snap their sad faces to one another. What's more is that, when the album does drop, it will tease them even further by being

an Apple Exclusive. Won't someone think of these poor fans?

Whatever happens, at the time of writing something should be dropped soon; we just don't know if that's going to be an album or a wooden boat.

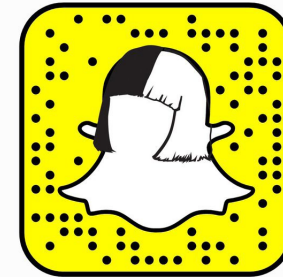


SIA WIGS OUT ON SNAPCHAT

Just when you thought that weird licking puppy filter was the best thing they could come up with, Australian singer Sia's famous wig has landed on Snapchat's roster of lenses.

Now every child, teen and mid-life-crisis adult can rock the iconic black and white wig which has been concealing Sia's face across live performances, television appearances and chat shows. Her motivation to don the wig originally was due to her desire for a non-celebrity lifestyle. As she said in conversation with Ellen DeGeneres, "It's so that I can go to Target and buy a hose." What better inspiration for something that people use to hide or enhance their own faces?

Regardless of that need for privacy, the wig has now become an emblem of Sia's career, appearing in music videos and live



performances on herself and her dancers (such as Maddy Ziegler and Shia LaBeouf). Alongside the moving wig lens, Snappers can switch their phones off silent to sing along to one of Sia's biggest (and less melancholy) hits, 'Cheap

Thrills', making them completely Sia-fied for their friends.

Snapchat has proven to be a great tool for artists, with geofilters among the more affordable aspects of the disappearing-content platform and making a splash earlier this year. With reports of sponsored lenses costing between \$450,000 and \$750,000, this one is a bit further out of reach for

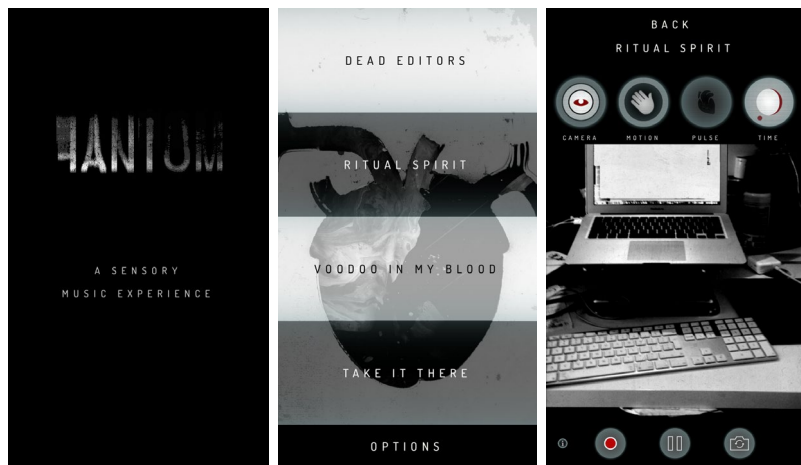
the majority of the music industry. Saying that, wigs are being snapped all over the shop. So with 100m DAUs on the platform, if you've got the cash, then splash it.



CAMPAIGNS

The latest projects from the digital marketing arena

MASSIVE ATTACK'S FANTOM MENACE



This is a rather big year for Massive Attack. In January, their EP 'Ritual Spirit' marked the first release in six years for the band. Further to the releases, some of you might have heard of their app released in conjunction with that EP at the start of the year.

It is called Fantom and exists as a "sensory" app, amending music according to various factors and indicators such as light sensors in your phone's camera, movement sensors, your heart rate (if you've got an Apple Watch) and time of day. So, if you were falling asleep at night, the music would be very slow and undramatic; equally, if you were on a run with your iPhone in your hand, your Apple Watch strapped on and your camera picking up sheer daylight, the mix would be upbeat, bright and dramatic.

The idea is to experience music in a dynamic, unique way – similar to Gwylim Gold's

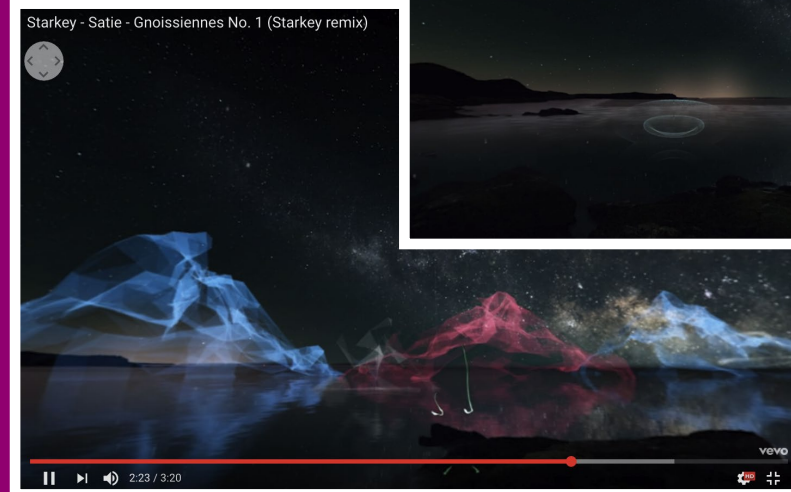
Bronze technology which produced music in an ever-changing, never-ending nature. This technology is slightly more intelligent, producing very personal mixes which can be recorded as a stylistic, monochrome video before being shared across social media.

We've written a lot about albums as apps in the past and one of the issues here is often that they are very isolated creations, forgotten on the page next to Spotify, Apple Music or whatever your preferred music service is right now. The social/sharing aspect of this application sets it aside from the rest, making it something that could potentially live on after the lifespan of these tracks or album campaign.

The official release of the band's latest double single happened last week after debuting both tracks on the Fantom app. You can find it on all major music services; or you can do something different and listen to it on Fantom.

VR GETS CLASSICAL

Starkey - Satie - Gnossiennes No. 1 (Starkey remix)



You might have heard about Decca's new re:works compilation, whereby original Decca recordings have been reproduced in new forms by artists such as Kate Simko, Fort Romeau and Henrik Schwarz.

The compilation is a stunning one, ranging from ethereal to intense as some of the best composers of all time are celebrated and developed into hybrid electronic styles.

Matching this move into the digital world, the world's first ever 3D classical music video has been released for the fourth track – Starkey's reimagining of Erik Satie's 'Gnossienne No.1', which has doubled in length as it is brought to an immense peak through soaring synthesisers and feverish percussion.

The video itself isn't the most riveting use

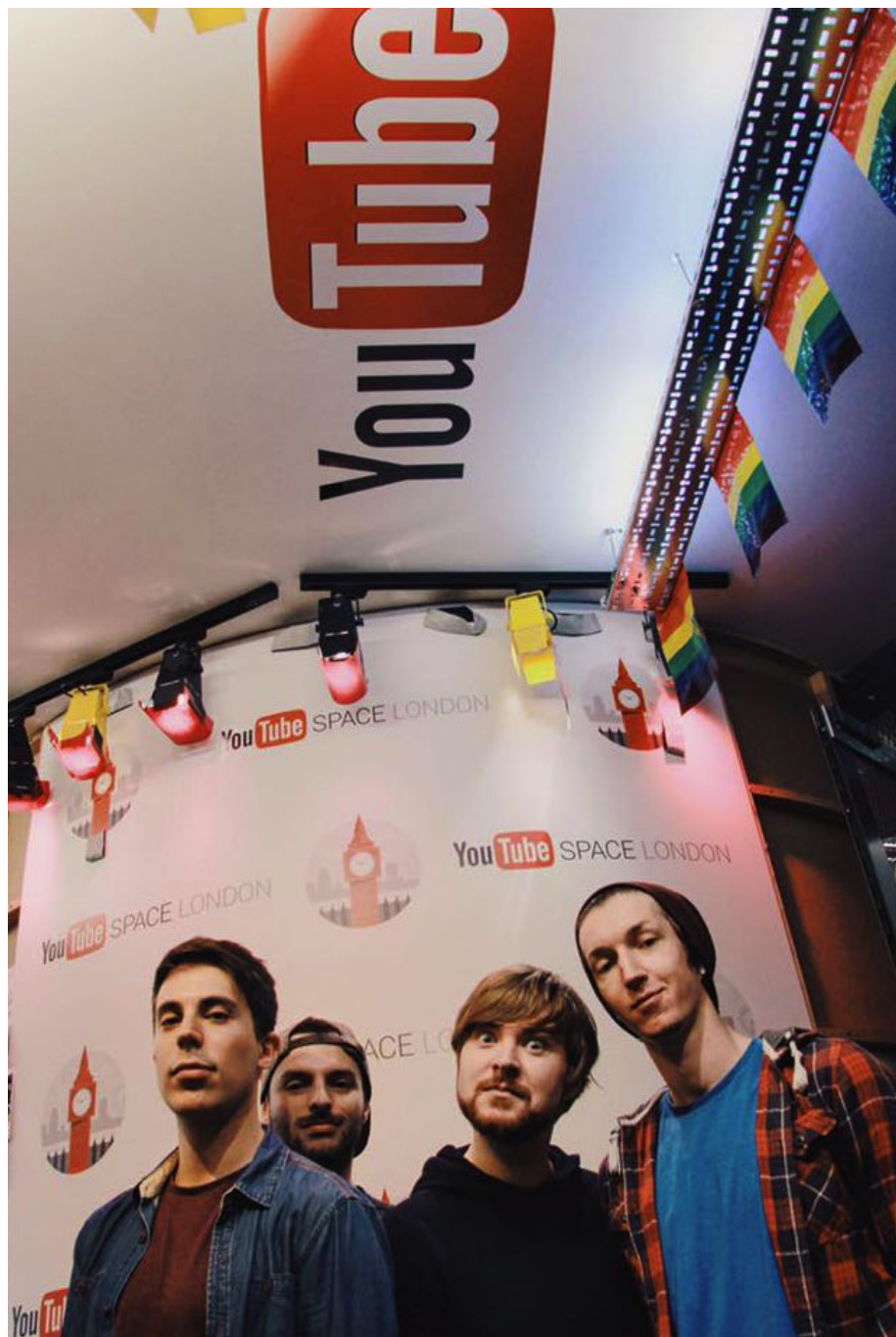
of 3D we've ever seen, but it compliments Starkey's piece very well ([see for yourself here](#)), following the steady growth within the music through a plethora of lights. The video is set on some sort of island rock where the user stays for the whole track, watching a kind of glorified Aurora Borealis from all around, lights pulsating through the ground as luminous, graphic mountains rise up from a glassy sea.

It's exciting to see classical music being explored through digital and virtual reality. The market is small, but bridging the gaps between traditional, classical and experimental music brings some really beautiful forms of music to the table. With it being such an immersive form, we can expect to see more uses of VR within the classical world in the near future.

BEHIND THE CAMPAIGN

AREA 11





Area 11 cut their teeth on YouTube before coming to independent label Cooking Vinyl for their second album, *Modern Synthesis*. **MARCUS KNIGHT**, product and marketing manager at Cooking Vinyl, explains how the label was focused on taking the band to the next stage, why YouTube collaborations were a return to their roots, how an in-store tour raised their profile and where Snapchat filters became a central part of taking their live activity into social media.

The band built their following initially on YouTube...

The band have been together a few years and put out an album by themselves a couple of years ago [*All The Lights In The Sky* in 2013]. They have just been doing things themselves – like going out on tour and doing other bits and bobs. They managed to build up a significant following off their own bat.

They had started developing a really good and hardcore fanbase. They came out of the YouTube world – connecting with gamers and other YouTubers who were into Japanese culture. They came from that subculture so they had built up a really strong allegiance around themselves. They had a significant and strong online fanbase that was really engaged, but they didn't really have any significant press or radio to their name by that point.

... but wanted a label deal to take them to the next stage

They had a second album they had been working on, but they needed someone to help bring it into shape and utilise the fanbase they had already built. They are signed to Cooking Vinyl and ultimately it's a label services deal.

They wanted us to help them build on



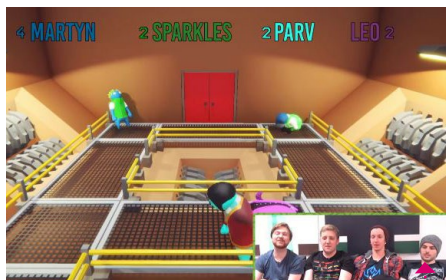
what they had already done and to start breaking out a bit more into the traditional media of radio and press. When they came to us, they already had the album prepared. It had been recorded and they were just looking to get it mastered.

They had already run their own pre-order campaign where fans could get things like meet & greets, listening parties and other cool things – and that played really well to their fanbase. They were doing that when they came to us, but what we then had to do from there was to take the finished album and have an official announcement that it was coming, adding links to iTunes and so on – and that's on top of having a strong D2C pre-order as well.

The first thing we had to do was to close down their existing "Help fund our album" pre-order initiative and then set up a proper album announcement.

Because they had already had the album up for pre-order for quite a long time beforehand, they were keen to get it out as quickly as possible and to not leave the fans waiting too long. It all came together quite quickly.

They delivered the album and had already released one track from it before this with a video, so that was already out there. When we came to announce the album officially, we knew that we had to get the fans new content. We decided to go with the track 'Watchmaker' and the band made a very cool lyric video for it. When the album pre-order went live, we went live with the track they had already out there as an instant grat and also this new track; that meant it was appealing heavily to the fanbase but obviously any new fans coming along at that point could also get the track that was released to fans earlier.



YouTube collaborations were a return to their roots

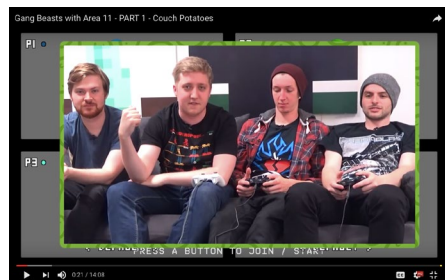
They had come from a world of being very YouTube-focused. They obviously had the connections and the partnerships there. Plus, it was where they built up a lot of their fanbase. When it came to release week, the band got in touch with one of their previous contacts and made some content with Martyn Littlewood who is a video blogger. They sat down for a series called **Couch Potatoes**, playing new games and chatting.

It gave them a chance to make some new content that wasn't solely music-focused. It gave the band an extra personality and depth that their fans have come to expect. They were able to mention and push the album multiple times through the video and they even featured the album pre-roll that we had made. They were open-minded to promoting the album [that way].

Release week and a seven-day in-store tour

This was coming into week one. We always knew it was going to be hard. Although we were making progress with the press and at radio, we were looking for other ways to get people in and get them interested throughout that week one. Part of that was getting the band out there and in front of people.

We did seven in-stores – one for each day



of the release week. The band went out and played acoustically in front of people. That was a big bulk of the work we were doing on release week, but we also want to make the most of letting the band go out there and do things and to really exploit that.

We build an album pre-roll and an in-store pre-roll – and we were running those pretty heavily and targeting people in those regions [where the in-stores were happening] across Facebook and Twitter. We were running a lot of ad campaigns. We wanted to make people aware of their shows. This was a really good place for us to convert new fans and get them on board. Obviously when you are working with a new band, then it's really important. We knew it was really important to make sure that people were aware that these in-stores were happening.

We also wanted to see how we could maximise the exposure around what was happening at the in-stores.

Given the band are from an online and video world, they are great at creating content. It's what they do and it's all very organic and efficient. They know exactly what works for their fanbase. I could suggest roughly what they could do and then they would go off and do it their own way. Sometimes content can feel forced [if the label is pushing things too much].

It's not even a case of going in with a light



touch. The band trusted us to do the stuff we needed to do in order to push them at press, radio and retail. Likewise, we had that trust in the band that they knew what they were doing and they were going out and doing it well.

We were making sure that everything was happening on time and we were all working towards an end goal. But the band were out on the ground and communicating with the fans so they were in the best position to be creating the content. That's great and it's so nice to have a band that is really active in doing that.

Their **in-stores** were a mixture of Fopps, HMVs and independents.

This is really important if you want to get a good result – you need a band who will work for it. They really did and were out on the road, happy and eager to do it.

They weren't shy about letting people know the album was out and they were really calling on their fanbase to rally behind them. They told the fans they had a good shot of breaking into the **top 40** but really needed their help. They knew that it was the fans who were going to make the difference. Having a strong fanbase is the

key component they have here.

In regards to creating assets and content, the band were great on the road. We were able to create different pre-rolls from that. It felt organic as they looked good and were created by the band.

We had an announcement that they shot at the Bristol in-store where they were all backstage, talking and being funny. It was charming to watch and they used the opportunity to say the album was out and fans should go out and buy it to support them. It was great to have that sort of content as well as pictures from the different stores.

Plus, they were retweeting fans and being very engaged. That made a big difference and ultimately that is what drove them getting a top 30 album. The band worked really hard and did a great job of engaging the fanbase. We managed to create a campaign that felt organic and utilised the assets we had.



Snapchat filters went hand-in-hand with the tour

We wanted to see how we could maximise the exposure from the in-stores. There has been a lot of talk about Snapchat being the next hotspot for bands to push content out and building fanbases. It's very direct and seems to be picking up a lot more speed and is getting mentioned a lot more in ad agency and marketing meetings. We really wanted to do something with the band on there. It felt very natural to do.

We decided to build our own Snapchat filter that was geo-targeted to wherever the band were playing at during each in-store – running a couple of hours before the show and a couple of hours after.

The band announced they had their own Snapchat filter and were getting fans to use it. They were very much involved in pushing that. On top of that, they said they would hang around after the in-shows and told fans they'd put their photos through the band's Snapchat filter. That gave fans an extra reason to hang around and get involved. In terms of fostering the fan relationship, it worked really well.

The Snapchat filters were really cheap to make – probably only a couple of hundred pounds to create – and they ran across all their in-stores. It's basically just an image that sits on top of a picture you take. That's what we used; it was an album-branded picture.

You identify the area you want the filter to cover and the amount of time it will run for. If you pick a high-density area, the cost will be more. The filters where the in-stores were happening were not expensive to book.

We managed to get great exposure around that – about 20,000 impressions overall. It was a really good result, adding

that extra layer and building those relationships.

Radio and press remain key in taking an act into the mainstream

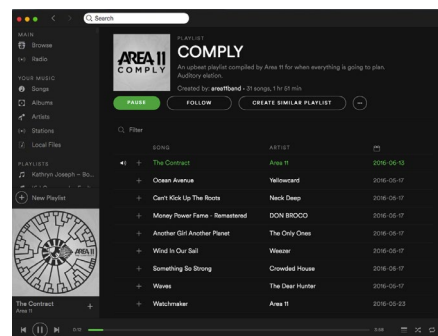
I still think press and radio are massively important. We have broken ground with this band. When they came to us, they had maybe only a new band feature in Rock Sound. We are building on that definitely – but, unfortunately it was not at a stage that it needed to be by album release to make a significant difference. They are out there in front of people and that's how they build their fans; but press and radio are really important to bring the new fans on board.

We did find that once we hit up the fanbase, it was difficult to go beyond that. Our main focus now is to continue building these things and to get the band out there in front of people and to continue to get radio and press support – on top of what we have already achieved. That is ultimately what we are trying to do. It has been a great success so far. We got the album out there in a relatively short amount of time and hopefully this gives the band the ammunition to get good support slots on tour and make the press pay attention.

Our job is to keep working on that and keep pushing it. It would be all too easy to think that once we had a top 30 record, the job was done and everybody could go home. This is really where the work starts.

We now have the framework to work from and so we just need to keep pushing and engaging the fans. We need to keep creating content that draws in new people.

We are speaking to YouTube about maybe doing something with them a bit further down the line. That would fit really organically with the band.



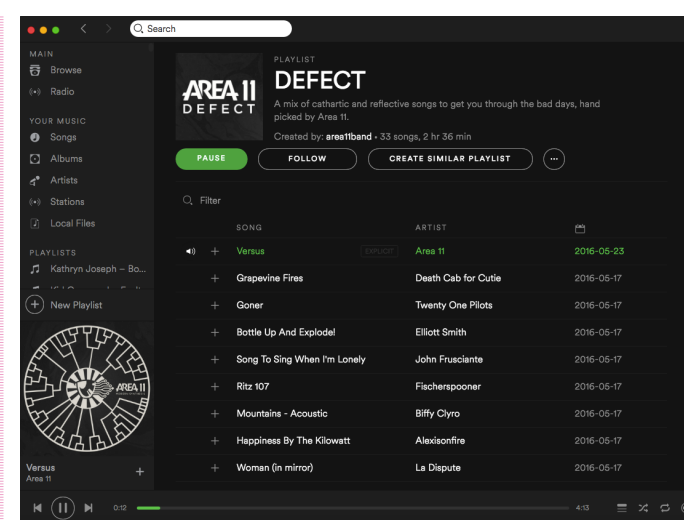
It's like a jigsaw puzzle and slowly but surely each part is falling into place. That, ultimately, is what this campaign is about. It's about taking a band that didn't really have anything there at all and creating that picture so that hopefully on the next album they have all the bits in place and they can really hammer it home.

Facebook live Q&A plus how streaming gives everything that extra boost

On week of release we were trying to do everything we could. Fans had gone out and pre-ordered the CDs so we thought we should try and convert a few more people onto the streaming side. They had already bought the CD, but if they started streaming it too that could really help us.

The idea was the band would go on Facebook and talk through the album as well as answer questions from the fans live. It gave us an extra push on the streaming and helped create a bit more noise.

It was the end of the release week. They had been playing all around the country and working the fanbase really hard. It felt like it all came together right at the end where they could sit on the sofa and talk about all the things that had happened. That was a really nice way to end that release week. Then the day after that they got the news



that they had got a top 30 album.

Before we started working with them they had about 5m streams on Spotify. We wanted to increase that engagement and have their fans interact on Spotify in the same way they would on any other social media site. The band created **two contrasting playlists** on there – one was upbeat and the other was more angsty. So they now have these two playlists that they can keep promoting and they update them every month. That means they are creating original content on Spotify and that ties in with what else we are doing. :)

WANT TO FEATURE IN BEHIND THE CAMPAIGN?

Marketing people: do you have a campaign you are working on that you would like to see featured in Behind The Campaign in a future edition of **sandbox**? If so, send a brief synopsis of it to Eamonn Forde for consideration and your work (and your words) could appear here.

Email: eamonn.forde@me.com



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