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An Artist Management Practicum: Teaching Artist Management in the Twenty-First Century

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Abstract

Modern-day artist management is one of the most challenging aspects of the music industry to teach in academic institutions. This paper provides a framework for teaching artist management through a series of weekly assignments focused on various real-world scenarios and solutions as student teams virtually manage an active artist in the marketplace. These assignments are designed to allow each team to effectively assess the stage of the artist's career, evaluate the marketplace, and plan successful management strategies for the artist. The paper also identifies benchmarks of achievement based on six stages of an artist's career which help student teams identify successful artist strategies and establish goals for their artists. Students conclude the term by constructing a strategic plan to assist their acts in progressing to the next stages of their careers.

Keywords: artist management, artist development, stages of artist career, Next Big Sound, practicum, pedagogy, music business

Introduction

There are several overarching challenges to teaching artist management in an academic setting. Unlike accounting (CPA), law (J.D.), or many other professions, there is no certification or degree required to act as a manager on behalf of an artist. Therefore, anyone can be an artist manager. However, managers play perhaps the most crucial role in the music industry, because they quarterback all components of an artist's career. Artist managers oversee intellectual property, analyze revenue, engage in marketing, and develop strategic initiatives which are unique to each artist. Accordingly, an academic course on artist management must incorporate copyright, publishing, marketing, finance, law, accounting, touring, songwriting, production, A&R, and almost every other course taught in

music business programs. These components are almost always aligned with the specific needs and goals of the manager’s artist and will largely depend on the artist’s “status” or “stage of career”. For example, an emerging artist will have a different set of goals, revenue structure, marketing considerations, and strategy than an established or superstar act. It is a manager’s job to appreciate this distinction and foster the growth of the artist from one career stage to the next. Accordingly, creating an understanding of the artist’s needs at each stage of the career must be at the crux of teaching artist management in an academic setting. A student who can effectively assess the strengths and weaknesses of an artist at each career stage will be primed to develop a successful and comprehensive strategic plan for that artist.

Previous Research

Mapping the Landscape:

“5 Stages of Artist Development” (Next Big Sound)

Next Big Sound (NBS) provides analytics for the music industry to assess the popularity of musicians in social networks, streaming services,

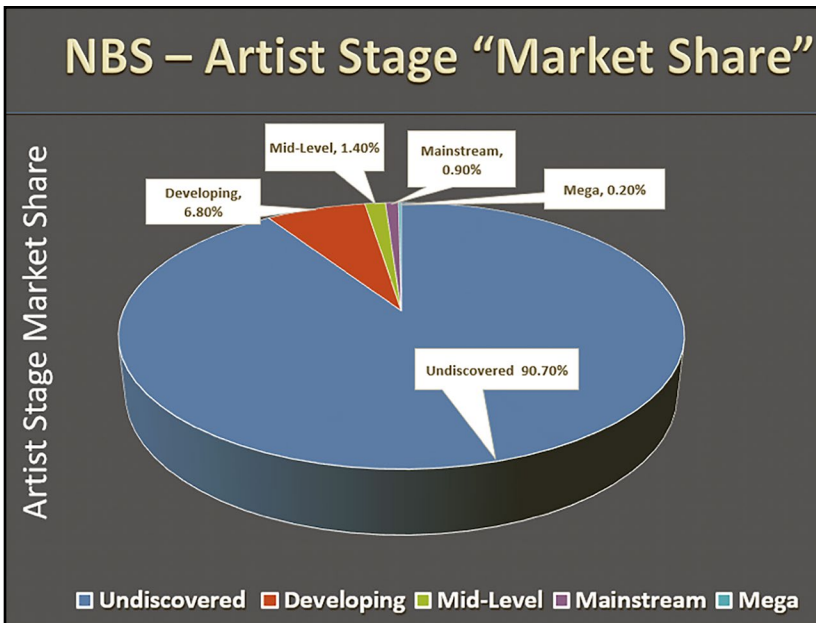


Figure 1. Mapping the Landscape: “5 Stages of Artist Development” (source: Next Big Sound 2013).

and radio. In 2013 NBS conducted a research study entitled *Mapping the Landscape: “5 Stages of Artist Development,”* which was retitled in 2016, to *The Taxonomy of Artists* (Buli 2016). The study focused on establishing a data set which sourced social media, sales, chart position, television appearances, and record label affiliation to create a benchmark of “career milestones” within the stages of an artist’s career. The study carved out five career stages: undiscovered, developing, midlevel, mainstream, and mega (Figure 1). According to *Digital Music News*, the NBS study determined that 91% of artists were in the undiscovered category (Ulloa 2014) (Figure 2). Therefore, one of the biggest challenges facing the majority of artist managers is to grow an artist from the undiscovered stage to the developing stage. Subsequently, my artist management course focuses on developing a strategic plan for these undiscovered acts to help them progress into the next stage of their careers.

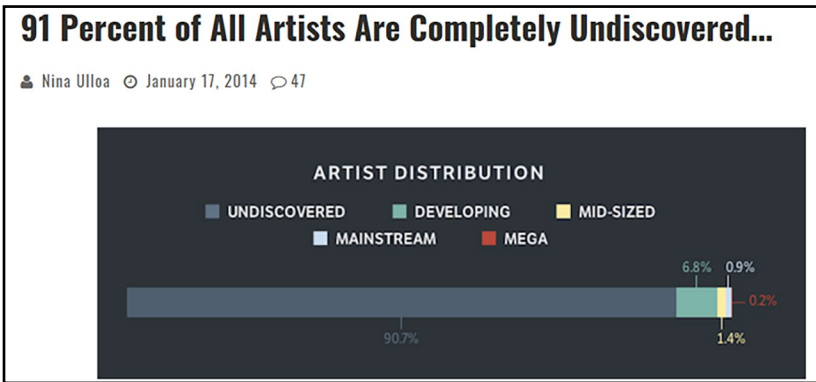


Figure 2. Artist distribution (source: *Digital Music News*).

**Quantitative and Qualitative Assessment Metrics:
Stage of Artist’s Career (Terry Tompkins)**

Since 2013, the music industry has experienced seismic changes in revenue sources, marketing, and rights management, thereby necessitating an update to NBS’s “Mapping the Landscape” study to include current resources and benchmarks of achievement. Additionally, the Next Big Sound study had limited qualitative data as part of its research. Lastly, Next Big Sound’s data points have been compromised due to a recent ac-

quisition by Pandora, thereby limiting the sources available for establishing current metrics.

In an effort to update the NBS study, I developed a new set of criteria to assess quantitative and qualitative components for the stages of an artist's career. My research outlines six sets of criteria—three quantitative categories: touring, streaming, and social media; and three qualitative categories: artist professional team, record label/music publisher, and brand partnerships.

Stages of Artist's Career – Tompkins Criteria (2019)

1. Quantitative
 - a. Tour History (venue size, geographic touring region/territory)
 - b. Streams/Sales (monthly listeners/followers, RIAA certification)
 - c. Social Media (likes, followers, engagement)

2. Qualitative
 - a. Artist Professional Team (manager, agent, attorney, business manager)
 - b. Record Label (type), Music Publisher (type)
 - c. Brand Partnerships (sponsorships and endorsements)

Sourcing this newly-established set of criteria, I created six new stages for an artist's career and a corresponding definition for each. The six stages are a key learning/teaching resource for students in the course.

Stage 1: Undiscovered Act

- Little or no previous track record of success:
 - No tour history; performing local shows/local press
 - Low streaming and social numbers
 - Little to no branded messaging
- Members of artist professional team (manager, agent, attorney) not in place
- No record label or publishing company
- 91% “undiscovered” (Digital Music News/NBS)

Stage 2: Developing Act

- Signed to record label (recent - indie or major label)
- Regional touring base established; Playing 300-500 capacity rooms
- Booking agent on team
- Social or Viral presence/story

- Self-managed or could have manager on team; Business manager not needed yet
- Examples: Moonrise Nation, Caroline Says, Del Water Gap

Stage 3: Mid-Level Act

- One largely successful release or multiple consistent sellers (major or indie)
- Sales, radio, touring, and/or synch licensing stories
- Touring Venues: 500-3,500 capacity
- Next release is anticipated by fans, press, and industry
- Examples: Dr. Dog, Spoon, Run the Jewels, The xx, Thousand Foot Krutch

Stage 4: Established Act

- Fully developed core fan base
- Multiple successful releases (Indie or Major label - minimum gold)
- Tour base: several territories (5,000-10,000 capacity rooms)
- Household name; not a superstar
- Examples: Wilco, Common, Ben Harper, Disturbed

Stage 5: Superstar Act

- Artist established in many worldwide territories
- Released several platinum records and worldwide tours (Major label)
- Huge grossing tours: arenas and stadiums (10,000-100,000 capacity)
- Merchandising and Branding: large sources of income
- Examples: Taylor Swift, Adele, Andrea Bocelli, Justin Timberlake, Beyoncé, Drake

Stage 6: Heritage Act

- Long established fan base
- No need for label: self-release/distribution deal
- Self-administer publishing
- Streaming and social media challenges (older demographic)
- Touring large arenas and sheds
- Examples: Rolling Stones, Elton John, Eagles, Aerosmith

Figure 3 outlines one example of a strategic consideration within the “stages of career”. The chart gives an overview of a strategic approach to developing or engaging with fans based on the artist’s stage. A manager working with an undiscovered act will likely need to grow fans beyond

family/friends and develop “real fans” perhaps through radio airplay or streaming. A developing act might look to grow fans in another region of the country, perhaps through touring or social media advertising in undeveloped regions. A mid-level act might consider monetizing its fans through direct-to-fan selling, perhaps by launching a crowdsourcing campaign or a merchandise bundling via its online web store.

Six Stages: Artist Needs and Goals – Fan Strategy
Stage 1 – Undiscovered: Develop “Real” Fans (Radio/Streaming)
Stage 2 – Developing: Expand Geographic Region (Touring or Advertising)
Stage 3 – Mid-Level: Direct to Fan (Crowdsourcing, Merchandise Bundling)
Stage 4 – Established: Re-Branding with Fans (Creative/Image)
Stage 5 – Superstar: Fans Become Influencers (Social and Streaming)
Stage 6 – Heritage: High Price for Fans to Engage (Meet and Greet)

Figure 3. Six Stages: Fan strategy (source: Tompkins).

Teaching Artist Management in the 21st Century

The following section provides detailed pedagogical insights into the artist management class. It includes a course overview, syllabus excerpt, weekly project assignments, in-class presentations, final paper, course reviews, and concludes with a description of future research.

MUSB 104 Course Syllabus (excerpt): Artist Management in the Music Industry

Course Overview:

- Explores the role and function of the artist manager in the music industry
- Explores practicum model “virtual management” of artist, selected and administered by students
- Student teams make strategic decisions for their artist through in-class exercises, weekly assignments, in-class presentations, and a final paper
- Pre-requisites: Survey of the Music Industry, Promotion in the Music Industry, Publishing in the Music Industry

Grading Breakdown:

Number	Type	Grade Percentage	Deliverables
1	Attendance and Participation	10%	Weekly
2	Weekly Projects	40%	Weekly
3	Guest Speaker Reaction Paper	5%	Due Next Class After Speaker Appears
4	Presentation	20%	April 30th and May 7th
5	Final Project Paper	25%	Due on Final Exam Date

Teams and Virtual Management:

Students work in teams of two to virtually manage an act they mutually select at the beginning of the semester. The course is centered around a series of weekly projects assigned to each team which assists the students in understanding, assessing, and planning successful management strategies.

Assessment and Strategy:

Assessment and strategy are the keys to effective artist management. An effective strategic plan is the by-product of deep-seated assessment to recognize an artist's strengths and weaknesses, surveying of the marketplace, insight into an artist's fans, and implementation of a plan for the artist to monetize the industry. The weekly projects for this course are centered around five key building blocks of assessment and strategy in artist management.

5 Key Building Blocks of Artist Management

1. Understanding artist's strengths and weaknesses (Assessment)
2. Knowing artist's audience (Assessment)
3. Knowing the market (Assessment)
4. Engaging and building audience (Strategy)
5. Monetizing marketplace (Strategy)

Assignments

Each week throughout the semester, student teams complete a specific project for the artist they are virtually managing. These weekly assignments are supported by a detailed set of guidelines for the student teams and builds on the prior week's subject.

Weekly Project Assignments

- Week 1: A&R Submission – Artist/Virtual Management (Assessment)
- Week 2: Artist Assessment – Strengths and Weaknesses (Assessment)
- Week 3: Fan Profile (Assessment)
- Week 4: Comparable Artists (Assessment)
- Week 5: Crowdsourcing Campaign (Strategy)
- Week 6: Sponsorship/Endorsements Partners (Strategy)
- Week 7: Synch Placements (Assessment and Strategy)
- Week 8: Touring (Strategy)
- Week 9: Record Label Partners (Assessment and Strategy)

I have highlighted below the weekly project assignments for weeks one through four, each of which teaches prospective artist managers a critical skill for building the proper foundation for their artists.

Week 1: A&R Submission Assignment

The weekly assignments begin with the artist discovery process through an A&R assignment. Identifying talent is an often-overlooked aspect of artist management. However, artist managers generally work on commission (15% to 20% of artist earnings), and identifying emerging talent is essential to earning potential for a young manager.

Students are directed to The Deli, a nationally syndicated music blog with regional publications in ten markets including: Austin, Chicago, Los Angeles, Nashville, New England, New York City, Philadelphia, Portland, San Francisco, and Toronto. The Deli provides a valued resource for students to seamlessly and expeditiously find an act to manage virtually for the duration of the semester; in light of the time constraints of academia, The Deli is used to circumvent the often-lengthy A&R process to allow students to select an artist they would like to virtually manage. Students choose from one of ten cities (Figure 4). Students customize a search for artists in each city based on popularity/fame range and genre/sub-genre. Their search results lead to a filtered list of acts and links to online artist properties (Figure 5). This assignment provides a crash course on teamwork, collaboration, and compromise for the newly-formed management company. The new management team presents the artist to the class, in-

THE DELI'S CHARTS				
AUSTIN	CHICAGO	LOS ANGELES	NASHVILLE	NEW ENGLAND
NEW YORK CITY	PHILADELPHIA	PORTLAND	SF BAY AREA	TORONTO

Figure 4. Deli cities (source: The Deli).

cluding music from the artist and an elevator pitch stating why the team wants to manage the artist they chose.

Because the largest percentage of artists fall into the “undiscovered” category (91%), I provide additional criteria for the A&R submission to ensure the teams’ selected artists have potential to move to the next stage of their career. There is no restriction on genre or whether the artist is a group or solo performer. However, the artists must have traction with an engaged fan base to move forward with their career. Therefore, each artist’s audience must fit within certain required parameters. Social media following is the main qualifier for audience size and engagement. The artist must have a minimum of 1,000 and a maximum of 5,000 followers with at least 3% reacting to posts online (engagement). For example, if an artist has 1,000 followers, it needs to have an average of 30 likes, shares, or comments on Instagram or Facebook to qualify as an engaged audi-

The screenshot shows the 'the deli' website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'All Scenes Hub' and a dropdown menu. Below that, there are filters for 'SHOW All Artists', 'FAME RANGE Fame Range', 'ORDER BY Web Buzz', and a search box for 'FIND ARTISTS SIMILAR TO...'. The main content area displays the following information:

- GENRE(S): Indie Rock + Indie Pop +
- REGION(S): Chicago +
- FAME RANGE: Emerging Artists, Mostly Unknown Artists

Below this, there's a section titled 'THE DELI'S CHARTS' with navigation arrows, a Facebook 'LOG IN' button, and an 'ADD YOUR BAND (FREE)' button. The chart lists 10 artists:

1	Girl K	☆	f	▶	2	Kali Masi	☆	f	▶
3	Seasalt	☆	f	▶	4	Ethers	☆	f	▶
5	The Evening Attraction	☆	f	▶	6	Courtesy	☆	f	▶
7	Miranda Winters	☆	f	▶	8	Ganser	☆	f	▶
9	Sports Boyfriend	☆	f	▶	10	Coupler	☆	f	▶

On the right side, there's a 'GET THIS CHART'S URL' button, 'SELECT GENRES' and 'SELECT REGIONS' buttons, and 'RESET GENRES' and 'RESET REGIONS' buttons. Below these are checkboxes for various genres: ALT POP, BRITPOP, DREAM-POP/PSYCH POP, INDIE POP (checked), LOUNGE-POP, and MELLOW POP.

Figure 5. Deli artist portal (source: The Deli).

ence. The Deli's Fame range consisting of "Emerging Artist" and "Mostly Unknown Artists" is a useful tool which aligns with these social media benchmarks. The artist must also not be represented by a manager or a label to ensure the students' final strategic plan will be realized exclusively by the student management team.

Summary of Artist Requirements/Qualifications:

- Any musical genre, solo or group
- Minimum 1,000 Facebook or Instagram likes/followers (maximum 5,000)
- 3% fan engagement on Facebook/Instagram (likes, shares, comments)
- Not represented or affiliated with an artist manager or record label

Week 2: Artist Assessment Assignment

The artist assessment assignment begins with the student teams learning about the history of the artist. How long has the artist been established? Have the releases been streaming or physical, digital downloads? How many shows does the artist play each year and what is the touring radius for these shows? Is the artist engaging with fans on Facebook or Instagram? Does the artist maintain an email list or newsletter? Is the artist self-producing or working with outside producers? Through watching YouTube videos, students assess stage presence, musicianship, and group compatibility. Are the artist's online assets (photos, videos, website, etc.) in line with the musical brand? How many followers does the artist have on social, monthly listeners on streaming platforms? What are the overall strengths and weaknesses of the artist? Sourcing all of this feedback, students create a summary analysis of the artist.

Summary of Artist Assessment Criteria:

- Artist History (year formed, releases, online presence, touring history)
- Songwriting (relevance, signature sound)
- Recording (production evaluation)
- Live Performance (musicianship, star appeal, group compatibility)
- Imaging and Branding (intent, aligned with style)

- Audience Size/Engagement (social & streaming)
- SW(OT) (strength and weaknesses)
- Summary Analysis

Example of Student Work

Week 2: Artist Assessment – Artist #1

- Songwriting/Recording:
 - Tone is original, includes echoed bends, synth, and humming with high energy riffs/solos
 - Relatable lyrics about heartbreak and changing his life for the better
 - High quality self-produced recordings; experiments with synths and voice modulation
- Live Performance
 - Comfortable being the only person on stage
 - High Energy – throwing/stomping on guitar after set, using a megaphone
 - Engaged audience at performances
- Branding
 - Psych/Indie rock scene
 - DIY – drawings, handwritten font, Photoshop, no merchandise
- Online Presence
 - 1,295 likes on Facebook; low engagement
 - 319 followers on Instagram; high engagement 15.4%
 - Lack of promotional efforts outside promoting shows

Example of Student Work

Week 2: Summary Analysis Artist Assessment – Artist #2

- The possibility of mainstream success for XXX is very real. They have a clear direction regarding songwriting that melds with their overall vibe and imagery.
- The relatability factor in their music is a major selling point. Social and streaming are growing, fans are invested, engagement is high.
- An increased budget through a label partner and collaborating with an outside producer could elevate their songs and commercial appeal to reach the masses.

Artist Assessment Collaboration with David Newgarden/Manage This!

In Spring 2019 the MUSB 104 class collaborated with artist manager David Newgarden, founder/owner of Manage This! (Guided by Voices, Yoko Ono, Sean Lennon, Tift Merit), to perform an artist assessment for two of his artists: Surfer Blood and The Lennon/Claypool Delirium featuring Sean Lennon and Les Claypool of Primus. Student teams chose one of the two acts and wrote an artist assessment about the act. David visited the class and listened to the student assessments of his artists. During this discussion, students were able to get direct feedback from him about their external assessment of his artists. This proved to be an invaluable resource for the students, validating some of their efforts and providing additional insight into the world of artist management. Subsequently, some of the takeaways from the students provided interesting insight which may not have been uncovered through virtual management.

Student Observations: David Newgarden/Manage This! Artist Assessment – Takeaways

- Lines between personal and professional can't be blended
- It's important to establish trust with your client
- You don't earn the same percent commission from every client
- Artist management approach is case by case, each client has different needs
- Managing an artist that you don't believe in will end up not working out well

Week 3: Identify Audience/Fan Profile Assignment

The third week's assignment directs the student teams to create a profile of the artist's fans. Categories for the fan profiles are derived from Ari Herstand's book *How To Make It in the New Music Business: Practical Tips on Building a Loyal Following and Making a Living as a Musician* (Herstand 2016). Herstand describes "20 Things" that an artist needs to know about their fans, including demographic, geographic (countries, cities), technological preferences, product preferences, entertainment consumption, and food preferences. Understanding an artist's fan interests

helps student management teams identify the best means to reach their targeted audience through various marketing and promotional efforts.

Ari Herstand “20 Things” Fan Profile (Herstand 2016)		“20 things” Student Guidelines:
1	Gender	Male/Female (ratio)
2	Geographic Location	Hometown
3	Countries	Top 3
4	Cities	Top 5
5	Age	18-24/25-34/35-44/45-54
6	Education	High School, College, Graduate
7	Disposable Income	High/Mid/Low
8	Concert Attendance	Frequency/Seated/SRO
9	Social Media Platforms	FB/IG/Twitter/Snapchat/Reddit
10	Streaming Audio + Video Platform	On Demand and UGC
11	Technology	Innovator/Early Adopter/Early/Late Majority, Laggard
12	Lifestyle Retailers	Smoke/Skate/Café/Tattoo/Record Shop
13	TV Shows	Netflix/Cable/Broadcast TV
14	Movies	Indie or Major Motion Picture
15	Alcohol	Beer/Wine/Mixed/None/All
16	Transportation	Car/Bus/Mass Transit/Private
17	Dining	Restaurants
18	Food	Favorite Foods
19	Books/Magazine/Blogs	Books/Magazine/Blogs
20	Miscellaneous	Name a few random things

Example of Student Work

Week 3: Fan Profile Assessment

The below fan profile suggests that the artist’s fans are young males, have less disposable income, are tastemakers, heavy into technology and social media, live in major metropolitan areas, and prefer non-chain retailers.

- Gender: 40% Female, 60% Male
- Age: 18-24

- Concert Attendance: Small shows, standing room
- Social Media Platforms: Instagram, Snapchat, Reddit
- Streaming Platforms: Spotify, YouTube
- Lifestyle Retailers: Cafe, record stores
- Alcohol: Craft beer, boxed wine
- Transportation: Uber, public transit
- Dining: In-N-Out, non-chain coffee cafes
- Food: Avocado WW toast, Big Mac
- RIYL: Weezer, Modest Mouse
- Misc: Xbox, Conan O'Brien fans

Week 4: Comparable Artists/Six Stages Assignment

Using the “Artist Stage of Career” guidelines (Tompkins 2019), students cite three comparable artists aligned with their act throughout the stages of the artist’s career. These acts have advanced further into the various stages (Developing, Mid-Level, Established, Superstar, and Heritage) of their careers providing valuable insight for the student-managed undiscovered artist. After collecting social, streaming, touring, and sales certifications for the acts within each stage, students compute the average for each metric (Facebook, Instagram, Spotify, etc.). Each team will cite a total of fifteen comparable artists: 3 developing acts, 3 mid-level acts, 3 established acts, 3 superstar acts, and 3 heritage acts. Teams are directed to the following resources for research:

- Facebook/Instagram likes: Facebook and Instagram: Go to “Home” tab, find “likes” or “followers”
- Spotify Monthly Listeners and Followers: Go to Spotify, search for artist, click “About”, find Monthly listeners and followers
- Tour History: visit www.Bandsintown.com, enter artist name, search “past dates”
- Number of Gold Records and Platinum Records: <https://www.riaa.com/gold-platinum> go to “advanced search”, enter artist name, and click album in dropdown box

Example of Student Work

Stage 4: Guidelines – Established Act

- Fully developed core fan base

- Multiple successful releases
- Tour base: several territories
- Household name/not a superstar

Stage 4: Established Comparable Acts (Student Submission):

- Modest Mouse
- Arcade Fire
- Death Cab for Cutie

Stage 4: Established Comparable Acts

- Average Facebook likes: 770,060
- Average Spotify monthly listeners: 5,560,265
- Average Spotify followers: 901,600
- Average capacity of venues performed: 4,750
- Average number of Gold Records: 1.7
- Average number of Platinum Records: 0.3

The student submission suggests artists in Stage 4 (Established) have over 750,00 social media followers, 5.5 million monthly listeners on Spotify, perform in large theaters, and achieved at least one RIAA certified gold record. I compile all of the student research and build a chart establishing benchmarks for each stage of the artist career. Figure 6 is a summary of the metrics for the assignment from one semester of my class.

As stated earlier, the six stages are a key learning/teaching resource for students in this course. The comparable artists in future career stages assist the teams to identify proper marketing channels, revenue sources, branding/record label/publishing partners, touring, and other important strategic considerations for their undiscovered artists. Additionally, the metrics for each stage provide a set of benchmarks for managers to consider when progressing through stages of the artist's career.

In 2019, I had an opportunity to validate student data from the "Six Stages" with an A&R scouting platform called Instrumental. Instrumental is an online music discovery scouting tool using data science to help A&R reps learn about artists building a buzz on streaming music platforms. Instrumental's A&R platform sources Spotify playlists to determine if an artist is gaining traction within Spotify's algorithm. Its research indicates that when an artist reaches 40,000 followers on Spotify, the artist's algorithm begins to trigger playlist activity within the platform. Essentially,

6 Stages - Summary	Stage 2: Average	Stage 3: Average	Stage 4: Average	Stage 5: Average	Stage 6: Average	
	Developing	Mid-Level	Established	Superstar	Heritage	Total Average
Average Facebook Likes	29,024	520,787	1,733,166	16,473,304	6,353,571	5,021,970
Average Spotify Monthly Listeners	391,703	2,328,789	4,294,336	13,458,903	4,918,215	5,078,389
Average Spotify Followers	46,340	351,247	1,451,907	4,313,019	1,148,140	1,462,130
Average Capacity Venue	293	1,621	3,982	9,335	8,845	4,815
# Gold	–	1	1	4	3	2
#Platinum	–	0	0	4	4	2

Figure 6. Six Stages Summary.

when an act reaches this level of followers, the artist is moving to the next career stage. My student research in the six stages suggests that an artist who breaks out of the Undiscovered Stage (Stage 1) into the Developing Stage (Stage 2) has garnered an average of 46,340 followers on Spotify. This statistic is closely aligned with Instrumental’s research algorithm of 40,000 followers on Spotify for buzzing acts.

One music industry application for the six stages research is to create a chart encompassing social, streaming, touring, and sales for each stage of an artist’s career. These charts are supported by benchmarks established by metrics in each of the six stages. This new set of charts will provide deeper insight for artists progressing through each career stage as it relates to other acts at their current level. Since the goal for many artists and industry types has been to reach number-one on the charts, this new data set and chart system could provide an opportunity for artists to reach number-one during several stages of their career. Perhaps this type of chart will be more relevant to artists in the DIY digital age.

Week 5-9 Assignments

The remaining weekly project assignments include raising venture capital, identifying brand partnerships, placement of music in film and television, developing a touring strategy, and forecasting record label partners. These assignments may alternate from year to year based on changes in the marketplace.

- Week 5: Crowdsourcing Campaign
- Week 6: Sponsorship and Endorsements Partners
- Week 7: Synchronization Placements
- Week 8: Touring Strategy
- Week 9: Record Label Partners

In-Class Presentation and Final Paper

The final two components of the course are an in-class presentation and final paper. These assignments bring the semester projects into a manageable framework to pitch an artist for representation.

In-Class Presentation Description and Criteria

The in-class presentation comprises all of the weekly assignments. Student teams highlight the most important takeaways from the weekly assignments during a fifteen-minute presentation. The teams present their research to the class who performs the role of the artist.

1. Management Company – profile of management team
2. Artist Assessment – strengths and weaknesses
3. Fan Profile – 20 things about artist fans
4. Crowdfunding – platform, projected funds, top experiences, and offerings
5. Sponsorship and Endorsements – local and national sponsorship and endorsement partners
6. Synch Targets – placement of music with supervisors, brands, television shows, and films
7. Booking Agent and Touring Acts – routing, venues, agent, tour packages
8. Record Label – record label targeted partners
9. Strategic Plan – brief summary of the three most important marketing platforms for artist to develop and monetize fans

Final Paper Description

The final paper is comprised of four components: marketing, expenses, revenue, and roster. The team assembles a marketing campaign for its artist detailing a plan for the three most critical channels to build and monetize the artist's potential audience. The next two components of the final paper prepare the management team to consider the prospect of running the management company as a stand-alone business. The team projects the necessary expenses to run its company as well as the revenue generated by the artist once the artist has reached stage two of its career. Finally, the team builds an artist management roster while determining the number of acts they need to represent at the developing artist stage (Stage 2) to make a living as an artist manager.

Final Paper Criteria: Marketing, Revenue, and Expenses

1. Artist Marketing Campaign
 2. Management Company – Expense Projections
 3. Artist Revenue and Commission Projections
 4. Artist Management Roster Forecast
-
1. Artist Marketing Campaign: Develop strategies for the top three channels that are vital to artist success (select three platforms). Student teams will source comparable artists from several stages of the career to learn about optimal marketing outlets, partners, and strategies
 - a. Touring
 - i. Route a concentric circle around your hometown in four directions within 250-300 miles (north, south, east, west)
 - ii. List 4 cities in each direction (16 total cities)
 - iii. Identify 2 key venues in each city to develop the artist
 - iv. Identify one artist to share/swap shows in each city (16 artists)
 - b. Radio
 - i. List 2 radio station formats for artist to service a single (AAA, Alternative, Urban)
 - ii. Identify 10 key stations within each format to break artist
 - iii. Identify one radio chart (example: Billboard R&B/Hip-Hop Radio Chart) to target for artist in each format
 - c. Streaming
 - i. Name 20 key playlists from 2 different platforms (Spotify, Apple, Amazon, Deezer, etc.) to target for placement
 - ii. Combine editorial (platform-based) and user-generated

- iii. Non-Interactive:
 - \$0.0022 (paid tier) x total number of streams
 - \$0.0017 (free tier) x total number of streams
 - d. Publishing
 - i. Synch: placement of music in film and television
 - ii. Major motion picture studios
 - \$15,000 to \$100,000 (depending on usage)
 - \$50,000 to \$300,000 (opening and end credits)
 - iii. Independent Films
 - Documentaries: \$500 to \$2,500 (film festival submissions)
 - Theatrical release: \$2,500-\$7,500
 - iv. Television
 - \$0 to \$50,000 (depends on usage and type of broadcast: cable, pay TV, network, etc.)
 - v. Broadcast TV Commercials
 - \$5,000 to several million (depends on sponsor type and scope: local, regional, or national placement)
 - vi. Video Games
 - \$5,000 to \$10,000
 - e. Sponsorship
 - i. Tour and event sponsorship
 - \$3,000 maximum per sponsor
- 4. Artist Management Roster and Commissions
 - a. Compute artist income, manager commissions, and manager expense
 - b. How much income and how many acts from Stage 2 of career are necessary to maintain a full-time management company with a partner?

**MUSB 104 Course Syllabus (excerpt):
Syllabus: Assessment and Evaluation**

In this course, students will learn to:

- Understand and implement key methods in artist management
- Think critically through assessment and strategic planning
- Build, grow, and maintain fans through marketing and branding initiatives

- Implement a plan for an artist’s long-term growth
 - Build a business as an entrepreneur
-

Student Evaluations and Feedback

Overall, student evaluations and feedback have been extremely positive during the years I have been teaching this course, scoring in the top percentile within the college. The practicum “learning while doing” nature of this course reinforces many aspects of the music industry in an active learning environment. Students take ownership of the projects they create and invest heavily into the course over the duration of the term.

Based on a student evaluation rating system where 1.0 is “excellent” and 3.0 is “poor”, this course has a three-year average rating in the “Instructor” and “Course” survey items of 1.1.

Future Considerations

I am in the process of developing a marketplace simulation which is a game designed to develop knowledge of the music industry through real-world practicum-based engagement. Players assume the role of an artist manager who signs an artist to its management company to compete in a virtual market against other players/artists. Essentially the game picks up where the management course left off—players release music and develop and launch marketing initiatives to compete in an online marketplace. Each decision the manager makes is impacted by conditions in the marketplace. The manager can play against the computer or other players in the marketplace. The winner is determined by chart position, revenue, profit, market share, and progressing to the next stage of the artist’s career.

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TERRY TOMPKINS has been a professional and professor in the music industry for the past twenty-five years. He began his career as an artist manager and worked as a talent buyer, journalist, record label president, festival organizer, A&R Rep, and Professor of Music Industry. Tompkins is currently Program Director and Assistant Professor of Music Industry at Hofstra University.



Tompkins spent five years at Columbia Records working in A&R where he discovered the Grammy Award winning multi-platinum recording artist John Legend. His experience in the touring industry includes talent buying for a prestigious rock club as well as a Showcase Director for the Philadelphia Music Conference, one of the largest music conferences in the United States at the time. Early in his career Tompkins established Big Fish Artist Management and Consulting, managing international artists signed to major and independent labels. Tompkins has been published in the *Journal of the Music and Entertainment Industry Educators Association*, *The International Journal of Music Business Research*, and the *Journal of Instructional Pedagogies*. Tompkins earned a BA from Temple University and MBA from St. Joseph's University.

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The *MEIEA Journal* provides a scholarly analysis of technological, legal, historical, educational, and business trends within the music and entertainment industries and is designed as a resource for anyone currently involved or interested in these industries. Topics include issues that affect music and entertainment industry education and the music and entertainment industry such as curriculum design, pedagogy, technological innovation, intellectual property matters, industry-related legislation, arts administration, industry analysis, and historical perspectives.

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