CultureCase

Exploring why people use social media to engage with music

This research was conducted by **Jari Salo, Mikko Lankinen** and **Matti Mäntymäki** at the **University of Oulu** and **University of Turku, Finland**

Summary

By talking to music executives and music fans in Finland this study found five motives for using social media to connect with artists and other fans: accessing content, feeling a sense of affinity, making content, sharing that content, and fostering a social identity. It also made suggestions for social media strategies that takes account of the motives revealed in the study.

The study focused on social media use in Finland between 2008 and 2010

It investigated the ways that Finnish record labels market their artists in social media. It attempted to decipher how consumers perceive marketing on social networking sites. The research included interviews with executives at one major and one independent record label, as well as one Finnish software music company. They also carried out four focus-groups with music fans who used social media.

At the time, common social networks used for artist marketing in Finland included Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, and IRC Gallery

The study found that fan pages were mainly used as an information source rather than an interactive medium. In other words, fans were followers rather than active producers of content.

The paper suggests various strategies for social media use by music marketers and artists

First of all, recognise consumer needs and understand the dynamics and logic of communities; offer tools for communication and self-expression; Involve artists in communication; make good use of “word of mouth” and the feedback loops it generates; use detailed metrics to appreciate return on investment.

The researchers recognise that the study has some limitations: it can’t be truly generalised beyond the people who participated in the study, all of whom were Finns between the ages of 20 and 40.

Keywords

Finland **fans** **focus group** **interview** **music** **online** **social media**

Title	The use of social media for artist marketing: music industry perspectives and consumer motivations
Author(s)	Salo, J., Lankinen, M. & Mäntymäki, M.
Publication date	2013
Source	urnal International Journal on Media Management, Vol. 15, Iss. 1, pp 23-41
Link	**https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14241277.2012.755682**
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By **Culture.Case** | | **Developing new audiences in arts and culture** , **Live and digital engagement in arts and culture** |

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