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AN IMC APPROACH TO CREATING A MUSIC PERSONALITY

By
Abbey Bounds

A thesis submitted to the faculty of The University of Mississippi in partial fulfillment of
the requirements of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College.

Oxford
May 2017

Approved by

Advisor: Professor Christina Sparks

Reader: Professor Jason Cain

Reader: Professor Scott Fiene

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ABSTRACT

Technology and the popularity of social media has empowered consumers and provided direct access to artists, changing the traditional approach to music artist exposure and the inherent needs of the music fan. Once dependent upon record deals and a traditional mass communication model, today's artists establish their own brand and attract targeted audiences by promoting a personality coupled with musical talent. The purpose of this study is to apply the direct to consumer principles of Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) to brand a music artist and build a loyal following among the millennial generation.

A literature review was compiled to investigate past and current consumer trends and identify undiscovered insights for potential research. Then, mixed methodology of qualitative and quantitative research was conducted to better understand the music fan adoption process and the appeal certain music artists have with the millennial generation.

The researcher created a survey and distributed it to millennials via email and social media. The survey objective was to explore current trends in music consumption and investigate how listeners, specifically millennials, choose to discover new music. Surveys were distributed and analyzed as a part of this study.

After analyzing the results, the researcher held two focus groups composed of ten students each on campus at the University of Mississippi. The goal of the focus groups was to gain insights about specific personality traits and qualities members of the millennial generation value and connect with on social media.

Finally, the researcher conducted one interview with an aspiring singer/songwriter from Nashville, Kynlie Freeman. Then the researcher generated a digital integrated marketing campaign for the artist and applied the IMC communication model in a social media strategist experiment over a four-month period. Social media content was developed and tested to measure the effect messages have on an audience. The success of the campaign was evaluated by comparing Kynlie's social media presence and following, songs sold on iTunes and total listens on streaming services, prior to the campaign and after the campaign.

The findings from the research supported the hypothesis. The results indicated a social media strategist is a necessity to establishing a millennial fan base whether that person is employed by a music industry entity or is employed by the artist. The findings validated the necessity of identifying an audience, developing a brand persona and communicating that brand through social and digital media to establish a music artist brand and relationship with millennial audiences.

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CHAPTER 1: THE MILLENNIAL MUSIC CONSUMER

The millennial generation is the first generation to come of age in the digital era. Comprised of technologically savvy individuals, this generation has become an omnipotent consumer, exposed to and engaged with online content 24/7. The millennial audience, with its unique perception of brands and relationship with technology, is responsible for the transformation of the music industry's business model.

So what is a millennial? The definition is not necessarily fixed. Neil Howe and William Strauss coined the term "millennial" and defined the generation as those born between the years of 1982 and 1995 (Howe & Strauss, 2000). The youth market research agency, Y Pulse, defines a millennial as someone born between the years 1982 and 2004 (Bylin, 2015). The Pew Research Center defines the generation as, "those born after 1980 and the first generation to come of age in the new millennium" ("Millennials", 2017). For purposes of this study, the researcher defined the millennial age demographic as 18-34 year olds, or someone born between 1983 and 1999.

As the first generation to own or have access to computers, iPods and or smartphones during critical development stages, millennials are technologically fluent and have used technology to redefine traditional relationships. They use the Internet, social media networks and instant messaging to communicate, discover, promote and recommend music. Thus, as music consumption methods have progressed with technology, so has music consumer behavior.

The Nielsen Company Music Consumer Study

The Nielsen Company (Nielsen) recognized this change in music consumer behavior in 2013 and segmented consumers by surveying the behaviors and annual spending of music fans. Annual spending refers to the revenue from concerts, merchandise, streaming, permanent downloads, etc. Nielsen grouped consumers into five categories: aficionado fans, digital fans, big-box fans, ambivalent consumers, occasional concert consumers and background music consumers.

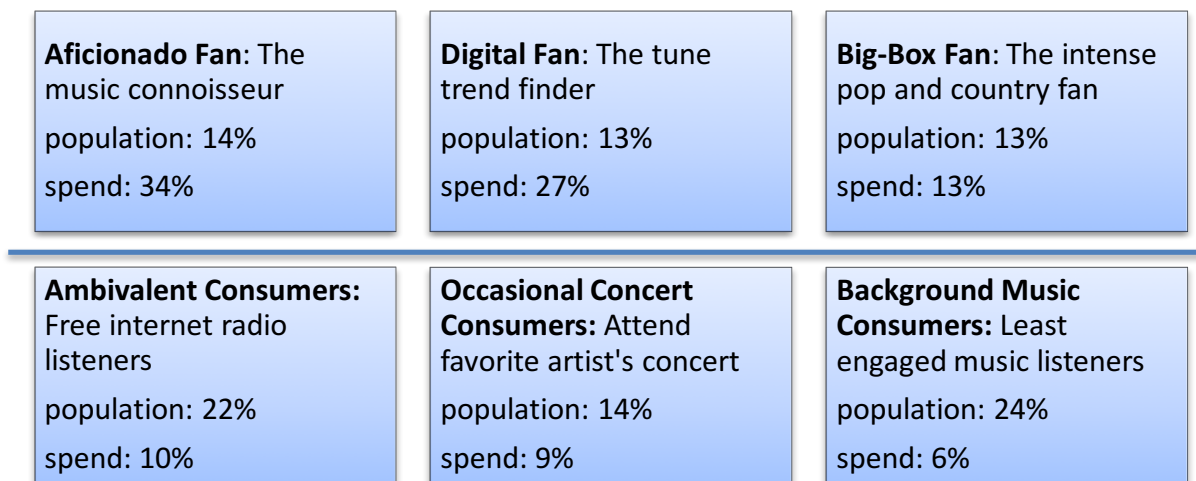


Figure 1: Results from The Nielsen Company's 2013 Survey (Nielsen, 2013). The line above denotes the three “fan” categories. The three categories below the line are considered “non-fan”.

Figure 1 is representative of the music consumer population in the pre streaming era.

Although streaming was introduced prior to 2013, it gained its popularity in the following years. Since this study was conducted, revenues from streaming increased from 21% recorded in March of 2013 to 51% recorded in March of 2017 (Friedlander, 2017). Also in March of 2017, Spotify remained the leading music subscription service with over 50 million paid subscribers (Fast Facts, 2017). In 2016, Spotify reported in

Adweek that 72% of their monthly listeners were millennials (Cummings, 2016).

Therefore, it can be assumed that the millennial generation, its music consumption methods and redefined relationships, has facilitated the change in the music industry landscape.

The researcher created and executed a survey to support this and denote the change. The researcher used the Nielsen survey as a basis for creating it. The purpose of the survey was to investigate the makeup of the millennial music consumer population in 2016 and the unique characteristics, values and motivations that make the generation an influencer of the new model.

The Researcher's Millennial Music Fans Survey

A 14-question survey titled, "Music Fans and Social Media Trends" was distributed to the researcher's network via direct e-mail and social media. Out of the 234 respondents that completed the survey, 212 of 234 fit the age range, 18-24 and 10 of 234 fit the age range, 25-34. Combined, the millennial demographic represented 95% of the total respondents. The majority (85%) were females residing in a southern state.

The survey asked general questions regarding music listening and social media habits. A more detailed account of the methodology, 14 questions and respondent demographics, is available in Appendix A.

Nielsen's fan categories listed in Figure 1 were used and Nielsen's three "non-fan" categories: 1) ambivalent consumers, 2) occasional concert consumers and 3) background music consumers were combined, knowing millennials are avid music consumers prior to research. This non-fan category, composed of ambivalent, occasional

concert and background music consumers was renamed “the ambivalent consumer group.” The researcher characterized the ambivalent consumer as one only semi-interested in music and listens via radio or streaming radio.

Using the ambivalent consumer group and the same three fan categories as the Nielsen study, this researcher asked a series of questions to determine the makeup of the millennial music consumer population in 2016. Their response to the millennial music fan survey question “What type of music fan best describes you?” is shown on the below in Figure 2.

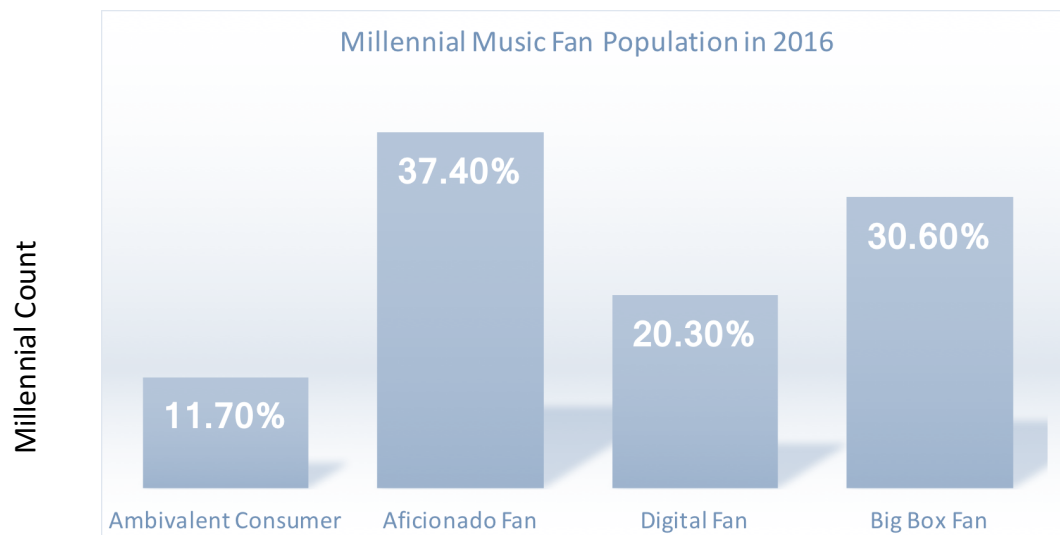


Figure 2: What type of music fan best describes you? (Millennial Music Fans Survey, 2016).

As pictured above in Figure 2, 196 of the 222 (88.3%) millennials surveyed identified themselves as fans, while only 26 of 222 (11.7%) millennial respondents identified themselves as ambivalent consumers; semi-interested in music, but not fans. The finding illustrated the tendency for millennials to view themselves as “fans” rather

than “non-fans”, which is consistent with millennial responses to the millennial music fan survey question “How do you listen to music?” presented in Figure 3 below.

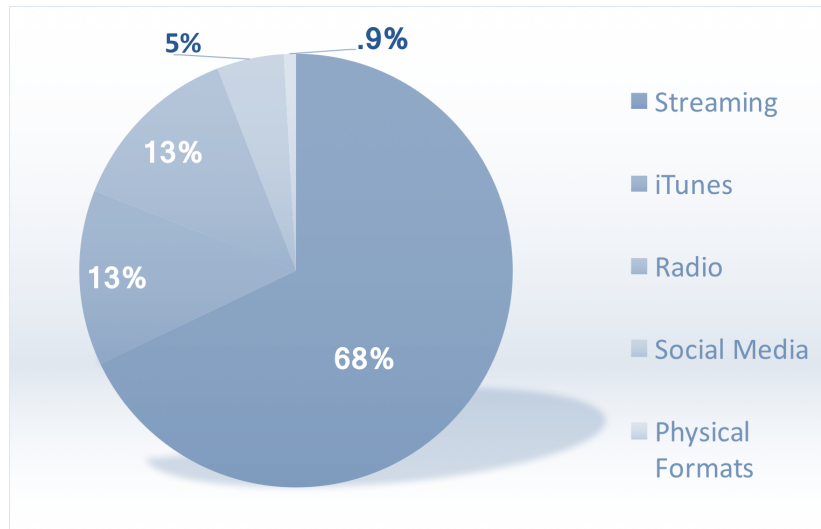


Figure 3: How do millennials listen? (Millennial Music Fans Survey, 2016).

67.9% of millennials choose to stream their music on their laptops or smartphones, which allows music to be a part of their everyday lives and conversations (Cummings, 2016). Millennial consumers listen to whatever they want, whenever they want, and there is nothing ambivalent about preference. Furthermore, there is a difference in listening habits and interactivity among each type of fan.

The Aficionado Fan Group. The aficionado fan is the music connoisseur, one who enjoys music from an array of genres and eras. This fan is always listening and discovering. A high percentage of millennials (37.4%) considered themselves aficionados (Figure 2).

The Digital Fan Group. The digital fan is the “tune trend finder”, often listening to music on social networks. This interactive consumer is less interested in the Indie genre than the aficionado and less likely to purchase music because of free access

through social networks i.e. YouTube and streaming services. In the millennial music fans survey, 20.3 % of millennials were digital fans (Figure 2).

The Big Box Fan Group. The big box fan is passionate about music, particularly pop and country, and prefers songs that resonate with movies, commercials or TV shows. Millennial big box fans desire a personal connection with music. They have an affinity for songs that remind them of their favorite actor, a movie scene, commercial or personal experience. The millennial music fans survey reported 30.6% of millennials were big box fans (Figure 2).

In conclusion, the 2016 millennial music fans survey revealed the millennial music consumer population is broken down differently than the total consumer population reported in Nielsen's 2013 survey. As aficionados, millennials are passionate and curious. As big box fans, they are nostalgic and loyal. As digital fans, they are opinionated and connected. Combined, these attributes make millennials a coveted target market for artists, but at the same time a challenging one.

Thus, using secondary and primary research, including the survey and focus groups, the psychographics and motivations of this demographic and coveted target market were further deliberated.

Millennial Psychographics

The millennial generation neither responds to nor accepts traditional advertising (Bylin, 2015). This generation values brands. They are not enticed to buy a product because of price or performance; they are eager to buy a product because they believe in the brand and the brand shares their same values.

In addition to brand loyalty, members of this generation value suggestions from their friends, family and those in their social networks and are reliant on peer-to-peer communication (Rolston, Macy & Hutchinson, 2015, p.53).

Y Pulse has studied 60,000 members of this generation for 10 years. Y Pulse surveys millennials every month to help brands better understand the attitudes, lifestyles and motivations of the millennial consumer. Mary Leigh Bliss, the Trends Editor and Strategic Consultant at Ypulse, described the millennial generation as one that appreciates authenticity and originality but stresses social identity (Bylin, 2015). This is reflected in the music millennials listen to, concerts they attend, and artists they follow and associate with on social media.

The researcher's survey supported that millennials were predominately music fans, which prompted the researcher's inquiries regarding the levels of artist fandom. As explained earlier, millennials bond with brands before products, meaning in music, millennials bond with artist brands before songs.

Defined by the researcher, there is a distinct difference between artist fandom and music fandom. Music fandom, as discussed previously, pertains only to affinity for music. Artist fandom refers to the level of interest and support for a specific artist, which uncovered motivations for spending money or time on social media to connect and build a relationship with the artist. The percentages of millennials in each category are shown on the following page in Figure 4.

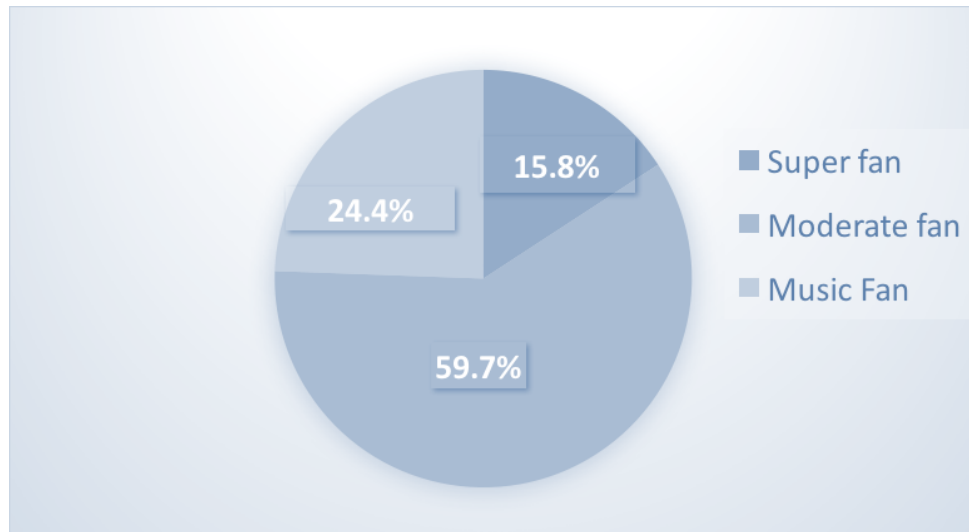


Figure 4: Millennials and degree of artist fandom (Millennial Music Fans Survey, 2016).

The super fan is the artist's most loyal consumer. Super fans are the commenters, consistent likers of posts, sharers, spenders of high priced concert tickets, backstage passes and any and all merchandise. It is crucial for a new artist to develop and maintain support and following from super fans, but he or she cannot rely solely on their advocacy because of the small percentage. As shown in Figure 4, only 15.8% of millennials are super fans.

The moderate fan follows social media accounts, but is more interested in an artist's music than personal details. The majority of millennials (59.7%) considered themselves moderate fans in the millennial music fans survey. They are not as financially or emotionally supportive as the super fan, but they do make up big numbers. Thus, it is equally important to understand the motivations of the millennial moderate fan as it is to understand that of the super fan.

The music fan does not express interest in any aspect of the artist's career other than music itself. In the millennial music fan survey, music fans accounted for 24.4% of

the millennial generation. Although this percentage is noteworthy, music fans pertaining to artist fandom are traditional. They have not allowed technological advancements such as social media or streaming to change their relationship with music.

However, this data insinuates that 75.5%, essentially three out of four, millennials are either super or moderate fans; meaning three out of four millennials are seeking a relationship with the artists they listen to.

Millennial Music Consumer Motivations

Along with having different levels of interest in artists, the three artist fan categories also have different motivations for maintaining a relationship with the artists they listen to i.e. spending time and money.

Motivations for Spending Money. Amidst the digital era, there are many sources for music spending, and only a tiny fraction is allotted to purchasing songs and albums. The most significant source of millennial music spending in 2015 was a ticket or admission to live concerts (Resnikoff, 2016). Rachel Cooper, a consumer insights professional at VH1 analyzed the results of a survey conducted by The Music Group titled, “The Music Experience in 2014”. One of the objectives of the study was to determine motivations for concert attendance. However, the age was not specified in the results, so the researcher asked millennials to choose their most common reason for attendance amongst three motivations: 1) opportunity to show case fandom, 2) opportunity to see live music or support 3) opportunity to spend time with friends (Cooper, 2014).

The millennial music fans survey indicated a direct relationship between underlying motivations to attend a concert and classification of artist fandom in the millennial demographic. As seen in Figure 5 below, a cross tabulation of the artist fandom categories and the underlying motivations for concert attendance was tabulated to present the relationship concerning millennials.

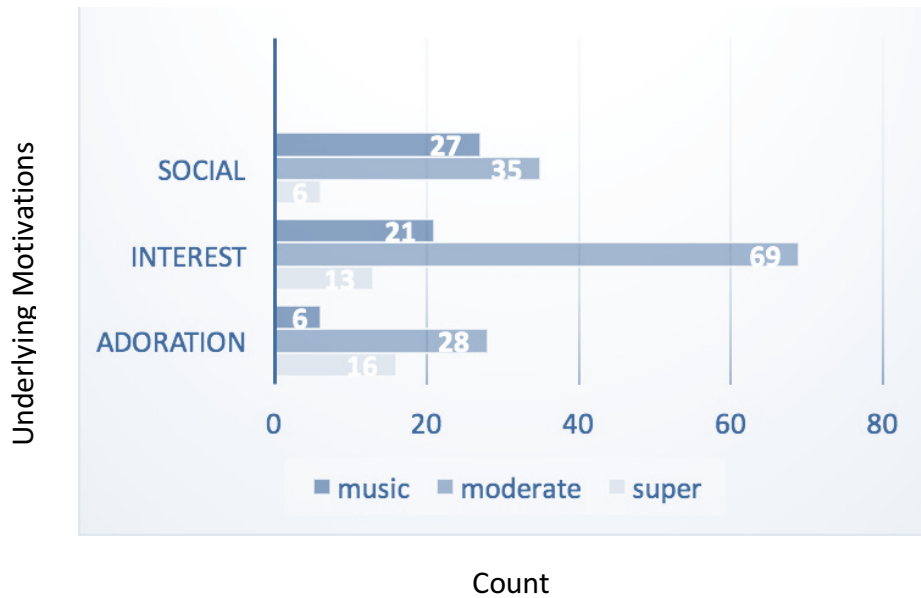


Figure 5: Artist fandom and underlying motivations for concert attendance cross tabulation (Millennial Music Fans Survey, 2016).

The millennial music fans survey reported a majority (38.5%) of millennial music fans attended concerts for the social aspect or a chance to hang out with friends. 47.7% of super fans attended concerts to showcase fandom and admiration for a particular artist. The majority of millennial moderate fans (63.3%) attended concerts because of their interest in live music and the opportunity to support an artist.

Because concerts have become the main source of income for artists, it is more important than ever to understand audience motivations in order to address the needs of the consumer. Thus, concerts have become consumer focused, or to be more specific,

millennial focused (Zimmerman, 2016). However, no accommodations have been made for the millennial music or traditional fan, as live music and social relationships are primarily the justification for attendance. Therefore, the adjustments are directed at the millennial moderate and super fans.

The concert industry has become a technologically dependent industry. Technology engages the moderate fans and gives them the experience they want from start to finish or from advertisement to the entirety of the concert. First, concerts are promoted on social media. Then, millennials purchase tickets on mobile ticketing services like Songkick, which makes fan engagement and personalization a priority. Lastly, throughout the concert, attendees are encouraged to tweet, text or share photos of themselves at the event that are displayed on the concert screens or photo-sharing app (Zimmerman, 2016).

However simple it may sound, millennial super fans require more than mobile technology to stay engaged. They use concerts as an outlet for not only showcasing their fandom, but also to socially identify with other super fans. The concert industry accommodated this need with concert movies in 2011. Following the success of Justin Bieber's *Justin Bieber: Never Say Never* concert movie, mega pop star Katy Perry and global sensation One Direction joined the concert movie trend the following two years. Beliebers, KatyCats and Directioners are featured throughout the films in interview segments, in-concert moments, on stage interactions and meet and greets. In each film, the artist or artists open up to their fans and relay the struggles and hardships that accompany fame. The same is done at the actual event.

As a result, the purpose of a concert has shifted from live music to fan engagement. Super fans want to attend because of this shared experience with other super fans and to connect with the artist on a deeper level.

Despite the desire to attend and to engage with artists on a personal level in a live experience, not all millennial, super or moderate, fans have the funds to attend pricey concerts. Therefore, these fans look to affordable substitutes that provide the concert “insider” experience and build the exclusive relationship they desire. Internet and technological advancements, specifically the advent of social media has provided a wealth of ways for fans to connect with and discover artists in lieu of attending live concerts.

Motivations for Spending Time on Social Media. Intuitively, one could hypothesize the access social media can provide to a music fan. Academic research from “The Use of Social Media for Artist Marketing: Music Industry Perspectives and Consumer Motivations,” an article published in *The International Journal on Media Management*, showcases the five motivations that drive social media interaction as the following:

“(1) access to content, (2) sense of affinity, (3) participation, (4) interaction, and (5) social identity in decreasing order of affect” (Salo, J., Lankinen, M., & Mantymaki, M., 2013, p. 23). This research can be applied to millennials, the leading demographic on all social networks, showing how increased access can lead to increased fan satisfaction for music discovery or connectivity with artists. This thought is supported by the millennial music fans survey.

According to the survey, 62.3% of millennial digital fans check their social media news feed every hour, as displayed in Figure 6 on the following page.

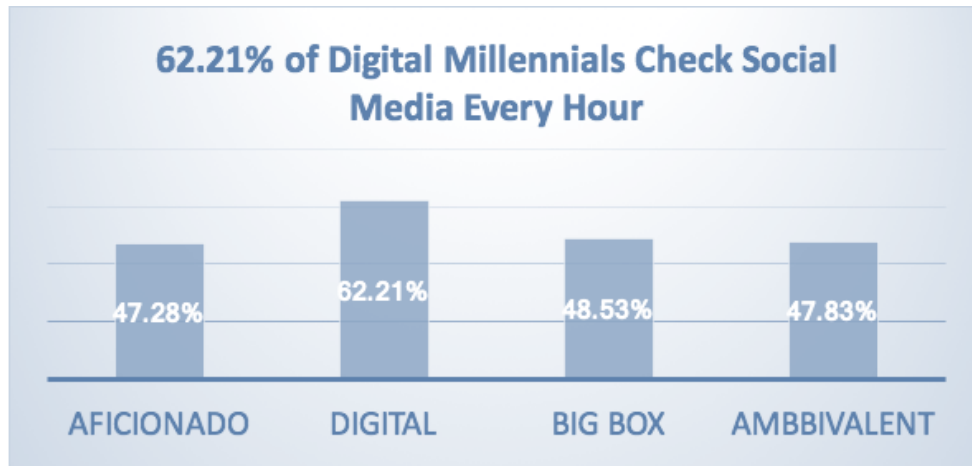


Figure 6: Music fandom and access to content (Millennial Music Fans Survey, 2016).

Social media is a crucial aspect of the digital fan group, a category of music fandom characterized as “tune trend finders”. As a digital fan, access to content pertains to the possibility of discovering an infinite number of free songs on social networking sites like YouTube, Facebook and Instagram.

Presented in Figure 7 below, 78.8% of millennial super fans admitted to checking their social media news feed every hour in the millennial music fan survey.

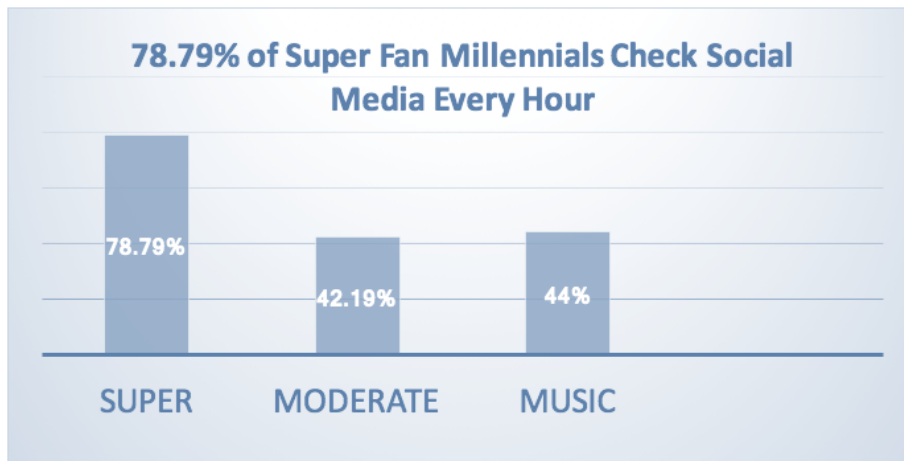


Figure 7: Artist fandom and access to content (Millennial Music Fans Survey, 2016).

For the super fan, access to content translates to access into an artist's life, twenty-four hours a day. This includes personal updates, tour updates or new music updates and releases. However, this reasoning behind social media use is not unique to millennial digital and super fans. Although traditional music fans do not express interest in social media, moderate fans appreciate and use it for music artist connectivity, but they do not rely on it in the same way digital and super fans do.

In addition to maintaining a relationship with a music artist through access to content, super fans use social media as means of building relationships with super fans alike. These relationships create a sense of affinity for super fans, which is the second motivator for social media use. Super fans are emotionally connected to one another via social media networks and share admiration for a specific artist and personal stories (Salo, J., Lankinen, M., & Mantymaki, M., 2013, p.25).

Social identity was briefly touched on in the concert section and has a similar purpose for social media. Introduced in 1979 by psychologists Henri Tajifel and John Turner, the social identity theory defines social identity as defining oneself based on how one fits into a group. Millennials use social media to socially identify with others with similar music tastes and habits. Members of the millennial generation are looking for music artists that stand out or help them stand out (Bylin, 2015). Expressing their music tastes and favorite artists on social media discerns them from the other millions of online profiles. It is a way of expressing themselves and defining who they are by how they fit into a group. Is one a Belieber or a Directioner? It is a tough decision, but one cannot be both. This is because millennials are extremely passionate music consumers.

They use music as a mean of building relationships and listen constantly. Millennial fans are social media fanatics and discovery junkies and a reason for the emergence of a new communication model in the music industry. Technology is also a key ingredient in this new engagement model. Take away technology and simultaneously take away access to content, causing the dissolution of millennial fan engagement. This idea insinuates the behaviors, attitudes and lifestyles of the millennial generation were shaped by the digital age, making technology the second critical component of the music industry model shift.

CHAPTER 2: THE MUSIC INDUSTRY IN THE DIGITAL AGE

The access granted to millennials has fueled a transformation of the record label's mass communication model, which is a direct occurrence of the digital era. Essentially, the control has shifted from the record labels to the consumers. Prior to the digital era, record labels exerted unchallenged control over the fan receipt of information and content. Dr. Valerie Vaccaro, professor of marketing at Kean University, and Dr. Deborah Cohn, professor of marketing at New York Institute of Technology, noted the label's mass approach to music distribution when they suggested the traditional business model of a record label was as an application of the four P's: product, price, place and promotion in *The International Journal on Media Management*. The label set a fixed price for the physical album to be sold in stores. The album required promotion, which consisted of paid advertising in traditional media to reach a mass audience. Sometimes markets were segmented by demographics, but never psychographics. It was a sustainable business model for record labels until the introduction of online music sharing.

Music sharing was the first digital innovation to change the model. The world was first introduced to music sharing in 1999, when Shawn Fanning created Napster, a peer-to-peer (P2P) music service that allowed users to download and share music with other subscribers. After capturing a consumer audience of 60 million people around the world, the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) and major labels like Universal, Sony Music, Warner Music, etc. sued Napster for music piracy due to the violation of copyright laws (Greenfeld, K. T. Taylor, C., & Thigpen, D. E., 2000).

Labels and their artists could collect neither payments nor royalties from the program (Vaccaro & Cohn, 2004). However, the industry's immediate backlash against Fanning's P2P music service could not possibly transcend its initial success. In 2000, journalists Karl Taro Greenfeld, Chris Taylor and David E. Thigpen stated in an article published in *Time International*, "Love it or hate it, that's what Napster has done: changed the world. It has forced record companies to rethink their business models." Despite the initial failure of Napster, the company would return in the late 2000s as a legal streaming service amongst others and record labels would have to adjust accordingly. However, there were online services created that helped sideline the popularity of online music sharing. The most successful was Apple's infamous iTunes (Russell & Sisario, 2016).

iTunes became the second disrupter to the traditional recording industry model when it was introduced to music fans in 2003. iTunes quickly became the first successful and legal online music provider. Fans rushed to embrace the pay per download method, and the industry welcomed iTunes as a way to regain control over an artist's music and counteract the digital music piracy that Napster created. Fans gained digital and portable access to personal playlists through Apple's software that served as a music library, playable on multiple devices such as iPods, laptops and eventually smartphones (Vaccaro & Cohn, 2004).

Apple's smartphone continued the shift in power to the consumer. The access supplied by the smartphone has arguably had the greatest impact on a consumer's relationship with music. According to the Pew Research Center, by 2015, two-thirds of American adults owned a smartphone, and 15% of millennials admitted they were

heavily dependent on the device (Smith, 2015). Unlike the iPod, which sole function is to store the entirety of an iTunes library in a handheld device, the iPhone serves multiple connective purposes. Music libraries coupled with Internet access and social media puts the consumer in control of his or her music experience. Smartphone use is on an unending rise, and it is no coincidence that the recording industry is seeing major growth in subscriptions to streaming services at the same time.

In 2016, the proliferated popularity of streaming services became the final factor in the control shift of label to consumer. Following the success of iTunes, streaming was reintroduced into the music market through multiple, legal online music providers that offer consumers instant access to an endless number of songs. Streaming services also include a personalization feature, which lets subscribers create their own playlists and play any song or artists they prefer. Of course there are different services. Some paid services require a small monthly fee i.e. Google Play, Spotify, Napster, Apple Music and Tidal. Pandora and the free tier Spotify service offer ad-supported radio for no monthly payment.

According to Joshua Friedlander, Sr. VP of strategic analysis at the RIAA, 2016 is the first year streaming has dominated the market. The number of paid subscriptions to streaming services in the US hit 18.3 million, an increase of 10.4 million in just two years (Friedlander, 2016, p. 1). It has surpassed all of its competitors, accounting for 47% of the industry's revenue. To put in perspective, permanent downloads from iTunes have declined to 31%, while physical formats only make up 20% of the revenue (Friedlander, 2016, p. 2). Even Apple's iTunes, despite its revolutionary beginning, could not compete

with streaming subscription growth. In June of 2015, Apple introduced their streaming service, Apple Music, as a way to stay relevant in the music market (Apple, 2015).

This control shift has been economically challenging for labels and their artists throughout the digital age. In the past decade, total revenue from music sales declined from 12 billion in 2006 to 7 billion in 2010 and stagnated (Russell & Sisario, 2016). Although research from the RIAA shows paid subscriptions have been increasing, the royalties paid back to artists, signed to a label or not, still account for only fractions of pennies per stream (Friedlander, 2016). It cannot and never will equate to the revenue brought in from the wholesale of physical albums. However unfair it might seem, record labels and their artists, along with independent artists, have been forced to accept it because millennial music consumers choose streaming. It is the most affordable and convenient option for music consumers. Why pay \$10 for one album, when the consumer can pay \$10 a month to have access to millions of songs?

In addition to demanding more music for less money, millennial music fans have an insatiable need to access, discover, share, and interact with music content on-line, all the time, as discussed in the previous chapter. Therefore, the label's traditional, mass approach of promoting artists and their music falls on deaf ears if the label does not actively connect with millennial consumers digitally and socially.

Thus, the control shift has introduced a direct to consumer model and opened doors for independent and aspiring artists to build and engage an audience of the same scale as a signed artist. Social media is the most prominent and evolving platform for signed, aspiring or independent artists to reach a millennial audience of thousands and

build a loyal fan base. As a result, two industry models currently exist to drive fan engagement: the standard communication model and the IMC communication model.

CHAPTER 3: THE NEW MUSIC INDUSTRY COMMUNICATION MODEL

The opportunity for an aspiring artist exists in the power shift from record label to millennial. This new communication model, a result of the technologically dependent millennial, is an introduction of the fifth “P” in IMC, personalization, as defined by Dr. Don E. Shultz, professor of IMC, The Medill School, Northwestern University. The fifth P incorporates the role of the consumer in the music marketing strategy. With the advent of online streaming and social media, consumers listen to whomever they want and artists engage their fans whenever and however they want. It is no longer the record label’s job to tell the consumer who to listen to.

The following figures, figures 8, 9 and 10, demonstrate the revolution of the new communication model as a direct to consumer model via social media.

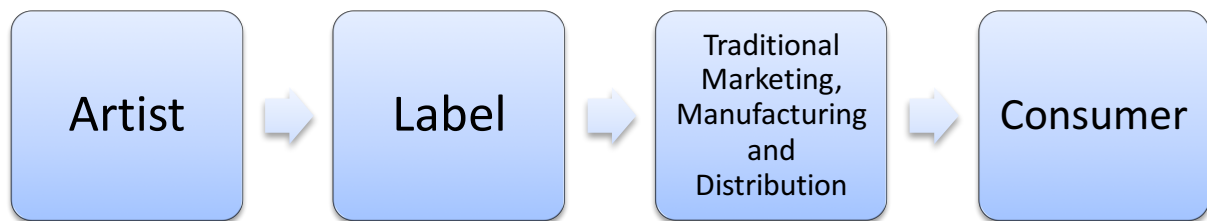


Figure 8: The old mass communication music industry business model

The old mass communication business model shown in Figure 8 depicts the label as a crucial channel that relays the message from the sender, or artist, to the receiver, or consumer, through means of manufacturing, distribution and traditional marketing tactics i.e. paid advertising. Hence, in the pre streaming era, a record deal was the goal

of every aspiring artist because the model shown in Figure 8 was the only model that existed.

Now with streaming, manufacturing is obliterated and artists can distribute their music themselves. Social media has replaced traditional advertising as the new means of direct to consumer marketing.

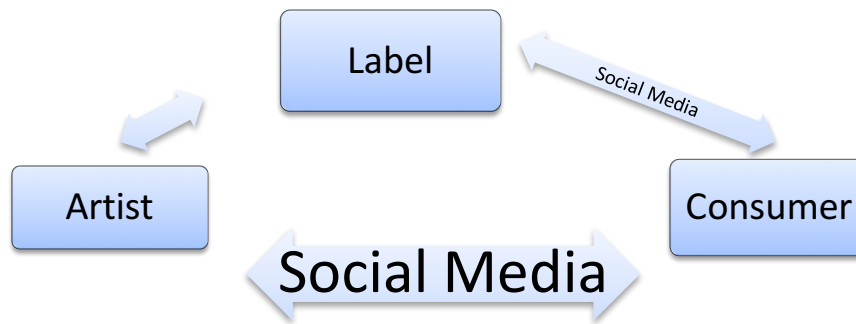


Figure 9: The standard music industry communication model

This standard model is an alteration of the old mass communication business model with the advent of streaming and social media. Signed contracts give the label rights to remain the mediator between the artist and consumer and control of the overarching messaging (Rolston, C. P., Macy, A., & Hutchison, T. (2015). However, the artist can speak directly to the consumer through social media.

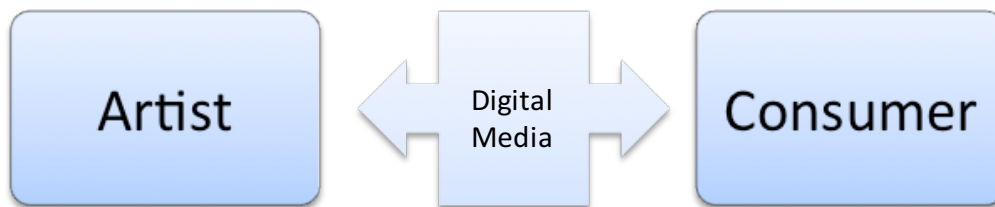


Figure 10: The IMC music industry communication model

The IMC communication model presented on the previous page in Figure 10 entails a direct relationship between the artist and the consumer, free of label control. Both new communication models provide an interactive relationship between artist and consumer, but the researcher concluded that in an IMC world, labels are less consumer focused and offer no additional benefits. Therefore, the IMC communication model is the most relevant and advantageous route for the aspiring artist.

The careers of the following highly recognized and accomplished artists, Justin Bieber and Chance the Rapper, are sufficient examples of proving the hypothesis. Both artists built their career through interactive relationships with a millennial audience.

Stars of the Digital Era

Justin Bieber. In 2008, talent manager Scooter Braun discovered Justin Bieber on YouTube. Justin was twelve at the time and had around 70,000 hits on the social media platform. Eight years later, Bieber is a household name and GRAMMY winning recording artist with a net worth of 200 million (Woods, 2016). The RIAA has certified all four of his albums and one album extension as double platinum or higher, and his VEVO YouTube page has skyrocketed to over 10 billion hits. In an interview with Forbes, Scooter Braun credits all of Bieber's success to the social media video-sharing website, YouTube.

Bieber had a strong following on the site before he signed with Scooter and Usher's joint label, RBMG Music, a division of Universal Music Group's Island Records. As his manager, Scooter had every intention of turning Justin Bieber into an overnight pop star, which he did. However, it was not luck. In a Forbes article titled, "Inside the

Brand of Justin Bieber: An Interview with Manager Scooter Braun”, Scooter said he was adamant about maintaining and building off the brand Justin had created on YouTube.

We were very strategic with how we introduced stuff and when we introduced it... we communicated directly with the consumer, with the fans. We let them tell us what they wanted... and constantly kept surprising them, and we kept our word, and that’s the most important thing. As Justin has become bigger and bigger, we haven’t left them behind. He continues to tweet often, post YouTube videos, and spends time on Facebook (Schawbel, 2011).

Justin Bieber’s career and instantaneous fame prove that millennials and social media are a force to be reckoned with. Without this undeniably influential combination, Justin could not have built such a profoundly loyal and global fan base. In the same interview, Scooter defended this thought.

There’s a sense of discovery and a sense of ownership. The kids found him. They didn’t find him on the radio... or even through my recommendation. They found him by us simply letting him introduce himself over the Internet, like any other teenager would... the secret to the marketing was to keep it organic and authentic (Schawbel, 2011).

Justin was the first Internet star to transform into a platinum recording, multi-million dollar artist. He was well known before signing with Scooter’s label, however Justin could not have produced, recorded nor distributed his premier album, *My World*, without Scooter and RBMG Music in 2009. Not only was he a 13-year-old kid lacking experience in the industry, but also the music industry landscape was completely different than it is now as noted in chapters 1 and 2. During this era, Justin Bieber’s fans were not yet using streaming services, and labels still had some control. Suppose the timing was different, Scooter may have positioned Justin Bieber as an independent artist

because in the current industry, artists like Chance the Rapper have experienced career takeoffs similar to Justin Bieber's without a label.

Chance the Rapper. In 2017, Chance the Rapper made history as the first independent artist to win a Grammy for his mix tape, *Coloring Book*, exclusively released to streaming services (Guerrasio, 2017). Like Justin, his career has spawned a new business model, the independent business model, by forging a new direct to consumer route to fans through social media and streaming services.

Chance the Rapper appeals to a different audience than Justin Bieber's initial teenage girl fan base. Therefore, Chance chose to release his music to streaming services only (Guerrasio, 2017). It was not available to buy or download anywhere. His reasoning behind this was the principle that "free adds value" stated in a *Forbe's* article titled, "Three Marketing Takeaways from Chance the Rapper's 'Coloring Book' Roll-Out". In addition to being monetarily free, as an independent artist, his music was also free of label control and interference. His mixtapes were purely original, which added credibility for his particular fan base (Payne, 2016).

When Chance The Rapper released his third mixtape, *Coloring Book*, exclusively on Apple Music... without a major record company backing his decisions, it seemed as though the mixtape culture had been exposed to the mainstream in an authentic fashion - one that would make the most avid fan of underground hip-hop proud (Payne, 2016).

In addition to keeping his music authentic, he did the same with his marketing. He used a combination of social media and traditional marketing to create an interactive, multi-media marketing campaign. *Coloring Book's* album artwork was available for purchase on Chance's website. Chance encouraged fans to distribute the posters across their

cities. “In the subsequent days, Chance retweeted a string of photos displaying his posters plastered on bedroom walls, buildings and bathroom stalls” (Payne, 2016). This interactive distribution of posters gave Chance free advertising to millions of bystanders in multiple cities and neighborhoods and engages his 40.6K followers on Twitter. More importantly, it helped build his brand image as an independent and creative, yet credible rapper.

By March of 2017, Chance the Rapper had 169M views on YouTube, 1.63M Facebook likes, 4.1M Instagram followers, 40.6K Twitter followers and 4.1M Instagram followers. He continues to interact with fans by posting updates about his music and personal life on his social networks including pictures and videos in the studio, around his hometown of Chicago and with his daughter. He is a humble, artistic and independent rapper, proud to be from Chicago, which he portrays in all aspects of his brand i.e. his song lyrics, album art, style and social media profiles. His hit song, “No problem” from his album, *Coloring Book* opens with the line “If one more label try to stop me” because he is insistent on remaining independent.

Artists like Justin Bieber and Chance the Rapper are revolutionists in the music industry and influencers of the new communication models, along with their fans. They prove that a music career can be achieved in the digital age with the right brand identity, audience, and social media strategy. Although the most recent, IMC communication model does not incorporate a label, the label could remain relevant by adjusting their focus to artist development.

The Relevant Record Label

The goal of the record label should be to create and promote a music personality from its artist, one that occupies an untapped space in the consumer's mind. A stronger brand will increase an artist's value to its fans, thus generating brand loyalty. To do this, labels need to devote the time and money spent on artist and repertoire (A&R) to the development of currently signed artists, rather than talent scouting. The IFPI estimates that \$4.3B is annually spent on A&R worldwide. However, the three major labels, Universal Music Group, Sony Entertainment, and Warner Music group, have signed over 7,500 artists combined (IFPI, 2014). This includes artists with record deals, publishing deals, artist development deals, etc. In the 2015 RIAA report titled, "Labels at Work: The Music Business in the Digital Age," the RIAA stresses the fact that labels find as many artists as they can. The researcher concludes it is far too many to develop a distinct persona for each one.

The new communication model calls for more attention to each individual artist, so the label should be more particular about who they sign and sign less artists. With fewer artists, there would be less of a need to outsource to marketing firms. In 2015, Clyde Rolston, former V.P of Marketing of an independent label and professor of music marketing at Belmont University, suggested the model label be a one-stop-shop.

Ideally, a label should be the branding agent, the megaphone, and the central intelligence agency on behalf of the artist and recording to create awareness of not only the music but that artist who created it (Rolston et al., 2015, p.5).

Labels have financial power, but they do not use it to their advantage. Chance the Rapper claims record labels are a dying industry. Signed artists give up a substantial

amount of financial and publishing rights for something Chance says they can accomplish alone like he did (Guerrasio, 2017). However, Clyde Rolston argues, “Conversely, with the power of influence—radio airplay, social media, imaging, word of mouth, etc.—a quality recording has a greater chance to succeed. The record label can deliver this influence” (Rolston et al., 2015, p.5). There are plenty of aspiring artists that still desire the financial benefits and elite title that comes with being a signed artist. So, it is the labels job to promise brand development and appeal to those artists. However, this is merely a suggestion.

The Independent Aspiring Artist

Chance the Rapper is an artist who has embraced the IMC communication model. In the post streaming, social media age of music, independent artists like Chance can thrive. The overarching goal of the artist should be to create brand love, which entails capturing the attention of a passive audience via social media and transforming them into fans. It begins with building a brand and sufficient following that differentiates him or her from competitors.

Social Media Strategist

The researcher proposes that these goals can be achieved with a branding agent or “social media strategist”. The role of the Social Media Strategist is to apply the principles of IMC as defined by the Meek School of Journalism and New Media, University of Mississippi.

Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) is a strategic approach to influencing brand perceptions and target audience behavior through the use of consistent, relevant, coordinated messages across multiple platforms” (The Meek School of Journalism and New Media, The University of Mississippi).

This brand and consumer focused strategy can be applied to the creation of a music personality. It begins with consumer research or by getting to know the consumer on a deeper level than demographics (Vaccaro, 2004). The social media strategist must learn the attitudes, interests, opinions, and lifestyles of an artist’s target market to successfully sell his or her music to the targeted audience.

If a label were to hire a social media strategist, this would also apply to A&R, in addition to artist development. First, the label would need to conduct extensive research on what its target market is lacking, regarding a unique genre, personality, or voice of an artist. Then, after signing an artist, have the social media strategist develop the artist by researching, planning, communicating and evaluating a clear brand identity.

An independent artist can choose to hire a social media strategist to do the same. The following case study demonstrates the role of the social media strategist in an experiment to position and brand an independent aspiring artist.

CHAPTER 4: A CAMPAIGN TO CREATE A MUSIC PERSONALITY

The case study, an experiment applying the new communication model and IMC principles, was designed to test the success of assigning a social media strategist to a music artist. The subject of the case study is Kynlie Freeman, a 21 year-old singer/songwriter from Nashville. Kynlie is an artist that has signed with Sony, but remains fairly unknown. This study will measure the effectiveness of a social media strategist by comparing Kynlie's social media presence and following, songs sold on iTunes and total listens on streaming services, prior to the campaign and after the campaign was implemented.



A Campaign to Create a Music Personality

Situation Assessment

Kynlie Freeman is a 21-year-old singer/songwriter from Nashville, TN. The oldest of eight, Kynlie always thought of music as an escape from her hectic life. Kynlie has been writing, performing and recording music since the ninth grade. In 2014, she signed a publishing and artist development deal with Sony/ATV. She currently has four EPs available on iTunes and Spotify; two were released under contract with Sony. Her SoundCloud features acoustic performances and other music that has not yet been released for downloading. Kynlie identifies with the Indie Pop genre, but has written and recorded a number of eclectic songs that could be considered genre bending.

As Kynlie has grown older, the message and language in her music has matured along with her audience, but her music career has not experienced the same progression. This stalemate is a consequence of an unclear, even non-existent brand identity and a limited online presence. Therefore, she did not renew her contract with Sony/ATV in 2016.

Online Brand Evaluation

Kynlie uses social media platforms and a website for digital marketing purposes. The ultimate goal is to increase following and interaction on social media sites, which will in return increase the online distribution of her music and build a loyal fan base.

The following evaluations were interpreted from data taken from November 2016.

Website Evaluation: <http://kynlie.com/home>. Kynlie’s website is organized, concise and built with a very responsive design, which converts well from a desktop to mobile presentation. The viewer experiences minimal load time and can navigate tabs without having to wait. Before being directed to the home page, the site displays her newest music video. For optimal views, it would be beneficial to caption the video saying, “Watch Now”. That way, it is more of a call to action rather than just a play button.

The website is a sufficient home base for her online brand and includes hyperlinks to all of her social media i.e. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube. The music services, Spotify, Itunes and Soundcloud, are also hyperlinked to purchase or play her music.

The media on her website includes professional photos, presented in Figure 11, and videos. Most of the photos i.e. her bio picture in Figure 11 are not expressive. Her clothing, facial expressions and the location they were taken are confusing to a viewer, and put together, do not create a clear brand identity.



Figure 11: Kynlie’s original website media pre social media strategy

Social Media Evaluation

Facebook: Her Facebook fan page, @KynlieMusic, has 1,193 likes. Kynlie typically posts once every two weeks. She is consistent across platforms and often shares her Instagram posts to the fan page, but does not include a direct hyperlink to her other social media platforms on the fan page. The majority of her Facebook posts are announcements; she rarely is personal with her audience on the site. In the previous four-month period, Kynlie received a total of 824 likes on all of her posts. A screenshot of her homepage and total likes in the previous four-month period is presented below in Figure 12.



Figure 12: Kynlie’s Facebook page and engagement over a four-month period prior the social media strategy

Instagram: Kynlie’s Instagram following, @kynlie_, is far less than Facebook with only 481 followers. She alternates between posting videos and photos, but only posts two times a week typically. Her average like per post is approximately 50.8, while her videos usually earn around 160 views. There is not a separate account for personal and music; so, she has potential to use this platform to build a stronger brand identity and relationship with her audience. Kynlie should do this by updating her bio and exposing fans to her personal and social life. Her bio and Instagram profile is presented below in Figure 13.

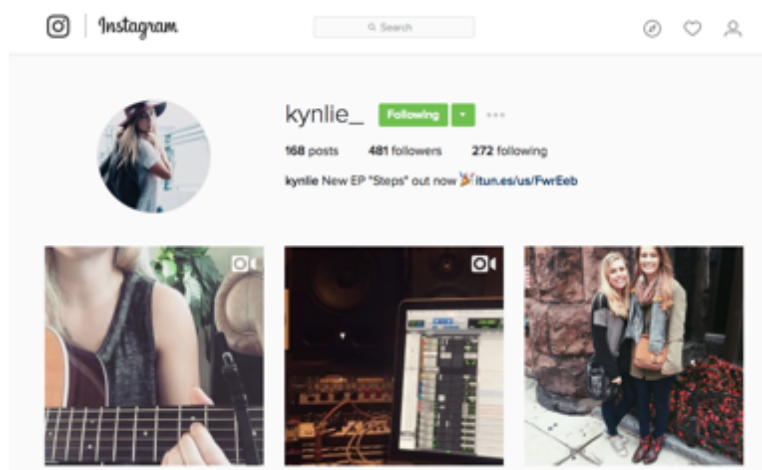


Figure 13: Kynlie’s Instagram profile prior to social media strategy

In addition to personalizing her account, Kynlie needs to make it discoverable. Currently, Kynlie uses the same seven hashtags on almost every music post. The hastags are #music, #songwriter, #photography, #pop, #newmusic, #kynlie and #nashville. Experimenting with different, more specific hashtags could increase Kynlie’s following, post reach and post impressions.

Twitter: Kynlie’s Twitter handle, @kynlie_, has 949 followers, but only earns an average of 0.33 likes per tweet and .33 retweets per tweet. She tweets very infrequently, maybe once a week, and uses hashtags sparingly. Kynlie needs to tweet at least twice a day to engage her audience and increase her following.



Figure 14: Kynlie’s Twitter profile prior to social media strategy

In addition to post frequency, Kynlie needs to rebrand her Twitter account by tweeting less music announcement posts and more personal posts.

YouTube: Lastly, Kynlie is active on the video streaming platform, YouTube. Kynlie has 180 subscribers and earns an average of 1,351 views per video. Her highest viewed video was posted two years ago and earned 6,897 views; however a video posted five months ago only received 252 views. Kynlie’s content on YouTube is limited to professional looking videos. The information in her bio needs to be updated, in addition to providing a more detailed explanation of her music and story to the viewers.

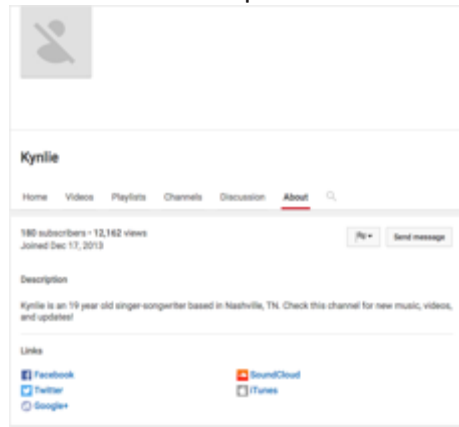


Figure 15: Kynlie’s YouTube profile prior to social media strategy

Kynlie does not currently use “Insights” for her Facebook page and Instagram account. Kynlie needs to use the insights tool to discover what time of day she should post based on her followers’ activity. Insights will allow Kynlie to see which hash tags work best for post impressions and reach. Most importantly, it will be a helpful tool for determining a target audience. Currently, the majority of her active social media following consists of females, ages 18-24.

Music Distribution Analysis

The following data was recorded from in November from Tunecore and shows the number of streams each song and album has received along with the number of songs and albums sold.

Total Spotify followers: 95

Steps EP: 8 albums sold/ 272 total streams

1. How to be Alone: 62 streams
2. Bubble: 47 streams
3. Beautiful Thing: 60 streams
4. So-Called Friend: 10 sold/ 347 streams
5. Unsure of Myself: 43 streams

Give in to You EP: 25 albums sold/ 3,787 total streams

1. Lost in the Night: 5 songs sold/ 937 streams
2. Walking Away: 3 songs sold/ 592 streams
3. Drop Me Off: 2 songs sold/ 411 streams
4. Tennessee: 10 songs sold/ 697 streams
5. Give in to You: 5 songs sold/ 572 streams

Kynlie EP albums sold: 47 sold/ 2,863 total streams

1. Licorice: 12 songs sold/ 572 streams
2. The City: 2 songs sold/ 385 streams
3. Our Stars: 3 songs sold/ 385 streams
4. Hangin’ Round: 33 songs sold/ 1,221 streams
5. Good to Me: 11 songs sold/ 631 streams

In Between EP albums sold: 16 albums sold/ 8,272 total streams

1. You and Me: 101 songs sold/ 2,973 streams
2. Always: 83 songs sold/ 1,511 streams
3. Shadow: 64 songs sold/ 839 streams
4. Hemingway: 100 songs sold/ 2,949 stream

SWOT Analysis: After analyzing Kynlie’s online brand evaluation, the researcher composed a list of Kynlie’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that make her an appropriate aspiring music artist for social media strategy. The list is presented in Figure 16 on the following page.

<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Instrumentalist: Guitar, Piano and Ukulele -Songwriter -Unique Name -Connected to cause i.e. Epic Girl -Oldest of eight -Dating musician in Boy Named Banjo 	<p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Lacks a brand identity -Small Social media following -Undefined Target Audience
<p>Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Snapchat -Instagram story, Instagram live -Facebook live -Covers -Analytics -Connect more with non-profit, Epic Girl 	<p>Threats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Other undiscovered artists with greater following i.e. @kelleighbannen @natalieestesmusic @alicek @natalieduffy @savannahconleydotcom @alexistaylormusic @lindsaymccaul @kennamusic @kayleighland -Differentiating herself from other established artists i.e. perceptual map

Figure 16: Kynlie’s SWOT analysis

Problem Definition

Kynlie is a talented singer/songwriter, but has not differentiated herself amongst the thousands of aspiring artists online and in Nashville. It is paramount Kynlie develops a unique brand identity that is frequently expressed with a distinguished voice across all social media platforms. The brand must be apparent in all aspects of her life including her clothing style, accessories, makeup and hair, social outings, charity work, language and song lyrics.

Kynlie must define her target audience and find her niche, filling a void in the consumer’s mind that no other artist can or has. She must strengthen the relationship she has with current consumers with intimacy and interactivity online. The more attention she receives on her online content, i.e. likes, comments or shares, the more intriguing she becomes to a passive audience, label, or publishing company.

Secondary Research

Kynlie does not only have competition online, but also lives in a city where thousands of residents share her same dream. Chris Cotton, a research analyst for the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce, defines the city of Nashville a media cluster in the report titled “Nashville Music Industry: Impact, Contribution and Cluster Analysis.”

The report estimated there were around 6,000 proclaimed musicians in Nashville in 2012. “While Nashville is a true pinnacle of achievement for many musicians, it also is a city filled with the highest level of talent. Performers must not only be good, but top of their class, to gain success or even an audience in Nashville” (Benfield, Z., Cotton, C. & Hapter, G, 2012, p. 61).

Kynlie must appeal to the thousands of super fans online, but at the same time, remain an authentic artist and respectable member of the Nashville music scene.

Primary Research

Interview Results: The researcher met with Kynlie for an interview in September of 2016 to learn more about her music story and how her Sony deal came about. The researcher covered the basis of the following questions:

- What artists would you compare yourself to?
- What kind of artist do you want to become?
- What level of fame are you seeking?
- Where are you right now with Sony?
- Have they expressed a plan for you?
- How did the artist development deal come about?
- How do you market yourself now? What platforms?
- How many followers? How often do you post?
- Who do you think your typical fan is?

The researcher concluded that Kynlie has no intentions of becoming the next multi-million dollar star, but she aspires to be heard and recognizable. She told the researcher that she wants her music to influence and speak to fans, and at the same time, be enough to make a living. “The dream would be to do music and not have to do anything else. I do not need to be a pop star, but I’d love it if someone was listening to the radio and could say ‘oh that’s Kynlie!’”

She compared herself to artists like Ingrid Michaelson and Sara Bareilles. “I really like what Ingrid Michaelson does with commercials...I like the route she’s gone. She’s selling out the Ryman. I would love to be able to do that. I don’t necessarily need to sell out Bridgestone”.

Her decision to not re-sign with Sony was due to a lack of development and attention on their part. Kynlie was offered a deal when she was 16, but decided it was not the right time. However, she kept in touch with Ed, the man who offered her the deal. After returning home from Berklee, Kynlie played her “Kynlie EP” for him, and he absolutely loved it. She says, “So the only reason I got signed with Sony was because Ed was really passionate about me. My decision to leave has a lot to do with Ed leaving. I know it is not where I am meant to be. They are primarily country”.

Kynlie further explained that Sony was not the reason for her progress. Although she signed an artist development deal in addition to publishing, she was basically working as an independent artist by means of recording and marketing. Sony’s only role was paying for recording, and the publishing rights restricted her from experimenting with any form of synching i.e. TV and film.

In conclusion, Kynlie stated, “I am basically sitting on a shelf there.” The only marketing advice Kynlie received was to restrict her Instagram posts to solely music posts, which disregards the researcher’s hypothesis entirely.

Kynlie is excited for this opportunity to expand her audience by working with a social media strategist.

Survey Results: The researcher applied the findings from the millennial music survey, introduced in chapter 1 and located in the appendix, to uncover insights about Kynlie’s fan base. The following results were aggregated from the survey.

Relevant Results: Women are more active on social media than men (Millennial Music Fan Survey, 2017). 53% of the women respondents admitted to checking their social media news feeds every hour; 38% admitted to every couple of hours and the remaining 9% checked their feed at least everyday. Men scored a lower percentage in all the previous responses in addition to 6% answering every couple of days and another 6% responding not applicable, meaning they did not engage in social media at all. However, frequency or lack there of is not the only difference between genders and their social media habits.

Women and men have differing motivations for following music artists on social media. It is typical for people of both genders to label themselves as moderate music fans, fans who follow an artist’s social media accounts but are more interested in the music than the artist’s personal or social life. However, the results indicated that a higher percentage of women consider themselves super fans, interactive and even obsessive over an artist, while more men consider themselves music fans, strictly music listeners with no concern for an artist’s personal life. Consequently, a higher percentage of men respondents were “very likely” to follow a music artist after hearing and liking multiple songs. The percentages of women responding “very likely” spiked when the conditions pertained to brand identity rather than music alone i.e. seeing a live performance, meeting in person and or learning facts about personal life.

The cross tabulation, shown on the following page in Figure 17, is a comparison of the percentages of women and men respondents answering the question “How likely are you to follow or like a music artist on at least one social media account after...” (a certain condition is named).

How likely are you to follow or like a music artist on at least one social media account after...		Female	Male	All
Seeing a live performance?	Very likely	13 36.1%	126 63.96%	139 56.6%
	Somewhat likely	17 47.2%	54 27.41%	71 30.5%
	Not likely	6 16.7%	17 8.6%	23 9.9%
Meeting in person?	Very likely	24 66.7%	168 85.3%	192 82.4%
	Somewhat likely	4 11.1%	18 9.1%	22 9.4%
	Not likely	8 22.2%	11 5.6%	19 8.2%
Learning facts about personal life?	Very likely	11 30.6%	100 50.8%	111 47.6%
	Somewhat likely	13 36.1%	77 39.1%	90 38.6%
	Not likely	12 33.3%	20 10.2%	32 13.7%

Figure 17: Cross tabulation of gender and how likely to follow. Results from respondents answering on a Likert scale (Millennial Music Fans, 2016).

The results indicated that women were more likely to follow an artist for reasons more telling of a personality. The other two scenarios “hearing and liking one song, hearing and liking multiple songs” did not evoke the same response from women. The researcher assumed this was a consequence of a woman’s interest in the lifestyles and affairs of someone other than herself, the inherent characteristics of a super fan. However, one question that evoked a similar response from both genders. When asked to rank which social media platform was most expressive or telling about a music artist in decreasing order of effect, women respondents ranked Snapchat first and Instagram second. Men respondents ranked Instagram first and Snapchat second but both genders responded believed Twitter, Facebook and YouTube to be the least expressive in decreasing order of effect. This data is presented in Figure 18 below.

Platform	Ranked 1		Ranked 2		Ranked 3		Ranked 4		Ranked 5		Total
SnapChat	7	98	12	39	7	25	1	14	6	15	224
Instagram	10	55	4	69	10	49	8	13	1	5	224
Twitter	5	15	6	58	11	62	7	24	4	32	224
Facebook	3	5	7	8	2	33	12	82	9	64	225
Youtube	3	19	4	18	3	24	6	46	13	85	225

Figure 18: Gender and ranking of most expressive social media platform (Millennial Music Fan Survey, 2016). Male respondents are differentiated by blue and female respondents are differentiated by pink.

When the researcher analyzed the data collected about social media trends, it was more interesting to study the differences in gender because the millennial generation is undeniably the most prominent digital adult generation. However when the researcher analyzed the questions about music, comparing ages and music consumption was far more enticing. The majority of respondents, considering every age category, identified themselves as an aficionado, or a music connoisseur. Therefore, it is assumed that genre is not the end all be all characteristic of an artist; hence Kynlie does not have to bind herself to a single genre.

The following cross tabulation in Figure 19 presents the percentages of each demographic categorized by level of music fandom.

	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-60	60+
Aficionado	78 (36.8%)	5 (50%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)
Digital	43 (20.3%)	2 (20%)	0 (0%)	1 (25%)	0 (0%)
Big Box	68 (32.1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (25%)	0 (0%)
Ambivalent	23 (10.9%)	3 (30%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)

Figure 19: Age and music fandom cross tabulation (Millennial Music Fan Survey, 2016).

It is important to note the divide in music fans of the millennial generation. 32% of 18-24 year-olds considered themselves big box fans; but no one the age of 25-34 responded the same. It makes perfect sense that maturing could change your music listening habits. There is a big difference in the life of a 20 year-old and one of a 27 year old. Growing up is inevitable, and as your weekends of partying slowly dwindle, so does your interest in listening to the “what’s hot” playlist or party hits. Thus, an older fan of Kynlie’s is more likely to listen to any one of her songs, while the 18-24 year old is more likely concerned with popularity and listens to the songs with the most streams.

The millennial generation was also divided on the topic of music discovery. The following cross tabulation in Figure 20 presents the differing percentages in millennials and their music discovery method preference.

		18-24	25-34
How do you most often discover or actively seek new music?	Social Media	25 (11.8%)	1 (10%)
	Friend Recommendations	64 (30.2%)	4 (40%)
	Discover playlists	113 (53.3%)	3 (30%)
	Local concerts	10 (4.7%)	2 (20%)

Figure 20: The differences in the millennial demographic regarding music discovery (Millennial Music Fan Survey, 2016).

Focus Group Results: After conducting the survey, the researcher sought to gain valuable insight about how members of the millennial generation perceive the brand identity of specific music artists. For this qualitative research, the researcher held two different focus groups on campus, at the University of Mississippi, and asked participants that fit the 18-24 year old age description. The moderator guide is available in Appendix B.

The researcher acted as the moderator and led the first focus group on November 17, 2016 lasting one hour. The eight participants consisted of three boys and five girls of different ages and from eight different cities. To begin, the respondents heard a brief synopsis of the objectives and ground rules of the focus group, as well as the meaning of brand identity. The moderator encouraged every participant to think about their favorite artist and what image or persona comes to mind when they hear the artist's name or picture his or her face. Then, the participants were asked to write a phrase or word that best describes the following artists: Justin Bieber, Carrie Underwood, Drake, Taylor Swift, John Mayer, Beyoncé and Adele. These particular artists were chosen because they are well known and were frequent responses to the survey question, "What artists do you follow on social media?"

One artist brand identity was so recognizable that it facilitated the same response from every participant. The artist was Beyoncé and every participant ensured her self-branded identity, Queen B. It is not only a nickname for the multi-million dollar recording artist, actress and performer, but also it encapsulates all that she is and her power and influence in the music industry. Beyoncé was creative and experimental with her most recent album "Lemonade." She announced the album in a Tweet and posted the "Formation" video to Facebook, deviating from traditional advertising. Beyoncé's innovativeness, honesty, vulnerability, talent, and courage are presented in the visual album and song lyrics and have rightfully entitled her Queen.

Although the other artists' pictures did not generate the same consistency in responses, participants perceived similar brand identities for Taylor Swift and Adele. The moderator showed two pictures of Taylor Swift. The first depicted the 24-year-old empowered, pop singer and the second depicted the 16-year-old country sweetheart and girl next door. The participants defined a more mature Taylor Swift as "wise", "fierce", "rebellious", "red lipstick", "professional", "sexy" and "hating boys". The picture of her in her teen country years had the opposite effect on participants. They described this Taylor as "innocent", "cute", "needy" and "desperate for love".

These results reiterate that Taylor has been extremely successful at branding and rebranding herself. The new Taylor has a choppy haircut, wears bold lip colors, dresses more provocatively and is outspoken on social media and in song writing. There is a clear distinction between how fans view the old and new Taylor.

The participants described Adele as “deeply emotional”, “passionate and pure”. Adele is a unique artist. Her lyrics often convey vulnerability, while her singing voice remains powerful and strong. The participants agreed that Adele’s larger build and “classy style” elicits respect from her audience because she has not conformed to the stereotypical celebrity look.

After analyzing the online brands of these particular artists with the participants, the moderator switched gears 30 minutes in and played a one-minute clip of Kynlie’s song, showed three pictures and played a one-minute clip of her video.

During the song, the moderator asked each participant to listen and simultaneously think about her age, genre or any way to categorize her as an artist. Some assumed she was 16, while the majority guessed she was around 20. Everyone agreed she was pop and compared her to Taylor Swift or edgier Colbie Caillat. They expressed more confusion about Kynlie’s age when shown a picture of her on what appears to be a jungle gym. Finally after watching Kynlie’s music video for her original song “So-Called Friend”, the participants were adamant that the way she was dressed, i.e. sundress and nose ring, was confusing. The focus group helped the researcher realize that Kynlie’s online representation was neither “relatable” nor “intriguing” to a passive audience.

The second focus group ran similarly and was held on December 2, 2016, however all 10 participants were female. This decision was made after analyzing the discussion flow of the first focus group. The males tended to interrupt the females, making the women participants more reserved and less insightful. In addition, the males admitted they would not be music fans of Kynlie.

The second focus group was facilitated the same as the first. The participants had similar perceptions of Beyoncé, Taylor Swift, and Adele to those of the first focus group. One difference worth noting was that the all female group mentioned a physical attribute of each artist. All ten females wrote “legs” for Carrie Underwood, and the majority wrote “sexy” for Drake and “mysterious” and “hot” for John Mayer. Although the men did mention Carrie’s legs, they spoke about John Mayer’s guitar style and Drake’s expressive lyrics rather than looks. Therefore, it can be assumed that women sexualize persons of the same gender out of admiration or jealousy. The same rule does not apply to men.

It would be beneficial for Kynlie to hone in on one physical attribute i.e. her tiny frame or thick hair. The female group agreed with this. For the second focus group, I played a one-minute song clip, showed the same three pictures and played a one-minute video clip. The song and video clip were different than the ones presented during the first focus group. The all female group categorized Kynlie as a country artist, comparing her to Kacey Musgraves, Taylor Swift and Maren Morris. One participant believed Kynlie to be 16, equating her photo on the jungle gym to a senior picture. The female group described her facial expressions as emotionless. She looks as if “she doesn’t care or doesn’t want to be there,” elucidating the senior picture reference.

More importantly, the female group believed Kynlie could be a success and was perceptive about how to do so. A couple participants discussed Jessie James Decker. They admitted that they follow Jessie James because they want her life, her hair, her husband, and her kids. As previously noted, they follow her out of jealousy and admiration. Kynlie has the potential to make super fans feel the same way about her. She is the oldest of eight. She is dating the lead singer in an up and coming band, Boy Named Banjo, and to top it off, she is an attractive 21-year-old. However, Kynlie is an introvert, and to be a successful music artist in this day and age she needs to show her fans these aspects of her life in an authentic way, using her humorous yet thoughtful voice.

Key Insight

Female millennials are social media enthusiasts who want an interactive and intimate relationship with the artists they listen to.

Communication Target

Sarah is on the edge of 18, about to encounter some big, foreseen changes in her life. As her high school graduation gets closer and closer, so does her friendships with the people she is about leave for four years. So to cope, she locks herself in her room and listens to sentimental songs. Although it depresses her, it makes her feel better that this singer understands what she is going through.

Kendall is experiencing her first year of college. She is the group's designated music enthusiast and DJ's for her roommates while they get ready to go out. When her group finds a song they like, they tend to play it excessively. So in her free time, Kendall searches Instagram and YouTube in hopes of discovering an undiscovered artist. If she finds a cool, trendy song or artist, she can't wait to play it for her friends and add it to their party playlist!

Izzy has been placed in an intern level position at her office for three years now. She is frustrated with work and to top it off, lonely. She is late to her bridesmaid fitting for her third bridesmaid dress this year. Not only does this fitting remind her of the 11 pounds she gained last month, but it also reiterates the obscurity of her love life. She cries on her drive home to music that gets her.

Perceptual Map

A perceptions map was used as a positioning tool for Kynlie. The map is presented in Figure 21 on the following page.

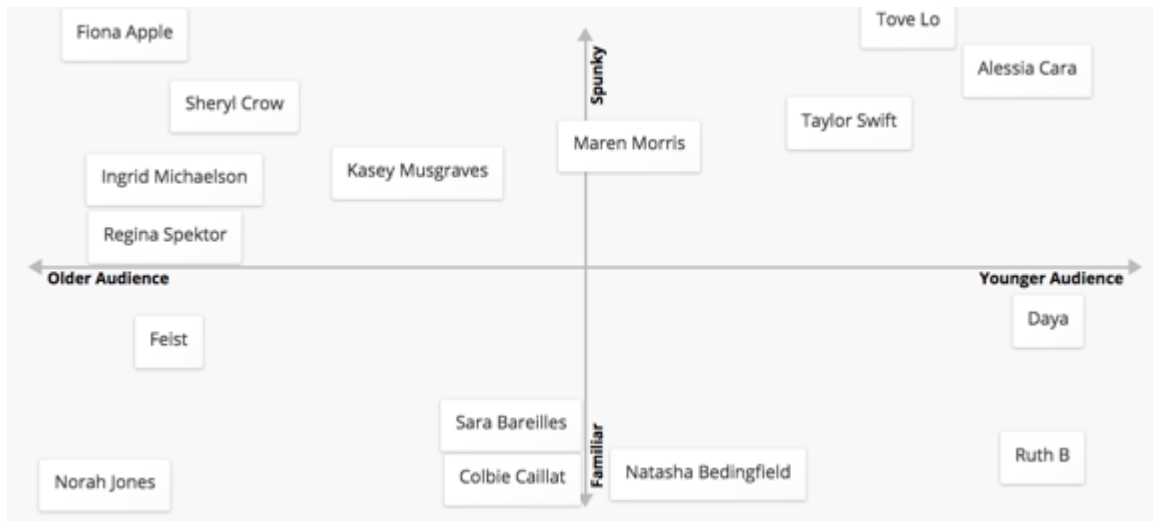


Figure 21: Perception map to position Kynlie

There is a clear white space for a more familiar artist that appeals to a twenty something year-old audience. This is where Kynlie fits. She is neither outspoken nor outrageous, but her lyrics and imagery are too mature to appeal to a 13 year old. She sings about real life experiences that connect with young women of a similar age.

Creative Strategy

Kynlie is the drama free best friend who transitions with you through adulthood.

Social Media Campaign for Kynlie

After uncovering insights from primary and secondary research, the researcher developed the creative strategy and will implement the strategy and as Kynlie’s social media strategist. The researcher will present a social media calendar for the following 4 months of December, January, February and March related to relevant topics in media and upcoming events. The success of the campaign will be analyzed by comparing Kynlie’s social media presence and following using Facebook and Instagram Insights, website traffic using Google analytics, songs sold on iTunes and total listens on streaming services, prior to the campaign and after the campaign is implemented.

A one page, creative brief for Kynlie’s social media campaign is available in Figure 22 on the following page.

KYNLIE

Problem Definition:

Kynlie is a talented singer/songwriter, but has no unique brand identity. As a result, she has no target audience and cannot fill a void in the consumer's mind.

Target Audience:

We are targeting women who are at a pivotal time in their young adult lives. These are women who are graduating high school, experiencing their first year of college, falling in and out of love for the first time or struggling at their first job.

Single Minded Proposition:

Kynlie is the drama free best friend that transitions with you through adulthood.

Reasons to Believe/Support:

Kynlie is a young woman herself. The music that she records is relevant along with the clothes she wears. She matured quickly being the oldest of eight, and is someone her sisters look up to and seek advice from. She can be that same comforting figure to an audience because she is intelligent and writes expressive and reflective lyrics.

Response:

We want young women that do not know Kynlie personally, to feel like they do. We want there to be an increased following and strong rapport between Kynlie and her fans, which entails encouragement from both ends.

Voice:

Kynlie is humble and empathetic with her audience, which is presented on social media by giving thanks and advice and using blush and smiley face emojis.

Media:

We envision our message to be seen and heard via photos, bios, captions, and videos on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook and YouTube.

Mandatories:

Professional photos must elicit everyday life with neutral colored clothing and ordinary locations. At the same time, tastefully exaggerate with makeup, hair, and accessories, evoking admiration and jealousy from a female audience. Kynlie is elegant and not harsh. She is not the drama girl, rather the girl that is aware of her mistakes.

Figure 22: Creative brief for Kynlie's social media strategy

CHAPTER 5: EVALUATING THE SUCCESS OF A SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGIST

The IMC campaign created for Kynlie, derived from conducting research and developing insights, was applied over a four-month period. The researcher worked with Kynlie as a social media strategist beginning December 8, 2016 through March 31, 2017. At the start of each month, small, achievable goals were set, such as increasing her following and engagement on social media and increasing website traffic. The progress was evaluated at the end of each month. The same was done at the start and finish of the campaign. The social media strategist addressed three overarching goals throughout the entirety of the campaign: 1) to display one, cohesive *brand identity*, the drama free best friend, across all of her online platforms, 2) to increase Kynlie's audience size and reach, by building her *brand awareness* and making online discovery possible and 3) to increase Kynlie's engagement, by interacting with her target audience regularly to create *brand love* and a loyal fan base.

December Goals

- 1) Brand Identity
 - a. Update bios and media on Kynlie's website and all her social media platforms to present the drama free best friend brand image.
 - b. Personalize posts by sharing photos with friends and family.
- 2) Brand Awareness
 - a. Increase Instagram following
 - b. Use hashtags that are trending for discovery purposes
 - c. Increase post frequency on all platforms
- 3) Brand Love
 - a. Give a passive audience a reason to believe your brand image
 - b. Give sincere thanks
 - c. Be original with photo captions

Table 1*December Social Media Calendar*

December 8	First Meeting- IG- Follow people FB- Invite friends
December 9	IG/FB/TW/YT/WEB- Update all Bios
December 10	IG/FB/TW- Announce Release Date of "Temporary"
December 11	IG/FB- Change profile picture on with eye contact
December 12	IG- Follow people FB- Invite friends
December 13	IG- Follow people FB- Invite friends
December 14	IG- Follow people FB- Invite friends
December 15	IG- Follow people FB- Invite friends
December 16	IG- Follow people FB- Invite friends
December 17	TW/ IGS- at Boy Named Banjo (boyfriend's show)
December 18	
December 19	
December 20	FB- add Facebook Milestones and announce Noisetrade feature
December 21	FB- share a Facebook milestones IGS- check out milestones
December 22	
December 23	IG- "Have yourself a Merry Little Christmas" cover FB/TW- share Instagram
December 24	
December 25	IG- Family picture on Christmas
December 26	IG- Another Family Christmas post
December 27	
December 28	WEB/EM- "Happy New Year" email campaign - announce "Temporary" and encourage follows on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter
December 29	
December 30	
December 31	IG- HNY post with friends IGS- New Years Eve shenanigans

Note. This calendar shows the date of a post, the purpose of a post and platform it was posted on i.e. Instagram (IG), Instagram Story (IGS), Facebook (FB), Twitter (TW), YouTube (YT), and the date of a website update (WEB) or email campaign (WEB/EM).

December Instagram

- 1) Updated bio and profile picture
- 2) 659 followers: +178 followers (37% increase this month)

See Figure 23.

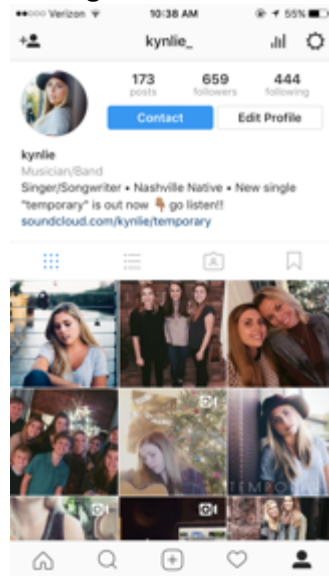


Figure 23: December Instagram profile: New profile picture engages audience with eye contact and bio is more expressive of Kynlie’s background. Both updates served the purpose of creating a *brand identity*.

- 3) Increased impressions, reach and engagement. See Figure 24.

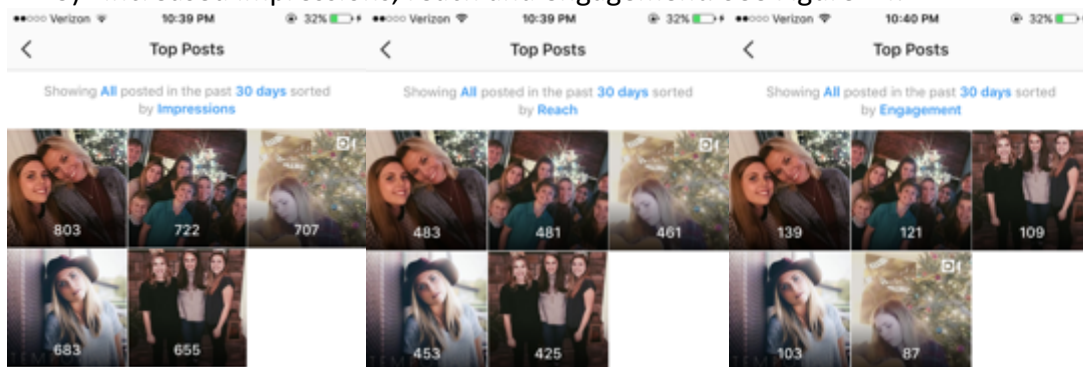


Figure 24: December Instagram insights: Although insights are not available from November, there is an assumed increase in impressions and reach because of an increased following. There was a definite increase (120.1%) in post engagement from November, 50.8, to December, 111.8. These increases demonstrate an increase in Kynlie’s *brand awareness and brand love*.

Average impressions per post: 714

Average reach per post: 460.6

Average engagement per post: 111.8

December Facebook

- 1) Added Facebook Milestones and updated profile picture with eye contact. Both served the purpose of getting more personal with Kynile's audience. The milestones tell her music journey and story and create *brand identity*.
 - 2) 1,220 Likes: +27 page likes (2.3% increase this month)
 - 3) 95 page views
 - 4) 749 post reach in one day
- See Figure 25.

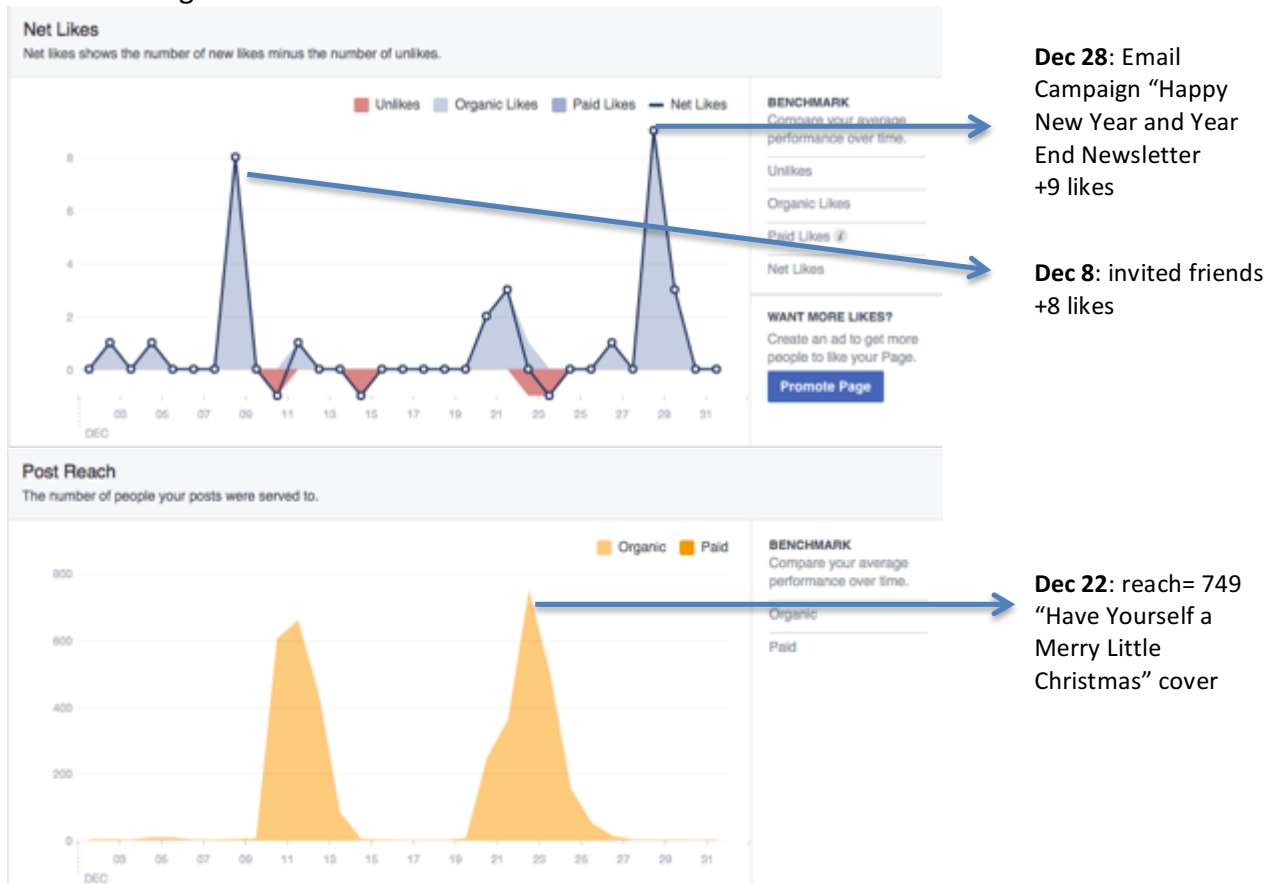


Figure 25: December Facebook insights: There was an increase in *brand awareness* demonstrated by 95 page views, a post reach of 749 in just one day and increase in *brand love* demonstrated by a 2.3% increase in net likes.

December Twitter

- 1) 8 Tweets (166.7% increase), avg of 2 likes per tweet (506.1% increase) and .5 retweets per tweet (51.5% increase)

See Figure 26.



Figure 26: December Twitter: The social media strategist encouraged Kynlie to tweet witty posts and personal updates in addition to music announcements to present the “drama free best friend” *brand identity*. The tweets were received well by her audience and there was an increase in likes (501.6%) and retweets (51.5%) per tweet or an increase in *brand love*.

December YouTube

The experiment concluded no progress was made on the YouTube page Google granted Kynlie access back into her account in mid January.

December Website

- 1) Updated bios and media to portray a more content, less distraught 21-year-old aspiring singer/song writer. See Figure 27.

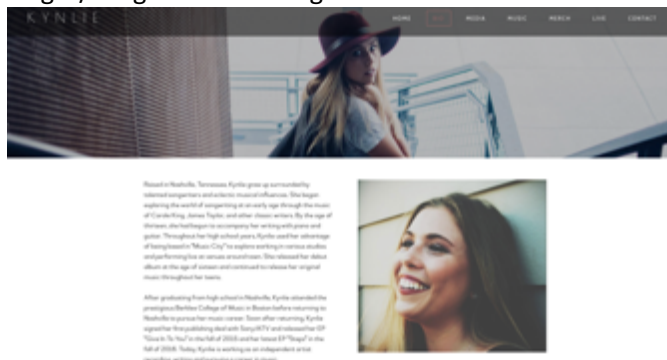


Figure 27: December website bio. This media was chosen as a better representation of “drama free best friend” *brand identity*.

- 2) Email Campaign: Happy New Year and Year End Newsletter sent at 6:00AM Wednesday, December 28, 2016. 244 out of 888 read (27% read). See Figure 28.

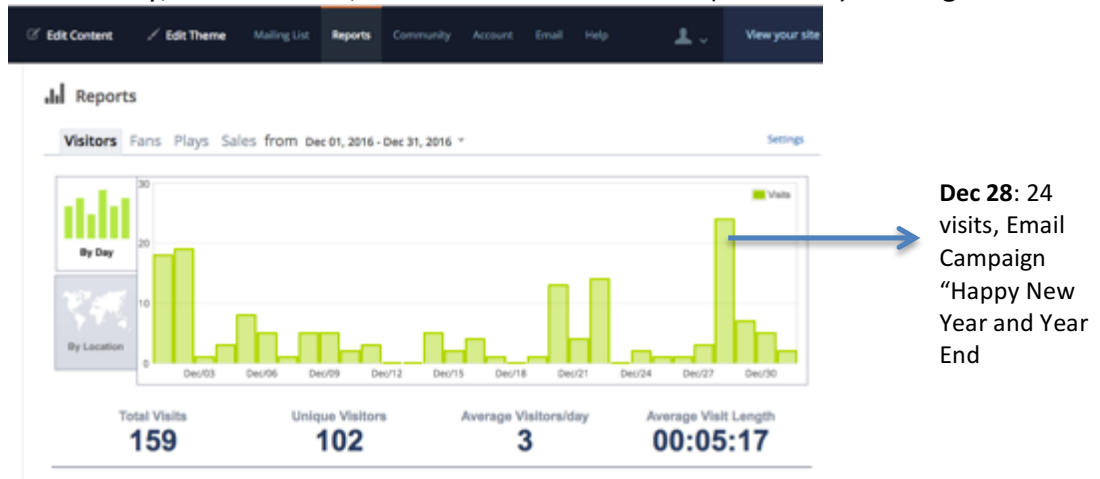


Figure 28: December website report: Website traffic increased because of email campaign, hence an increase in *brand awareness and brand love*.

- 159 visits (27.4% decrease)
- 102 unique visitors (10.5% decrease)
- 3 average visitors per day (25% decrease)
- 5:17 average visit length (20% decrease)

December Music Distribution Analysis

Total Spotify followers: 103 (8.4% increase)

December Evaluation

A data analysis from the month of December showed direct mail as the most beneficial digital marketing tactic to gain an online following i.e. Instagram, Facebook and Spotify following increases for Kynlie’s audience. For the Facebook page, inviting friends was the most successful tactic for increasing net likes. For Instagram, the first month of social media strategy confirmed the researcher’s assumption that Kynlie’s target market values a follower to following ratio. The easiest, most efficient way to gain Instagram followers was to go on following sprees.

In addition to following, post reach, impressions and engagement increased on Instagram and Twitter as a result of new hashtag use. Lastly, Instagram’s insights supported the idea that Kynlie’s target market preferred personal posts to music promotion posts. Her pictures with family and friends during the holidays received the most engagement.

January Goals:

- 1) Brand Identity →
 - a. Take photos for new media website and post on social media and website to position Kynlie as “the drama free best friend”
 - i. Dress Kynlie in relevant clothing i.e. trends that are “in”, reflecting style of her audience
 - ii. Dress Kynlie in soft colors and natural make up to emphasize “drama free”. Portray a calm and collected 21 year old.
 - iii. Continue to mix personal and music posts.
- 2) Brand Awareness→
 - a. Increase website traffic
 - b. Increase Instagram following and Facebook page likes
 - c. Use trending hashtags for discovery
 - d. Increase post frequency on all platforms
- 3) Brand Love→
 - a. Engage followers on social media; make the fans feel like they have a voice
 - b. Reply to comments and like people’s posts.
 - c. Post Instagram stories; make fans believe they more access to personal life

Table 2*January Social Media Calendar*

January 1	
January 2	IG/FB Release “Temporary” via picture and SoundCloud link
January 3	FB/ IGS- Share that “Lost in Night” got 1,000 streams on Spotify
January 4	FB- Boost “Temporary” on Facebook
January 5	
January 6	IGS- singing old “originals”, showed her humorous personality
January 7	
January 8	
January 9	Photo Shoot IG- Share Noisetrade feature IG/FB- Post picture from photo shoot
January 10	IG- post picture promoting website and announce FB Live
January 11	FB live- Play two songs and announce when Temporary will be released to iTunes and Spotify
January 12	
January 13	
January 14	
January 15	IG- Post/Announce #5in5 competition
January 16	Noisetrade feature ends- 468 joined email list
January 17	
January 18	
January 19	
January 20	
January 21	IG- Temporary on iTunes-
January 22	FB/TW- Share Instagram announcement of #5in5 FB- boost #5in5 post
January 23	WEB/EM- Email campaign for “Temporary” and #5in5 IGS/TW- “Temporary” on Spotify
January 24	
January 25	
January 26	IG- Date Night Instagram Post with boyfriend
January 27	
January 28	FB- chance cover photo- one day till #5in5
January 29	IG- #Day1 #5in5 “I don’t get to keep you”
January 30	IG- #Day2 #5in5 “It’s You”
January 31	IG- #Day3 #5in5 “When We Were Kids”

Note. This calendar shows the date of a post, the purpose of a post and platform it was posted on i.e. Instagram (IG), Instagram Story (IGS), Facebook (FB), Twitter (TW), YouTube (YT), and the date of a website update (WEB) or email campaign (WEB/EM).

January Instagram

- 1) 778 followers: +297, (61.7% increase in total)
 - a. This month: +125, (19% increase)
- 2) Increased impressions, reach and engagement

See Figure 29

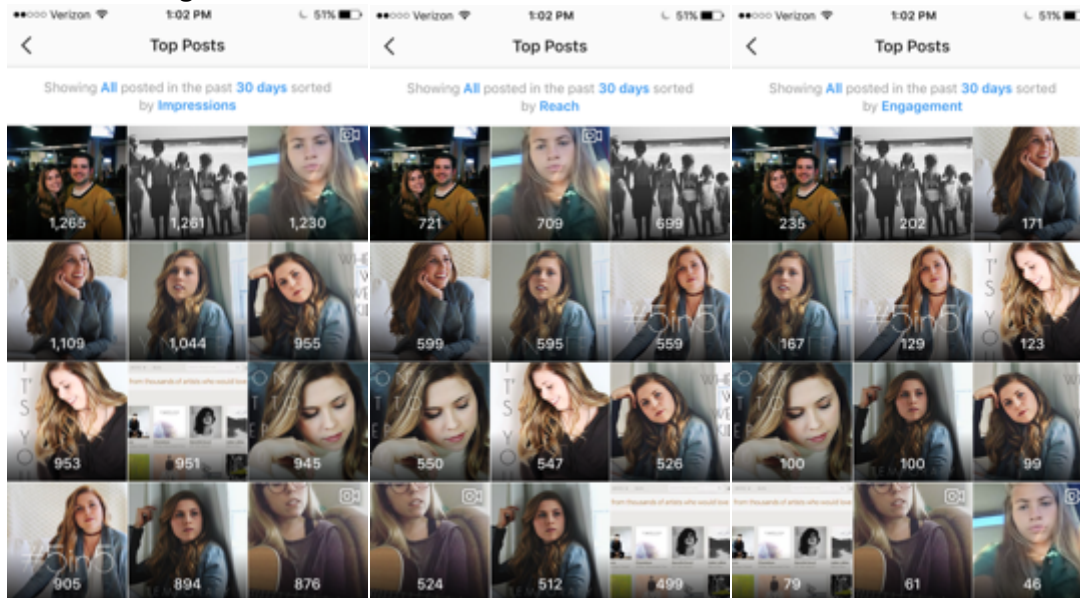


Figure 29: January Instagram insights: There was an increase in average impressions, reach and engagement per post from December to January. The following percentages represent the amount increase in the month of January. These increases demonstrate an increase in Kynlie's *brand awareness and brand love*.

Average impressions per post: 1032.3, (44.6% increase)

Average reach per post: 586.7, (27.4% increase)

Average engagement per post: 126, (12.7% increase)

In the month of January, Kynlie introduced her #5in5 campaign to engage followers. The campaign began January 29 and continued into February. Kynlie released five songs in five days and at the end, prompted her followers to vote on the song that would be her next single on Spotify.

January Facebook

- 1) 1252 Likes: +57 page likes, (4.7% increase in total)
This month: +32 likes, (2.6% increase)
- 2) 143 views this month, (50.5% increase)
- 3) 1,444 post reach in one day: (92.8% increase)

See Figure 30 on the following page.

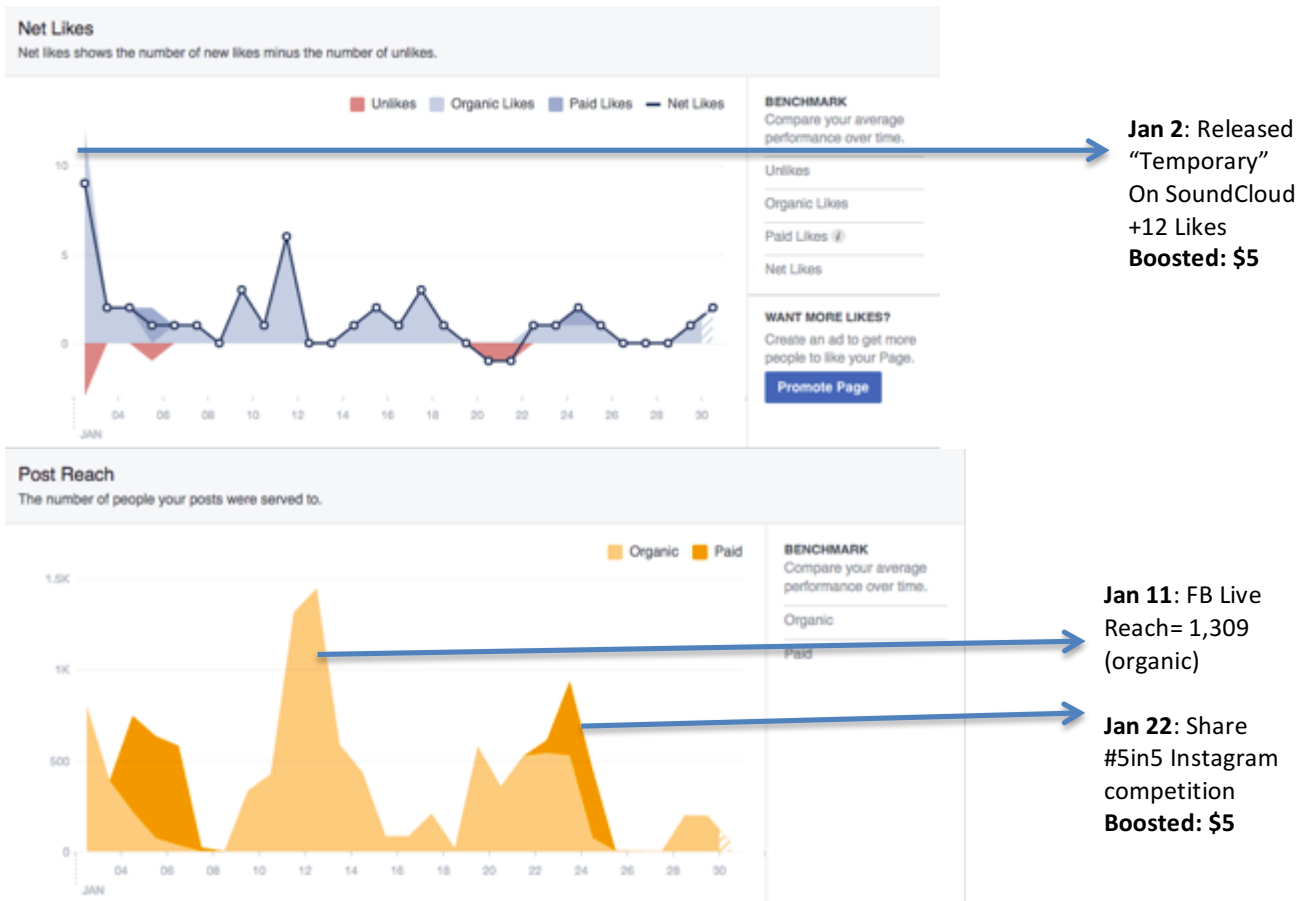


Figure 30: January Facebook insights: There was an increase in *brand awareness* in comparison to December demonstrated by 143 page views (50.5% increase), maximum post reach of 1,444 (92.8% increase this month), and an increase in brand love demonstrated by 32 more net likes (2.6% increase this month).

As shown in Figure 30, the \$5 boosted post releasing Kynlie’s new single “Temporary” generated the most net likes. The Facebook Live video reached the largest audience in addition, beating the \$5 boosted post to promote Kynlie’s Instagram competition #5in5. In total, \$10 dollars was spent on Facebook, in the month of January, promoting Kynlie’s page. To see an example of a boosted post and the Facebook live video, see Figures 31 and 32 on the following page.

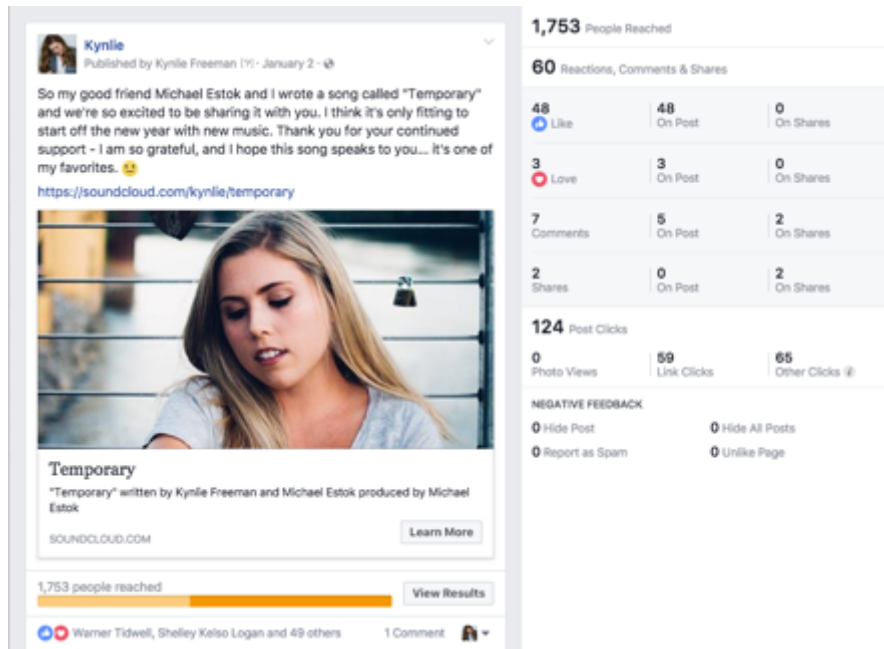


Figure 31: Example of boosted Facebook post: In total, the post itself reached an audience of 1,753 (*brand awareness*) and generated 60 reactions (*brand love*).



Figure 32: Facebook live post: Of the entire campaign, the Facebook live video reached the biggest audience, 3,045, received the most video views, 1,318, and generated the most reactions 138 of any Facebook post. The social media strategist was very strategic about the time of post, which was Sunday night. Kynlie played two songs and talked to her viewers in a relaxed environment i.e. her apartment living room. The authenticity was well received and helped shape Kynlie's *brand identity*, increase *brand awareness* and strengthen *brand love*.

January Twitter

- 1) 14 Tweets (75% increase), average of 1.42 likes per tweet (-29% decrease), average of 1.27 retweets per tweet (145% increase)
 - 2) 7 mentions (100% increase), 7 Retweets (100% increase)
- See Figure 33.



Figure 33: January Twitter: Although Kynlie received more mentions (100% increase) and retweets in January ((145% increase) in comparison to December, Kynlie’s average like per tweet decreased by 29%. The social media strategist concluded that post frequency does not necessarily increase *brand love*.

January YouTube

- 1) Updated YouTube bio and media
 - 2) 185 subscribers, +5 subscribers (2.8% increase)
- See Figure 34 on following page.

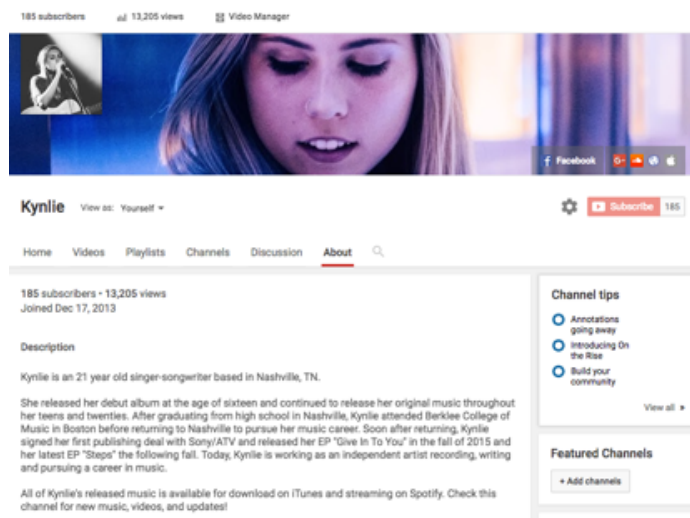


Figure 34: January YouTube: The social media strategist updated Kynlie’s bio to tell more about her personal story and include media for her audience to connect with. This strengthened Kynlie’s *brand identity* on this particular platform and simultaneously increased *brand awareness* by 2.8%.

January Website:

- 1) +467 joined mailing list via NoiseTrade (*52.6% increase*)
 - 2) Email Campaign: “New Song Out Now!” sent at 9:00AM, Monday, January 23, 2016. 488 of 1355 read, (*36% read*)
- See Figure 35 on the following page.



Figure 35: January website report: Website traffic increased because of Kynlie’s feature on NoiseTrade, a website to share free music in exchange for email address and subscription. The website added 467 more people to her mailing list. In addition to NoiseTrade, the social media strategist sent an email campaign that generated 47 visits the day of. This month, there was an increase in *brand awareness and brand love* via website traffic, demonstrated by the following data.

- 205 total visits (*29.5% increase*)
- 163 unique visitors (*59.8% increase*)
- 5 average visitors per day (*66.7% increase*)
- 2:15 average visit length (*58.4% decrease*)

January Music Distribution Analysis:

Total Spotify Followers: 116 *(12.6% increase this month/ 22.1% increase in total)*

January Evaluation

A data analysis from the month of January verified direct mail as the most effective tactic to earn website traffic with Kynlie's target market.

For Twitter, January showed her "follows" and "unfollows" increase simultaneously with post frequency, making it a much harder social media platform for her to gain followers.

For Instagram, January reconfirmed Kynlie's personal posts, both pictures and videos, receive more engagement, impressions, and views than her music promotion posts on Instagram. The Instagram post with her boyfriend, a member of an up and coming band, Boy Named Banjo, acquired the most engagement of any post to date.

Lastly for Facebook, the Facebook live, which reached and engaged the most people of any organic Facebook post to date, confirmed Kynlie's target audience prefers an authentic and intimate performance. They like to see and hear Kynlie singing in her room with her guitar, neither the music nor video overproduced.

February Goals

- 1) Brand Identity → Demonstrate connection with local non-profit, Epic Girl, on social media.
 - a. Mix personal and music posts.
- 2) Brand Awareness →
 - a. Increase website traffic
 - b. Increase Instagram following and Facebook page likes
 - c. Post covers of popular songs using trending hashtags for discovery
- 3) Brand Love →
 - a. Reply to comments and like people's posts.
 - b. Post Instagram stories, giving fans more access to personal life.
 - c. Create engaging content and interact with audience on all platforms.

Table 3*February Social Media Calendar*

February 1	IG/TW- #5in5 #day4 Still We Play
February 2	IG/TW- #5in5 #day5 Placeholder FB- reminder to vote
February 3	IG- Personal "happy birthday bro" IG- #5in5 competition
February 4	
February 5	
February 6	
February 7	FB- Share winner, "Placeholder", of Instagram competition
February 8	
February 9	
February 10	
February 11	
February 12	
February 13	
February 14	IG/FB- Happy valentines day "Love on the Brain" cover IGS with boyfriend
February 15	
February 16	
February 17	
February 18	
February 19	IGS- "grandpa taking pictures of birds" -afternoon date with boyfriend
February 20	IGS Story- on afternoon run, runner
February 21	IGS Story- music- Follow Spotify
February 22	
February 23	IG- Epic Girl Post, connected to cause IGS- Placeholder on Spotify 3/10
February 24	IGS- sunrise 6:35 -early bird
February 25	TW- "Proud of BNB for signing with WME entertainment..." -connection to band
February 26	
February 27	
February 28	

Note. This calendar shows the date of a post, the purpose of a post and platform it was posted on i.e. Instagram (IG), Instagram Story (IGS), Facebook (FB), Twitter (TW), YouTube (YT), and the date of a website update (WEB) or email campaign (WEB/EM).

February Instagram

- 1) 814 followers: +333, (69.2% increase in total)
 - a. This month: +36, (4.6% increase)
- 2) Increased impressions, reach and engagement
See Figure 36 below.

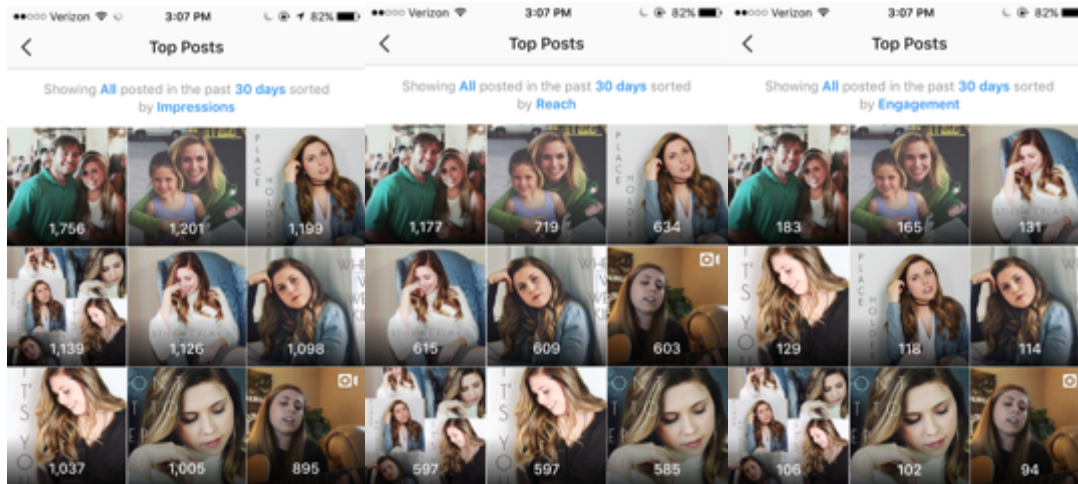


Figure 36: February Instagram insights: There was an increase in average impressions, reach and engagement per post from January to February. The following percentages represent the amount increase in the month of February. These increases demonstrate an increase in Kynlie's *brand awareness and brand love*.

Average impressions per post: 1032.3, (44.6% increase)

Average reach per post: 586.7, (27.4% increase)

Average engagement per post: 126, (12.7% increase)

In addition to finishing the #5in5 campaign to engage followers, the social media strategist's other objective for February was to share Kynlie's involvement in community service to strengthen her *brand identity*. This was executed by posting a picture with her mom, the founder of Epic Girl, a non-profit focused on women empowerment for underprivileged women. In the post, Kynlie expressed how she is so fortunate, but others aren't as lucky. She encouraged her fans to check out the non-profit.

February Facebook

- 1) 1263 likes: +70 page likes (5.9% increase in total)
 - a. This month: +11 page likes (0.9% increase)
- 2) 38 page views in February (74% decrease)
- 3) 465 post reach in one day, (67.8% decrease)
See Figure 37 on the following page.



Figure 37: February Facebook insights: There was an decrease in *brand awareness* in comparison to January demonstrated by only 38 page views in February (74% decrease), 465 post reach in one day, (67.8% decrease). However, there was still a small increase in *brand love* in February, demonstrated by +11 page likes (0.9% increase).

February Twitter

- 1) 4 Tweets (71.4% decrease), average of 1 like per tweet (42% decrease), and average of 0 retweets per tweet (100% decrease)
 - 2) 0 mentions (100% decrease), 0 Retweets (100% decrease)
- See Figure 38 on the following page.

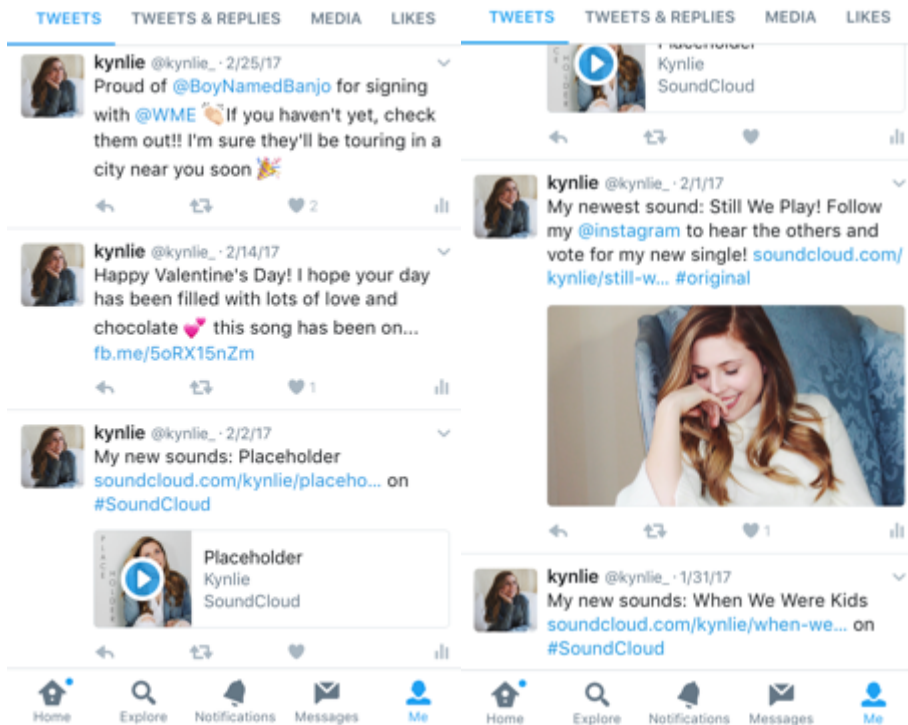


Figure 38: February Twitter: Post frequency in February decreased by 71.4%. This decrease in *brand identity* and *brand awareness* directly affected *brand love*. Kynlie only received 1 like per tweet (42% decrease), and average of 0 retweets per tweet (100% decrease). The percentages are comparative to January's Twitter.

February YouTube:

No changes were made to the YouTube page in February.

February Website:

- 1) Updated website media and layout to strengthen *brand identity*. However, although the website was updated, there was no promotion of the site on social media or an email campaign. Thus, there was a definite decrease in *brand awareness*.

See Figures 39 and 40 on the following page.

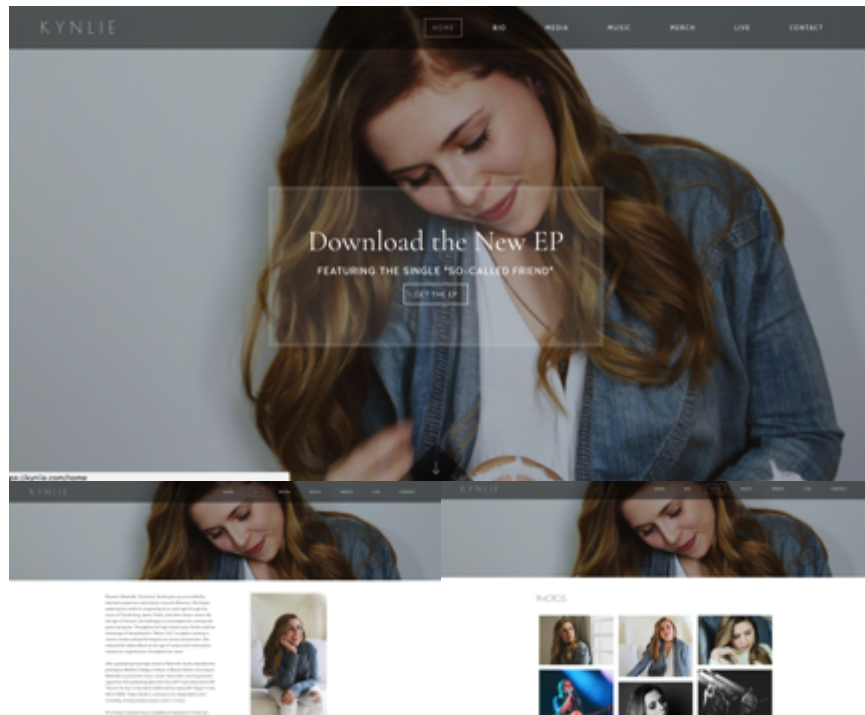


Figure 39: February updated website and media: The social media strategist reconfigured the website and updated media to present the “drama free best friend” *brand identity*. This is demonstrated with soft blues and pictures that portray a more light-hearted, calm and collected 21-year-old musician.



Figure 40: February website report: The following data demonstrates the decrease in *brand awareness* by decreases in total visits, unique visitors and visitors per day. However the month of media update increased *brand love* in February, presented by an increase in average length per visit.

- 69 total visits (66.3% decrease)
- 54 unique visitors (66.9% decrease)
- 2 average visitors per day (66.7% decrease)
- 3:28 average visit length (52.6% increase)

February Music Distribution Analysis:

Total Spotify Followers: 119, (2.5% increase this month), (25.3% increase in total)

February Evaluation

A data analysis from the month of February proved updating her followers regularly was important to follower growth. There was a decrease in post frequency on all platforms in February and it was reflected in a decrease of new Instagram followers, decrease of Facebook page views and decrease of new Facebook page likes. This also applied to the website because an email campaign was not sent out in February and website traffic decreased dramatically.

For Instagram, February and the #5in5 competition demonstrated the lack of Instagram bio clicks. The campaign may have been more successful had the songs been presented on the Instagram post. The majority of the audience did not backtrack to Kynlie's profile to click on the SoundCloud link to hear the song.

For Facebook, February verified that directly inviting friends was the most effective tactic for her net like growth.

For Twitter, February revealed that a lack of post frequency was reflected in a decrease of her tweet engagement and mentions.

March Goals

- 1) Brand identity→
 - a. Update Instagram bio to accurately portray personality (funny) purpose (artist and cause) and promotion (new music)
- 2) Brand awareness→
 - a. Increase post frequency on all platforms
 - b. Send out email campaign
 - c. Increase website traffic, increase Instagram following and Facebook page likes
 - d. Post covers of popular songs and use trending hashtags for discovery
 - e. Increase Spotify followers
- 3) Brand love→
 - a. Reply to comments and like people's posts
 - b. Post Instagram stories, giving fans more access to personal life
 - c. Create engaging content and interact with the audience on all platforms

Table 4*March Social Media Calendar:*

March 1	<i>IGS</i>
March 2	IG- "Falling in love with you cover" <i>IGS</i> - BNB concert
March 3	Email campaign- "Many Thanks" follow Instagram to checkout covers
March 4	
March 5	<i>IGS</i> - "BFF home"
March 6	
March 7	<i>IGS</i> - Oldie but goodie "Lost in the Night"
March 8	IG with sisters #InternationalWomensDay
March 9	<i>IGS</i> - Record piano performance for placeholder and edit
March 10	IG/FB/-Post video and attach link to YouTube – measure views and subscribers (Currently there is 184)
March 11	TW- Snow in Nashville in March
March 12	
March 13	Email campaign- "Placeholder" out now!
March 14	TW- share YouTube performance and Spotify
March 15	
March 16	IG and Facebook- Shania cover
March 17	
March 18	
March 19	
March 20	
March 21	IG/TW- 2 new singles out on Spotify
March 22	
March 23	<i>IGS</i> - TBT singing old original song
March 24	
March 25	IG/TW/FB- song "Hangin' Round", which made it to the top 16 of lightening 100's music city mayhem is 3 years old
March 26	
March 27	
March 28	
March 29	FB- Create Spotify ad
March 30	<i>IGS</i> - babysitting younger brothers
March 31	<i>IGS</i> - Private BNB concert

Note. This calendar shows the date of a post, the purpose of a post and platform it was posted on i.e. Instagram (IG), Instagram Story (*IGS*), Facebook (FB), Twitter (TW), YouTube (YT), and the date of a website update (WEB) or email campaign (WEB/EM).

March Instagram

- 1) 867 followers: +386, (80.2% increase in total)
 - a. This month: +53, (6.5% increase)
- 2) Increased reach this month
See Figure 41 below

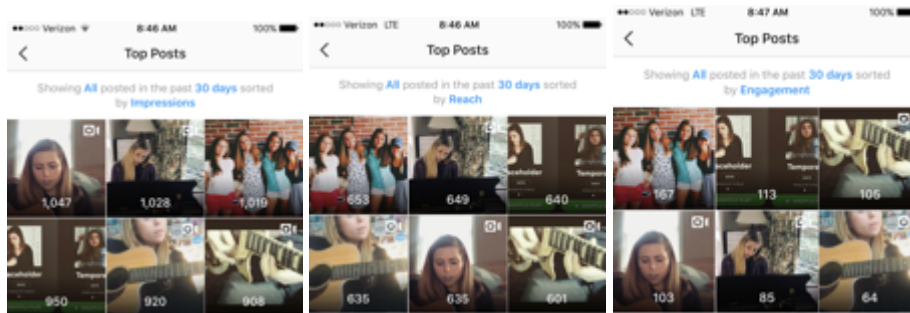


Figure 41: March Instagram insights: There was an increase in average reach per post from February to March, but a decrease in average impressions and average engagement per post. The following percentages represent the amount increase and decrease in the month of March.

Average impressions per post: 978.7 (15.8% decrease)

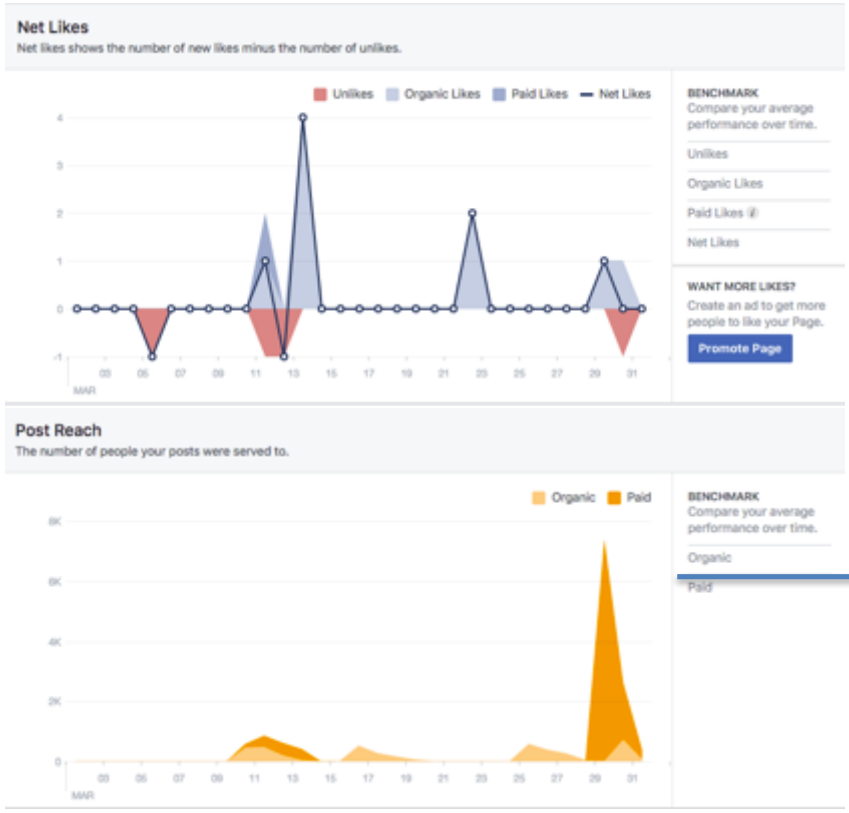
Average reach per post: 635.5 (3.5% increase)

Average engagement per post: 106.2 (16.3% decrease)

An increase in reach demonstrates an increase in Kynlie's *brand awareness* but a decrease in engagement demonstrates a decrease in *brand love*.

March Facebook:

- 1) 1,268 Likes: +75 page likes (6.3% increase)
 - a. This month: +5 likes (0.39% increase)
- 2) 57 page views in March, (50% increase)
- 3) 7,372 post reach in one day (719.1% increase)
See Figure 42 on the following page.



Mar 29:
"Placeholder" on
Spotify- paid ad
Reach= 7,372

Figure 42: March Facebook insights: There was an increase in *brand awareness* in comparison to February demonstrated by 57 page views in March (50% increase), 7,372 post reach in one day, (719.1% increase), and increase in *brand love* demonstrated by +5 likes (0.39% increase) in March.

The post reach in one day showed a dramatic increase because of the Facebook and Instagram ad created by the social media strategist. The ad ran for two days and cost \$29.42 dollars in total. To see the ad and results, see Figure 43 on the following page.

Kynlie
 PLAY FOLLOWING

OVERVIEW RELATED ARTISTS ABOUT CONCERTS

Latest Release
 Placeholder
 10 MARCH 2017

Hear Kynlie's new single "Placeholder"
 Click "learn more" for Spotify link
[HTTPS://OPEN.SPOTIFY.COM/ARTIST/5ICKJKD7T2NBHATQEC5UOG](https://open.spotify.com/artist/5ICKJKD7T2NBHATQEC5UOG) [Learn More](#)

1,284 Views

Kynlie added a new video.
 March 29 at 9:35am · 🌐

Kynlie, Nashville indie pop recording artist

Like Comment Share

Account: Abbey Bounds
Campaign: Follow Kynlie on Spotify

Search Filters Last 30 days

Performance Demographics Placement

42 Results: Link Clicks 8,951 Reach

All Women
 100% (42)
 100% (8,951)
 \$0.69 Cost per Result

All Men
 0% (0)
 0% (0)
 \$0.00 Cost per Result

Age: 13-17, 18-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, 65+

Campaign On
 Create Rule

Delivery Recently Completed

Objective
 Traffic
 See Post
 See Instagram Post

Amount Spent Today
 \$0.49 spent today
 \$29.42 total spent of \$33.14 budget

Total Schedule
 Mar 29, 2017 7:35am – Mar 31, 2017 6:45am

Ad Sets in this Campaign + Create Ad Set

Ad Set Name	Delivery	Results	Reach	Cost p..	Budget	Amount S..
Nashville, Knoxville, Oxford, Boston, Tuscaloosa ... Follow Kynlie on Spotify	Recently Completed	42 Link Clicks	8,951	\$0.69 Per Link C...	\$15.00 Daily	\$28.93
Results from 1 Ad Set		42 Link Clicks	8,951 People	\$0.69 Per Link C...		\$28.93 Total Spent

Figure 43: March Facebook ad and insights: The social media strategist used Facebook’s ad manager feature to target 18-24 year old women living in Nashville, Knoxville, Oxford, Boston and Tuscaloosa, interested in night life, pop music, concerts and online shopping i.e. demographics and psychographics of Kynlie’s current target market. The ad was targeted to young women that did not already like Kynlie’s page. In total, the ad received 44 post clicks, costing \$.67 cents per click and reached 9,203 people. The objective of the ad was to increase *brand awareness*, and specifically increase traffic to Spotify.

March Twitter

- 1) 7 Tweets (75% increase), average of 1.1 like per tweet (114.3% increase) and average of 0.85 retweets per tweet (100% increase)
- 2) 0 mentions (no change), 1 retweet (100% increase)

See Figure 44 below.

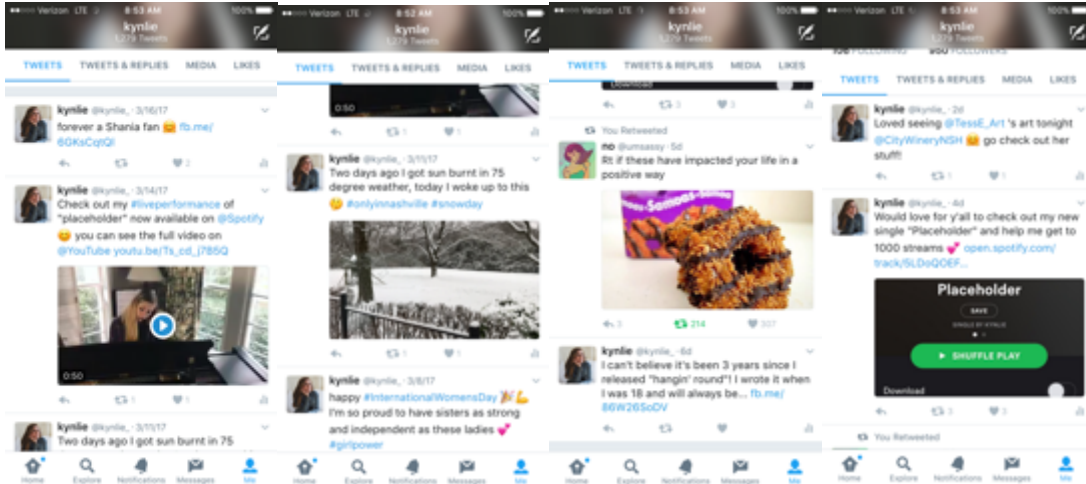


Figure 44: March Twitter. Post frequency in March increased by 75%. This increase in *brand identity* and *brand awareness* directly affected *brand love*. Kynlie received 1.1 likes per tweet (114.3% increase), and average of .85 retweets per tweet (100% increase). The percentages are in comparison to February's Twitter.

March YouTube:

- 1) Uploaded piano version of "Placeholder" to promote the song on Spotify
See Figure 45 below.

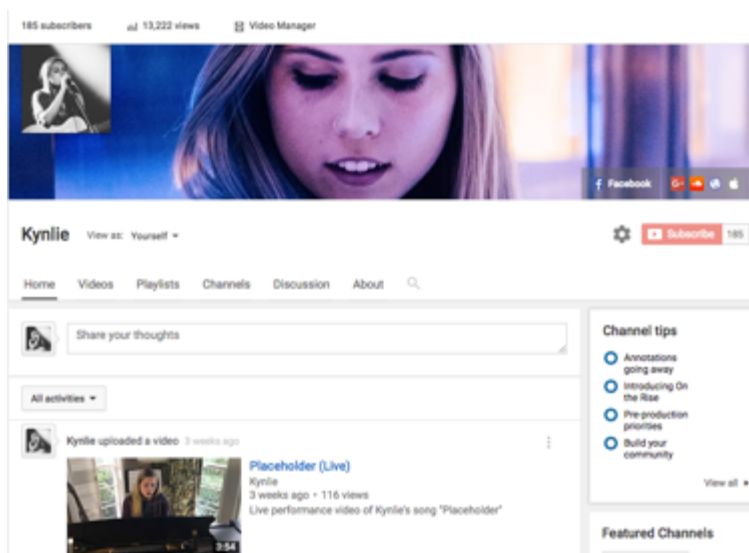


Figure 45: March YouTube: "Placeholder" Live received 116 views in 3 weeks. The video received 6 likes to date and helped strengthen her *brand identity*. The video was not overproduced; it was just Kynlie playing the piano recorded on an iPhone. It also increased *brand identity and brand love* demonstrated by views and likes.

March Website:

- 1) Email Campaign: Many Thanks sent at 11:40 AM Friday, March 3, 2017. 511 of 1299 (39%) read.
- 2) Email Campaign: "Placeholder" Out now! Sent at 9:00 AM Monday, March 13, 2017. 362 of 1270 (29%) read.

See Figure 46 below.



Figure 46: March website report: Website traffic increased from February because of two email campaigns. This month, there was an increase in *brand awareness*, demonstrated by total visits, unique visitors and average visits per day, but a decrease *brand love* demonstrated a decrease in average visit length. See the following data.

- 112 total visits, (62% increase)
- 97 unique visitors, (80.0 increase)
- 3 average visitors per day, (50% increase)
- 1:36 average visit length, (58.5% decrease)

March Music Distribution Analysis:

Total Spotify Followers: 121, (1.68% increase this month), (27.4% increase in total)

Because the social media strategist's campaign ended on March 31, an evaluation of the month was not necessary. Thus, the social media strategist concluded the case study with one last final evaluation of the digital integrated marketing campaign and its effect on Kynlie's online brand.

Final Evaluation

Instagram:

- 1) **Brand Identity** → “Drama free best friend” presented in light-hearted profile picture and personalized bio presented in Figure 47 below.



Figure 47: Kynlie’s new Instagram profile

- 2) **Awareness** → 876 followers: +395, (82.12% increase in total)

After the first month of social media strategy, strategist increased average reach from 460.6 on December 31, 2016 to 642.2 on March 31, 2017 (39.4% increase). See Figure 48 below.

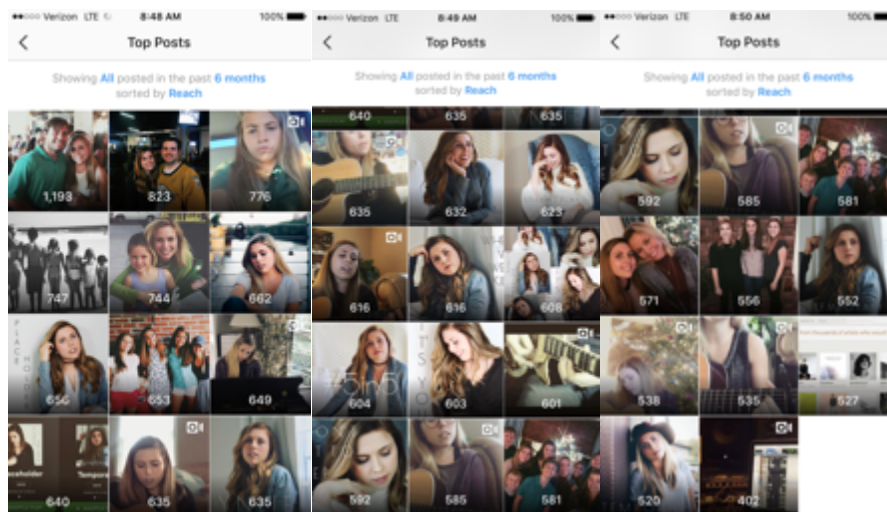


Figure 48: Increased Instagram reach

After the first month of social media strategy, increased average impressions from 714 on December 31, 2016 to 1048.0 on March 31, 2017 (46.8% increase). See Figure 50 below.

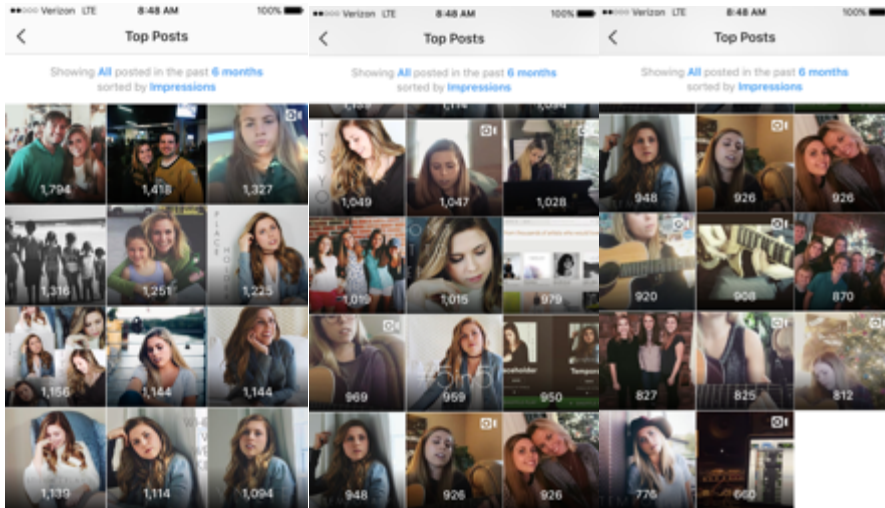


Figure 49: Increased Instagram impressions

3) **Brand Love** → Increased average engagement from 48.5 on December 8, 2016 to 119.4 on March 31, 2017 (146.1% increase). See Figure 51 below.

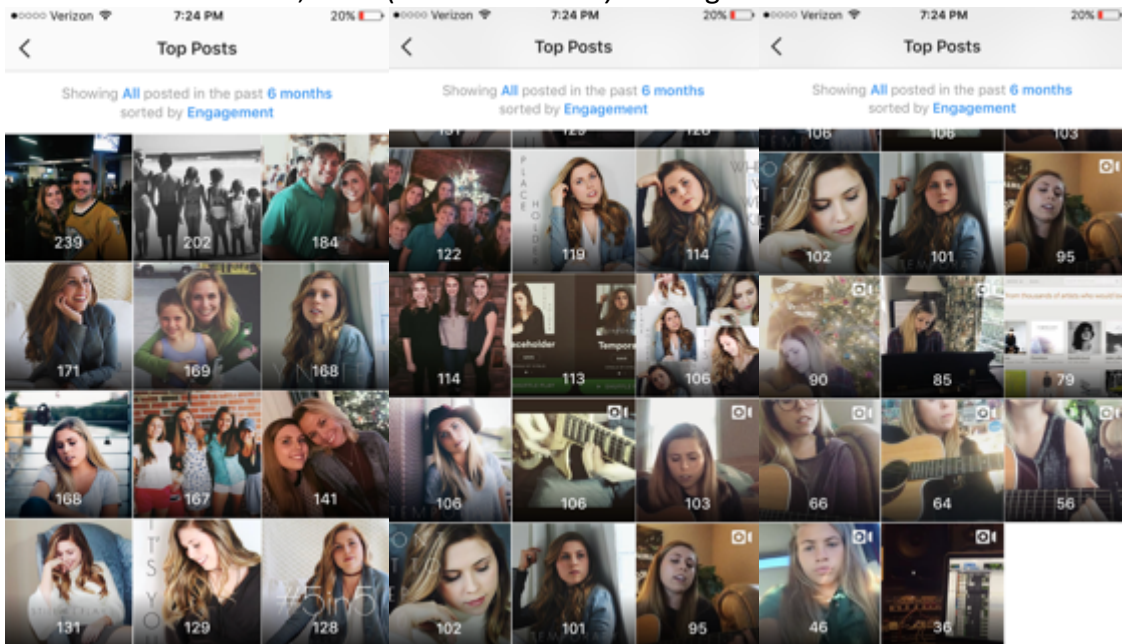


Figure 50: Increased Instagram engagement

Facebook

- 1) **Branding** → “Drama free best friend” presented in new profile picture.



Figure 51: New Facebook home page

- 2) **Awareness** →
 - a. 1,268 Likes: +75 page likes (6.3% increase)
 - b. After first month of social media strategy, increased maximum post reach from 749 on December 22, 2016 to 7,372 on March 31, 2017 (861.4% increase).
- 3) **Brand Love** → Likes recorded in a 4-month period increased from 824 August-November 2016 to 1,200 December 2016-March 2017 (45.6% increase). See Figure 53 below.

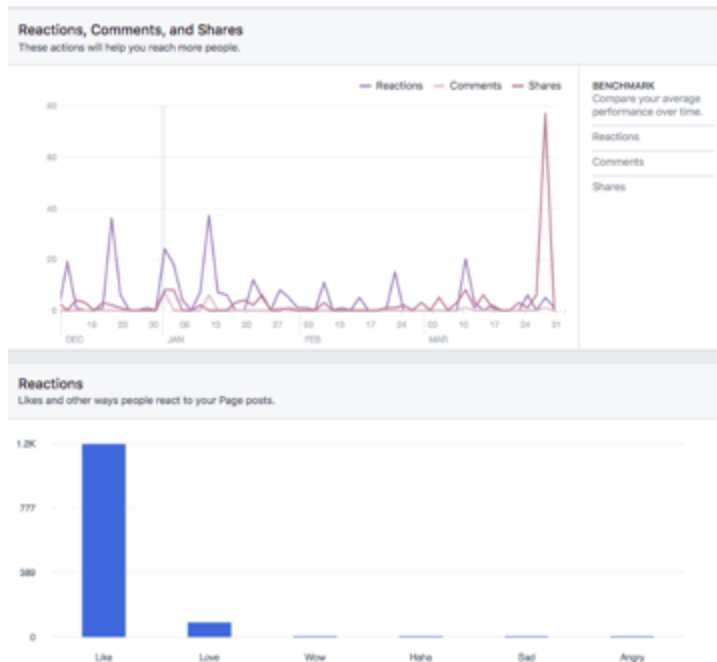


Figure 52: Increased Facebook engagement

Twitter:

- 1) **Branding**→ Tweeted personal tweets at events, about big family, life in Nashville and connection to Boy Named Banjo.
- 2) **Awareness**→ No follower increase. Increase of hashtag use.
- 3) **Brand Love**→ Increased engagement with 1.38 likes per tweet (*318.2% increase*) 0.65 retweets per tweet (*98.5% increase*).

YouTube:

- 1) **Branding**→ Updated bio, media and new video.
 - a. Uploaded piano version of “Placeholder” to promote the song on Spotify.
- 2) **Awareness**→ 185 subscribers, +5 subscribers (*2.8% increase*)
 - a. Shared YouTube link to Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and through direct mail. “Placeholder” Live received 116 views in 3 weeks.
- 3) **Brand Love**→ Received 6 likes and one comment on “Placeholder Live” video.

Website:

- 1) **Branding**→ Updated bio and media with more lighthearted pictures that showcase style and portrays maturity and softness
- 2) **Awareness**→ Received 491 visits and 368 unique visitors in a four-month period.
- 3) **Brand Love**→ Visitors spent an average visit length of 2:43.

See Figure 54 below.



Figure 54: Final Website report: 491 total visits, 368 unique visitors, 3 average visitors per day, and a 2:43 average visit length.

Music Distribution Analysis

Total Spotify Followers: **121 (27.4% increase)**

Steps EP: 10 albums sold / 1,168 total streams (*25% increase/ 76.7% increase*)

How to be Alone streams: 285 (*359.75 increase*)

Bubble: 1 song sold/ 161 streams (*100% increase, 242.6% increase*)

Beautiful Thing: 2 songs sold/ 227 streams (*100% increase/ 278.3% increase*)

So-Called Friend: 11 sold / 641 streams (*10% increase/ 84.7% increase*)

Unsure of Myself: 1 songs sold/ 190 streams (*100% increase/ 341.9% increase*)

Give In To You

Total albums sold: 25 albums sold / 4,767 total streams (*no change / 25.9% increase*)

Lost In The Night: 5 songs sold / 1,093 streams (*no change / 16.65 increase*)

Walking Away: 4 songs sold / 700 streams (*25% increase / 18.2% increase*)

Drop Me Off: 2 songs sold / 788 streams (*no change / 91.7% increase*)

Tennessee: 11 songs sold / 868 streams (*10% increase / 24.5% increase*)

Give In To You: 5 songs sold / 742 streams (*no change / 29.7% increase*)

Kynlie EP albums sold: 47 sold / 3,098 total streams (*no change / 8.2% increase*)

Licorice: 13 songs sold / 619 streams (*8.3% increase / 8.2% increase*)

The City: 2 songs sold / 418 streams (*no change / 8.6% increase*)

Our Stars: 3 songs sold / 412 streams (*no change / 7.0% increase*)

Hangin' Round: 37 songs sold / 1,277 streams (*12.1% increase / 4.6% increase*)

Good To Me: 11 songs sold / 700 streams (*no change / 22.4% increase*)

In Between EP albums sold: 16 / 9,059 total streams (*no change / 9.5% increase*)

You And Me: 108 songs sold / 3,377 streams (*6.9% increase / 13.6% increase*)

Always: 86 songs sold / 1,702 streams (*3.6% increase / 12.6% increase*)

Shadow: 66 songs sold / 906 streams (*3.1% increase / 8.0% increase*)

Hemingway: 103 songs sold / 3,115 streams (*3% increase / 5.6% increase*)

Temporary Singles sold: 4 / 32 streams (*100% increase / 100% increase*)

Conclusion:

After analyzing the final evaluation, the researcher concluded that the data supported the hypothesis. A clear brand identity and personality coupled with musical talent is crucial to generate brand love amongst the millennial generation.

Kynlie's social media following, discovery and engagement all increased once her brand identity was established and implemented by the social media strategist.

In addition to positioning, an increase in brand awareness and brand love was a result of the social media strategist creating monthly content and performing extensive data analysis at the end of each month.

The analysis revealed the most effective use for each social media platform.

Personal posts and stories on Instagram were the most effective way to portray Kynlie's

brand and create brand love. Music promotion and link clicks were most effective on Kynlie's Facebook page. Link clicks were effective for awareness and brand love via Twitter, but post shares were not. The effectiveness of Twitter was less than expected due to the lack of branding available and the 25-character limit on the platform. Tweeting more frequently with shorter, wittier tweets would have been beneficial, in addition to live tweeting. Updating Kynlie's YouTube page and posting a raw performance video increased subscribers and total views. Lastly, each month reconfirmed that direct mail was the most effective way to get Kynlie's audience to click links, follow pages and platforms and listen.

Most importantly, the results demonstrate a direct relationship with social media and music distribution. Kynlie's social media following and Spotify following and streams increased simultaneously, which validated the two-way communication model of the music industry.

Artist exposure can be achieved without a label. The researcher findings show millennials value each other's opinions regarding music and listen to the artists their friends, streaming service or social media accounts suggest. They also value authenticity and originality in the artists they listen to and desire an exclusive relationship with that artist. The tech savvy millennial, a product of the digital era, is the influencer of the IMC communication model. The millennial music fan is passionate about music. This fan is a social media fanatic, streaming enthusiast and discovery junkie. Social media and streaming, which have given millennials a platform to express their opinions and personality publically pertaining to music i.e. who they like/dislike, what genre they

prefer to listen to, which artist they socially identify with, etc., are two advancements of the digital era that have given millennials their influencing power.

In conclusion, an artist with raw talent and a unique sound can achieve music exposure and build a loyal fan base among the millennial generation independently, utilizing an IMC approach to create a strong brand personality. It may not be instantaneous, like Justin Bieber before he signed; it might be gradual, like the progression shown in the case study of Kynlie. Nevertheless, with the right social media strategy, which entails identifying an audience, developing a brand persona and communicating that brand through social and digital media, independent artists can compete on the same level as signed artist and become an established brand with a millennial audience. Chance the Rapper and his 2017 GRAMMY win is just the beginning. IMC is the future of music promotion, and it seems that labels in their current state are not compatible.

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APPENDIX A

Millennial Music Fan Survey

The researcher created a 15-question survey titled, "Millennial Music Fans." The survey was intended for all generations of persons above the age of 18 and asked general questions regarding music listening and social media habits.

The survey opened November 13, 2016 and received 260 responses before closing on December 3, 2016. It was distributed via Facebook and Instagram posts and email. No incentive was offered, but the researcher encouraged responses by providing this explanation of the survey link, "Please take the following survey for my senior these ☺ it only takes 3-4 minutes of your time, completely anonymous and so easy! Your participation helps me complete my exploratory research and graduate in May. Insert Link. Thanks so much!"

The response rate on Facebook was very low since the researcher did have 1,032 friends. Similarly, Twitter (232 followers) and Instagram (800 followers) produced a low response rate. However, an email blast to over 400 of the researcher's contacts produced an estimated 35% response rate or 150 respondents. However, the response rate for all four mediums combined generated an estimated .09% response rate.

212 of 234 respondents were millennials aging 18-24 and 10 of 234 respondents were millennials aging 25-34. Combined, the millennial demographic represented 95% of the total respondents. Of that 95%, the majority were females (85%) and lived in Tennessee or Mississippi. Several more respondents resided in southern states like

Georgia and Louisiana, but only a limited number, about 4%, of respondents lived in other parts of the country i.e. North Carolina Massachusetts, Colorado and New Jersey.

The specific questions and scales are listed below.

1. How often do you check you social media news feed?
 - a. Every hour
 - b. Every couple of hours
 - c. Everyday
 - d. Every couple of days
 - e. Not applicable- I do not have any social media accounts

2. What type of music fan best describes you?
 - a. Aficionado- a music connoisseur, enjoys music from an array of genres and eras, even undiscovered Indie artists
 - b. Digital- a social media connoisseur, discovers music on social media and interested in music that is trending or popular
 - c. Big Box- more interested in pop and country music, enjoys music that resonates with movies, commercials and TV shows
 - d. Ambivalent- only semi interested in music, listens to music that plays on radio and free streaming radio

3. Choose the TWO genres you listen to most.
 - a. Rap
 - b. Pop
 - c. Indie
 - d. Country
 - e. Alternative
 - f. R&B
 - g. Rock
 - h. Other

4. How do you typically listen to music?
 - a. Streaming
 - b. iTunes
 - c. Radio
 - d. Social Media (i.e. YouTube)
 - e. Physical formats (i.e. CD, Cassette, Vinyl)

5. What kind of fan are you to your favorite artist or band?
 - a. Super Fan- interactive with artist on all social media platforms and interested in all aspects of his/her day-to-day life

- b. Moderate Fan- follower of social media accounts, more interested in the artist's music than their personal and social life
 - c. Music Fan- strictly a music listener, not interested in other aspects of the artist's life
6. List any artists you follow on social media.
7. Rate in order, which social media platform is most telling or expressive about a music artist's true self. 1 being the most telling and 5 being the least.
- a. Snapchat
 - b. Instagram
 - c. Twitter
 - d. Facebook
 - e. YouTube
8. How likely (on a scale of likely, somewhat likely and not likely) are you to follow or like a music artist on at least one social media account after
- a. Hearing and liking one song
 - b. Hearing and liking multiple songs
 - c. Seeing a live performance
 - d. Meeting in person
 - e. Learning facts about personal life
9. How do you most often discover or actively seek new music?
- a. Social media
 - b. Friend recommendations
 - c. Discover playlists or suggested listens on streaming services (i.e. Spotify)
 - d. Local concerts and shows
10. What typically motivates you to attend a concert or show?
- a. Adoration: to showcase fandom for artist
 - b. Interest and support: to see live music and support the artist
 - c. Social event: to hang out with friends
11. Do you enjoy listening to cover songs
- a. Yes
 - b. No
12. How old are you?
- a. 18-24
 - b. 25-34
 - c. 35-44
 - d. 45-60
 - e. 60+

13. What is your gender?

- a. Male
- b. Female

14. Where do you live? (i.e. City, State)

APPENDIX B

TEMPLATE FOR CONDUCTING KYNLIE POSITIONING FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

Facilitator's welcome, introduction and instructions to participants

Welcome and thank you for volunteering to take part in this focus group. You have been asked to participate, as your point of view is important.

Objectives: This focus group discussion is designed to understand how the millennial generation perceives music artist's brands, particularly on social media. Specifically, how can Kynlie, a Nashville singer/songwriter, build a recognizable brand image that differentiates her from other artists and interests a record label?

Time Commitment: This focus group discussion will take no more than one hour.

Consent: The discussion may be recorded to facilitate its recollection.

Ground rules

- The most important rule is that only one person speaks at a time. There may be a temptation to jump in when someone is talking but please wait until they have finished.
- There is no right or wrong answer
- You do not have to speak in any particular order. Discussion should flow naturally.
- You do not have to agree with the views of other people in the group
- Does anyone have any questions?
- OK, let's begin

Warm Up

- First, I'd like everyone to introduce themselves. Can you tell us your name?

Introductory question

I am just going to give you a couple minutes to think about the artists that sing your favorite songs. Does a certain image or persona resonate with you when you hear their names? Do you follow them on social media? What was it about that particular artist that made you want to follow them?

Guiding Questions:

- I'm going to show you a picture of multiple, well-known artists. Write down a word or words that comes to mind when you think of him/her? (Show Rihanna, Beyoncé, Justin Bieber, Taylor Swift, Miranda Lambert, Drake, Tim McGraw)

- Do you follow them on any social media? Which ones specifically and Why?
- Do you think it is important for an artist to identify with a specific genre? (Specific to Kynlie)
- Let's listen to her song "Lost in the night".
 - How would you describe the singer? By age, by similar artists, by genre
 - What do you think she looks like?
- Show pictures of Kynlie.
 - Describe what you think her personality is like?
 - Which picture is your favorite and why?
- Watch video for "So Called Friend".
 - After watching her video, seeing her picture, and hearing her song, Does she intrigue you? Would you want to know more and follow her on social media? What would you want to know about her?
- If I told you she was the 21, the oldest of eight, dating a good-looking musician in the band "Boy Named Banjo", would you be more enticed to follow her on social media?

Concluding question:

After hearing her voice and learning some facts about Kynlie, could you use a particular word, image, or persona to describe her?

Conclusion:

Thank you for participating. This has been a very successful discussion. Your opinions will be a valuable asset to the study. We hope you have found the discussion interesting.