

Summer Scholars Project Proposal

Name: XXXX

Proposed Mentor: Dr. XXXX

Relevant Course Work:

Organizations in Perspective
Music History
Berklee College of Music Summer Program

Background:

Every day, thousands of bands send demo tracks to record companies, hoping to sell their music. Despite their best efforts, only a few of these bands succeed. The question is: What separates success from failure? Usually, the answer is the band manager. It is typically the manager that has the connections and the resources to successfully sell a band to a record company. However, my concern is deeper; I am interested in how popular culture and music become linked to not only to production and consumerism, but to forms of struggle and possibility. Therefore my proposal is to be the band manager for "The Freedom Underground," a more than merely promising local band that incorporates forms of resistance and possibility inscribed within the music industry; and to realize the requirements of signing them to a record label. By combining the work this will entail with my passion for music, this project will be more than just a job for the summer, or a mere learning experience; it will be the expression of bridging an intellectual understanding of popular culture, music and resistance to empowerment, and the foundation for a career. From contacting artist and repertoire representatives, to constructing professional promotional kits, the research and preparation will be extensive, but it will ultimately be worth every second. There is a difference between having a dream and following a dream. For me, this project will be following a dream -- my dream.

Project:

This is a study that links a theoretical understanding of cultural texts and contexts of popular culture to a concrete plan to sign a record label. My proposal is to apply the management marketing theory that I am learning as a Management major and Marketing minor toward the concrete end of actually producing and then implementing a business and marketing plan for a small business -- which (unless you're the Rolling Stones) is exactly what a professional recording and performing band is. My objective is to learn how to conceptualize, formulate, document, and then implement, from the perspective of band manager, the specific plans and steps that a band must make and then take to successfully transition from practicing in the basement to signing a recording contract with a record label.

I have chosen Dr. XXXX as a mentor because of his professional and academic experience (degrees in Communications, Marketing and Mass Media plus 20 years in the radio industry). His knowledge and contacts are crucial to the success of this project.

From being the VP of Programming and Marketing for Clear Channel Communications, to teaching Music Marketing, Dr. XXXX's experiences more than qualify him as a mentor to me and my pursuit of both theoretical knowledge and professional learning. This project will allow me to bridge my intellectual curiosity with his intellectual and practical expertise. Dr. XXXX's relationship with record companies will also allow me to not only draw upon his knowledge but that of executives in the record industry. By working together with Dr. XXXX and using his sufficient resources, I will engage in unparalleled, experiential learning.

Methods:

This summer, XXXX a Sophomore Management major and Marketing minor, will work under the supervision of Dr. David XXXX to research and complete the following tasks:

1. Prepare a literature review on popular culture, resistance and consumerism.
2. Understand the music industry as the role of a band manager in regards to signing unsolicited music and bands to record labels by:
 - a. Directly interning with Greg Thompson (VP of Marketing) and Andy Epstein of Universal Records in NYC.
 - b. Attending Dr. XXXX's Music Marketing classes
 - c. Reading the recommended sources of the business of music mentioned in the bibliography.
3. Research the requirements of and appropriate format for a professional looking demo package (press kit), and then construct such a package, including:
 - a. Cover letter
 - b. Biography and Facts
 - c. Band ID sheet
 - d. Press/Media coverage
 - e. Context/lyrics
 - f. Professional Photograph
 - g. Music/Demo CD
4. Using the insights gained in connection with Step 1 above, contact appropriate Artist and Repertoire (A&R) Representatives and provide them with the demo package.
5. Follow up with the A&R Representatives to:
 - a. Verify they received the press kit package
 - b. See if they reviewed it
 - c. Ask for their reactions

Preliminary Bibliography:

Baker, B. (2002). *Guerilla Music Marketing Handbook*. Pacific, MO: Mel Bay Publications.

Blackwell, R. & Stephan, T. (2003). *Brands that Rock*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons.

Brabec, J. & Brabec, T. (2006). *Music, Money and Success (5th Ed.)*. New York: Schirmer Books.

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- Grossberg, L. (1992). *We Gotta Get Out of this Place: Popular Conservatism and Post Modern Culture*. New York: Routledge.
- Hall, C. & Taylor, D. (Eds.) (2000). *Marketing in the Music Industry (3rd Ed.)*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
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