

The relationship that exists between the artist and the fan on social networks.

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The rise of the social web has changed the relationship between the listener and the artist. This representation has led to redefine the promotion of music but especially how to engage with the audience. The auditor is now active, he involves and advises on social networks. The artists use these social networks to promote, distribute and sell their work. Therefore, the audience and artist are now face to face on the same platforms, in a new type of relationship and exchange.

During the past three years, I did my academic research about the appropriation of digital services by independent labels and about the relationship between fans and the artist but also and more specifically about the relationship between the listener and the independent labels on social networks. This research aims to understand and learn more about the relationship between the independent label (or the artist) and the listener on social networks.

These studies seek to answer several questions : How social interactivity allowed by the web took part in promotional work for independent labels ? What connection is there between the auditor and the label? Does this interaction contribute to their visibility and their work? How is this new relationship perceive ? From the side of the listener, but also from the side of the independent label ? How to build this relationship? What has changed for the independent label ? What has changed for the listener ?

Through my research, I was able to highlight some practices that have contradicted some prior assumptions, provide answers and new trail of research. To be brief, I will essentially return to the different types of relationship between the auditor and the independent label (or the artist).

Between the fan and the label: privileged relationship or a relationship of principle ?

The label and artists are aware that it is now necessary to communicate on social networks to create a relationship with the listener and the fan. This relationship allows to extend the

contact with the community. Content is the guarantor for retaining the auditors and a certain way to engage the community in the daily actions of the artist. However, participation in the social networks are primarily the result of a much more social dimension. My research led me to highlight that a typology of actions and motivations are creating a link between the two protagonists.

For the listener (or fan)

- *Action of exchange and experience*

The auditor sees the opportunity to interact with the contents of the artists as a way to get in touch with them, to act on their content and to give their opinion. The fan is no longer a passive listener, it has the ability to act and provide advice directly to the artist. This tight link between the artist and his audience produces an illusion of privilege, pleasure and recognition of its status as a fan.

- *Action of support*

When the auditor follows the profile of a label or artist, he confirms a certain commitment and interest in the followed profile. Many listeners say they follow the social networks of artists on one hand to get important news but also to support the artist or label, which they give particular affection to. Therefore, a certain empathy and affect exists in this connection between the listener and the label on social networks. In this type of posture, the subject shares or advises to affirm and reaffirm its role as benefactors of the musical mark which it lends special support.

- *Action of socialization*

The auditor and the fan searches to interact with the artist and their content for some recognition and social integration, but also a way to promote himself over his circle of friends and claiming his knowledge opinions and tastes. He acts as a music critic, being part of a genre and an artist ambassador interacting with publications of the artist.

For the label

- *Informational or promotional action*

Social networks have the strength to be able to disseminate information quickly and concisely. The technical configuration of social networks can meet the needs of artists and labels to do their job and make it visible.

- *Recognition of Action*

Publications can engage in conversation with the community. The messages are used to provide presence on the web and provide more visibility. These exchanges allow for a better understanding of the fans, to listen to their opinions and taking into account their recommendations. If the label and the artist are very attentive to these exchanges, it can get some knowledge and form a certain expertise and knowledge of their fan community.

- *Action of exchange and experience*

The social network is seen as a medium of exchange and participation. This interactive site is a boom for independents that can via these platforms develop a real dynamic engagement with their virtual community and therefore increase their reach on the web via video sharing and publishing of visually attractive and aesthetic content.

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Ultimately, social interactions come in many forms and shapes. On the one hand as the other, either on the side of the artist or the side of the listener, each seeking to fill personal and professional needs.

This link is primarily a polymorphic carrier which relates to the different issues as appropriate. Therefore, the link between the two entities is primarily a link of influence. Any exchange carries a personal expectation and each profile (listener or label) seeks to ensure mastery and success with the tool that is being used.

The relationship of influence

The interaction between the label and the listener on a social network resource is called an influence link.

On one hand, we have the labels and artists that influence listeners with their published content and control over their publications. They take advantage of the reactions aroused in the listener by the artists, to build their marketing operations. And, on the other hand, we have the listener who joined the label on the social network to gather information, and secondly to satisfy some of these needs such as the need to belong to a group, a musical aesthetic but also the needs of social recognition, self-esteem needs and fulfillment.

Researchers Hagel and Armstrong spoke of four main types of virtual communities. In this case study, we discuss four types of links that energize a community of fans. These large types of links (originally needs) could be defined in this way:

- *Interest* : listeners seek, share and exchange the information they have collected.
- *Relationship* : the exchange of common experiences (concerts, meet and greets), advice, the sharing of certain feelings towards the artist.
- *Imagination*: feeling of being close to the artist, to deal with his world, the decisions of an artist, to believe to be the ambassador of a musical genre.
- *Transaction/Dealing* : exchange of information between members of the community, but also supporting the label (concept of donation - against donation).

This type of relationship could be defined primarily as links of influence, where one side or the other, labels and listeners are seeking to exercise their power over the other to satisfy personal needs: that of the individual or that of the company.

Thus, the issue of influence raises and boosts interaction and therefore promoting the independent label and/or artist. The needs of the listener while contributing significantly to

the visibility and work of the independent label, since in this relationship the listener influences the actions used to develop and expand the impact of business operations carried out by the label.

Therefore, the relationship between artists and fans (or any other type of businesses) are now considered as a relationship of influence where each one side or the other has a media weight. This relationship is increasingly regarded as an experience relationship where the artist has to be more open to his audience and his community while setting limits on his personal level. Music is an experience today, much more than just a hobby. And this experience makes sense when considering the influence link to the experience is seen as the most emotional and engaging.

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