

Saimaa University of Applied Sciences
Faculty of Business Administration Lappeenranta
Degree Programme in International Business

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Exporting Finnish rock and metal music to Germany: Case Aus Finnland project

Thesis 2017

Abstract

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Exporting Finnish rock and metal music to Germany: Case Aus Finland project, 39 pages, 1 appendix

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The objective of the research was to find out what kind of assistance companies representing Finnish rock and metal bands could receive for their export activities. The research focused on a project called Aus Finland which was an export project conducted by Music Finland.

Theoretical framework included internationalization, exporting, export marketing and marketing communication. The information was gathered from multiple sources including books, the internet and different reports. Qualitative research method was used and the data were gathered by conducting an interview with the manager of the Aus Finland project.

Aus Finland project provided both financial and non-financial support for Finnish music industry professionals who were exporting to German market during 2015 and 2016. The non-financial support included training and networking possibilities. Creating the contacts is the most crucial issue in the industry. The success is not possible without good networks and contacts. The Aus Finland project was successful and increased the visibility of Finnish music in Germany.

Keywords: music industry, exporting, internationalization, metal music, rock music, export marketing, marketing communication mix, promotion

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Appendix 1 Interview questions

1 Introduction

1.1 The topic of the thesis

The topic of this research is music exporting from Finland and more precisely finding out what kind of assistance different organisations can offer to companies representing Finnish metal and rock bands that would like to expand or grow their operations to international markets. The representatives include record companies, publishers, managers and promoters. Internationalization is becoming more and more important for Finnish metal and rock bands. There are quite many examples about Finnish bands that have gone straight abroad rather than waiting to become popular in Finland first. This is actually understandable, since the Finnish markets are quite small.

There is a real potential for exporting Finnish metal and rock music since it is already well known and respected around the world because of bands like Nightwish and HIM, to name a few. The competition is hard and that is why smaller artists and their representatives need to get some kind of assistance. The bands that are backed up by multinational companies are provided by the channels and contacts.

Many potential artists and their representatives might not be aware if there is a possibility to assistance that could be provided for them, if they would like to go abroad. The research will justify and lower the threshold of music exporting and provide concrete examples what should be done to make

1.2 Aus Finnland project

The main focus is on an Aus Finnland project by an independent association called Music Finland that has different projects considering Finnish music exporting. According to Music Finland website the organisation is promoting Finnish music and helping to increase the export of Finnish music. They operate both in Finland and abroad. Music Finland has several services and it manages marketing programs, events, networking opportunities, training, consultancy, support, research, information and funding programs. (Music Finland n.d.)

Aus Finland project is the largest implemented internationalization project considering Finnish music industry. The main goals are to increase music exporting from Finland and increase the visibility of Finnish music in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. The main partners include Ministry of Employment and the Economy, Ministry of Education and the Culture, Music Promotion MES, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Finnish Institute in Germany. (Aus Finland n.d.a.) The project includes six main programs. Those programs are market, visibility, live, movement, art music and jazz and folk music programs. (Aus Finland n.d.b.)

Not too much research has been done about these kinds of projects by people outside these projects. When a research is done by a person who is not included in the project itself, there is a possibility of finding new and fresh viewpoints about the case.

1.3 Objectives and delimitations

The purpose of the research is to find out what kind of export assistance is available from Aus Finland project to companies representing metal and rock bands and what prerequisites are needed before getting assistance for exporting to Germany from the project. The thesis will also have an insight into the current situation of music business in Finland as a whole. The prerequisites mean what is needed before getting the possibility for assistance for exporting. The research will show what the Aus Finland project has achieved.

The research includes the current situation of music business in Finland and especially exporting from Finland. This thesis focuses on exporting to Germany because Music Finland has the project called Aus Finland towards that area. The area is really potential for music exporting as is proved by facts in the Aus Finland website (Aus Finland n.d.c).

This thesis focuses on metal and hard rock bands representatives and their position in the music exporting. Metal and rock genres are chosen because of author's own interest towards those genres. Another reason is the popularity of Finnish bands in those genres in Germany (Ruokamo 2010).

Especially promotion and different channels used for promotion are included in the research. This is because the main part of making a band popular is to get people know that they exist and to separate the band from the huge competition. There are a lot of potential bands and becoming popular can even be a matter of luck. Usually luck is needed.

The Aus Finland project includes six different main programs (Aus Finland n.d.b). This thesis will include four of those which are market, visibility, movement and live programs. Art music and jazz and folk music programs are excluded because they would be conflict with the delimitation to rock and metal bands.

Financial information about the project or the grants they have given will not be included. It is more important to know what can be done, instead of finding out how much money the organization will grant.

1.4 Research questions

The main research question is formed as follows:

What kind of assistance metal and hard rock bands representatives get to their export objectives towards Germany from Aus Finland - project?

There are two sub-questions that will be useful when answering to the main research questions. The sub-questions are:

What kind of promotion is used in music exporting?

What are the prerequisites and limitations for entering programs inside the Aus Finland project?

The main research question forms the objective of the research and the sub-questions will help answering into more precise problems and topics. The delimitations become clear from the main research question because the market area,

genres and the project is clearly defined. Sub-questions define what areas are seen important for this research.

1.5 Theoretical framework

The topic has been studied before but not with the same focus that this thesis will include. From the topic of Finnish metal music abroad, a lot of articles, conference papers, books, book chapters, journal papers and conference papers have been written by Toni-Matti Karjalainen (2014 & 2015). There is also other thesis made with a similar topic such as Best practices of public export promotion in the Finnish music industry: case MOI! Sounds from Suomi by Miia Paakkanen (2012). There is another bachelor thesis made that are relatively close to the topic of this thesis. The most relevant is: Music industry: opportunities and challenges of exporting a Finnish artist abroad by Anne Saikko (2013).

The key concepts are music industry, exporting, internationalization, metal music, rock music, export marketing, marketing communication mix and promotion.

A basic marketing related book Principles of Marketing by Hundekar, S.G., Appannaiah, H.R., Reddy, P.N. (2009) will be used. In this book the marketing promotion has been discussed extensively including the nature and importance of promotion. There will be used literature about exporting for example International Marketing and Export Management by Albaum, G. & Duerr, E (2011) and Export Marketing by Acharaya, W.K. Ali, S. Jain, K.S. Palsapure, D. & Vanjani, A. (2009). Not too much has been written precisely about music exporting. In this thesis, the basic information about exporting is used in the theoretical part.

Because not too many books have been written about the specific topic and the theories, somehow similar theses already made and internet pages of music magazines will be used as a source for the theoretical framework. The most important one will be a Master's Thesis titled Best practices of public export promotion in the Finnish music industry: case MOI! Sounds from Suomi by Miia Paakkanen (2012).

The internet sources include the main website of the Aus Finland- project and articles from Teosto and from Finnish music magazines such as Soundi. Also, a

report about the current situation of Finnish music industry written by Hiltunen, R. & Ilmavirta, R. (2016) will be referred to.

1.6 Research method

Qualitative research method will be used because of the topic of the thesis. Gillham (2010, p 10) states that qualitative method will give the researcher an inside and evidences about what is actually going on and enlighten the issues that are researched. This is exactly the aim of the thesis, knowing what kind of assistance the case project actually provides for the bands.

Large samples are not that often needed in qualitative research, but a small focused sample (Glenn 2010, p. 95). As in this thesis there is only one case project that is researched. Qualitative method is useful when other methods are not practical and not much is known about the topic (Gillham 2010, p. 11) For this thesis this is the perfect way to do the research because not much is known about the case.

The research will include a case study about the Aus Finland project. According to Yin (2009), case studies are used in order to understand complex real life events and phenomena (Ridder 2012). Case study is used when there is not much control over the phenomena that is researched. Case study answers the questions asking why and how which makes it an appropriate method for this research.

The research data were gathered by conducting an interview with the Aus Finland manager Riku Salomaa. It was a telephone interview and it was recorded. Interviews are useful when the number of people involved is low and the questions are mainly open (Gillham 2010, p. 62). There was also a plan to interview bands or their representatives but the interviews were not finished because of lack of time. This creates a significant limitation for the research, when the practical information from the customers of the project is not included.

The author's own knowledge about the music industry, that is gathered while playing in multiple bands, will be used.

1.7 Structure of the thesis

The thesis starts with theories about internationalization and exporting. The second part of the thesis includes marketing and promotion issues. The empirical part includes the current situation of Finnish music industry, introduces Germany as a music market area and introduces the Aus Finland project.

2 Entering international markets

2.1 Internationalization

Internationalization means that the links between nation states are increased with the respect to trade and the movement of resources (Britton & Worthington 2009, p. 39). Internationalization thus simply means going to international markets to gain benefits to the business. The links for internationalization and an internationalization strategy must be created to lower the risks for going international. The links are especially important in the music industry. Without good contacts and networks around the world, the internationalization in music will be nearly impossible. This is because music business is about relationships. With contacts of one well known and respected person, the doors will open to huge amount of possibilities.

2.2 Reasons for internationalization

Three reasons for internationalization can be identified according to Peter D. Ørberg Jensen and Bent Petersen (2014). The first reason is having a competitive advantage in the home market that can be exploited in a foreign market. The second reason is that the competitive advantage in the home market can be obtained only by internationalization. The third reason is the possibility to gain a competitive advantage by internationalization.

All of these can be seen also in the music industry. If a band is really popular in their home market, this might suggest that they could also become popular in some other countries. When bands get more popular in their home market they can gain valuable experience and resources that can help in their internationalization. This includes for, example, marketing services. Becoming more popular

in the home market opens possibilities to get access into bigger record companies and entertainment agencies that can offer the money needed for internationalization.

What comes to the second reason, to be able to compete with other bands of the same size that are going international might require going international as well. As said before, the market in Finland is small and a band can have more stable future in the market if they can internationalize. By internationalization a band can get to places, such as studios and large festivals. Especially by getting to large festivals the competitive advantage will grow tremendously.

2.3 Growth of internationalization

According to Ruzzier, Hisrich & Antoncic (2006) there are three main reasons for the rapid growth of internationalization. Low-cost technology is creating more awareness about economic possibilities and connecting people and locations. A more open market has been created for innovative organizations when trade barriers and financial deregulations have been teared down. New possibilities have arisen for economic growth and investments because of widespread economic liberalization and restructuring and because of geographical market expansion. (Paakkanen 2012, p. 15-16.)

These things can be seen in music business in recent years. The low-cost technology has a great impact on music business. Social media has for example connected bands to their fans in real time. People also have music with them all the time. Earlier it was possible by using mp3-players and nowadays with services such as Spotify, Deezer, iTunes, Google Play, where people can stream or download music.

Besides of large and well known commercial services, there are also services where bands can sell their music directly by themselves to the consumer. One of the most known service is called Bandcamp, where it is possible to set the price that the band wants, or then the customer can choose if they want to pay and how much. Through Bandcamp it is possible to sell also physical copies. With these services the market expansion has been huge. Sharing and selling music all around the world has become really easy because of the Internet.

2.4 Barriers for internationalization

The most traditional barriers for internationalization include financial and labor market constraints and low productivity (Arndt, Buch & Mattes 2009, p. 17). In the music business, these are all somehow applicable, but the industry is so different from traditional manufacturing business that those barriers must be seen a bit differently.

Financial market constraints are a barrier but nowadays the Internet might open possibilities without using significant amounts of money. Money is needed mostly for recording, publishing, promotion and organizing tours. Labor market constraints could be seen as the lack of professional management, players, producers, audio engineers, road crew and other people involved in the operations of the band. Low productivity can be linked to the creative side. If a band is not able to create and maintain creating enough songs and music videos that have quality and character, the internationalization is not possible. One hit wonders are an exception.

One major barrier for internationalization in entertainment is the possible censorship in some countries according to Jensen and Petersen (2014). Heavy and rock music contains lyrics and images that are not in accordance with the social norms of some cultures, which may cause problems. It is understandable that the cultures are different and those issues should be considered and respected.

For instance, when Iron Maiden went to China to play concerts in 2015 they were not permitted to use harsh language on stage and they had to alter their lyrics in some of their songs. Using smoke effects, pyrotechnics and Union Jack flag which is waved during their song "The Trooper" were banned. (DiVita 2016.)

2.5 Choosing the target market

Ellis (2000) notes that one of the most important decisions about exporting and internationalization is choosing the market where to enter and expand into. One framework for firms working in the music industry has been created by Nimble

agency. This was formed by combining three international market selection models of Root (1998), Johansson (1997) and Hollensen (1998). (Nimble Agency 2016.)

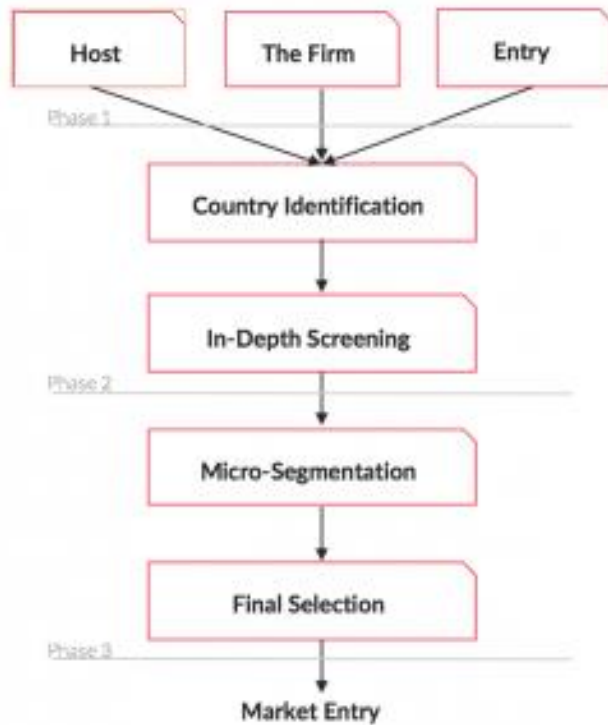


Figure 1. Conceptual market selection framework (Nimble Agency 2016).

Figure 1 shows the framework created (Nimble Agency 2016). There are three phases in the market selection. In the first phase the host, client and the artist begins the research and identification of countries and makes detailed screenings in macro level. Phase 2 is about understanding the micro environment of the countries that might be chosen as the target market and making the final decisions. Phase 3 is the actual market entry plan formed from the basis of the research.

According to Johanson and Vahlne's (1977, 1990) Uppsala model the internationalization of firms start gradually from countries that are similar physically or psychically. Germany and Japan has been often the first places of internationalization in the Finnish music industry because of that. (Paakkanen 2012, p. 69)

2.6 Exporting

Exporting can be defined as a process where goods or services from the residents of one country are exchanged to the residents of another country. Exporting includes export marketing which means directing the flow of products and services to consumers in multiple nations. (Acharaya, Ali, Jain, Palsapure & Vanjani 2009, p. 2.)

2.7 Export entry modes

Export entry modes can be divided into indirect and direct. Indirect exporting is the situation when a company uses a home country based independent marketing organization for entering the target market. Direct exporting means that the products are sold through own unit or through a marketing organization based in the foreign market. At the end both approaches result in the distribution channel. The importance of choosing the right partners has become even more critical because the Internet and e-commerce might not give a real picture about the possible partner. (Albaum & Duerr 2011, p. 491.)

The advantages of indirect exporting include lower risk, lower investments and the fact that it is also suitable for smaller companies. The risk is lower because the intermediaries have knowledge about the market and marketing efforts are made by the intermediaries. The intermediaries also provide the needed infrastructure for smaller companies. The disadvantages are lack of control, lower selling prices and lower sales volume. The exporting company must rely on the information from the intermediaries and the marketing decisions cannot be controlled directly. The more intermediaries the lower price can be charged because the revenue is divided for multiple companies. The intermediaries sell products from multiple companies meaning one exporter is a small part from the whole exports. (Acharaya et al. 2009, p. 83-84.)

Direct exporting enables a direct control over the operations and first-hand information from the buyers that can be used to develop the supply. Other advantages include higher pricing and profitability because there are no intermediaries. The disadvantages include high risk, high investments and it is not suitable for small companies. Direct exporting requires a lot of knowledge about the target market

and the distribution can become more expensive and difficult than in the case of indirect exporting. (Acharaya et al. 2009, p. 82-81.)

Leonidou, Katsikeas and Hadjimarcou (2002) notes that building the relationships with foreign customers is obligatory. The exporting should be shown as a strategic possibility to the customer. Suitable people should be appointed for taking care of the communication and relationship to build trust. Both indirect and direct communication and inter-firm commitment should be built and sustained to achieve sustainable cooperation. (Albaum & Duerr 2011, p. 491.)

2.8 Product decisions

Product planning and development for foreign markets concentrates on the decisions about new products, changes in existing products, new uses for existing products and product elimination strategies. The strategies also involve the decision whether to use standardization or adaptation. (Albaum & Duerr 2011, p. 639.)

In standardization, the product that is exported, or for example a marketing program, is the same in all markets, while adaptation offers a different version for different markets (Albaum & Duerr 2011, p. 959, 972). Different aspects of the product or service must be considered. The adaptation or standardization might be done not only to the core product but also to the package or to a whole brand.

Adaptation might be compulsory sometimes because of regulations and laws but it can also create benefits when adapting the products to specified market to be more appealing to local tastes. In music business, it is not always necessary to adapt the products for different nationalities because the consumers of some age-group or definite music genre have similar kind of preferences all around the world. (Albaum & Duerr 2011, p. 621.) The key benefit of standardization is that it decreases costs (Albaum & Duerr 2011, p. 621).

The reality is that the products exported to foreign markets are usually in between of the two extremes that are adaptation or standardization (Albaum & Duerr 2011, p. 640). This means that some part of the product is standardized and some parts

may be adapted, for example the labels are written in different languages in different markets although the package and the core product is the same.

2.9 Problems in exporting

Exporting is a lengthy procedure because it includes many stages, like discovering new markets, manufacturing the products, pricing, packaging, shipments and registration formalities (Acharaya et al. 2009, p. 2). Problems might arise at any point of the stages. The long distances can obviously cause many problems because the products might break or perish in transportation. Uncertainties and risks might arise because of changes in political environment. Commercial risks might arise if the product is not accepted by the target market consumers. This is because of issues such as different customs, traditions and languages in different cultures. (Acharaya et al. 2009, pp. 5-7.)

Trade barriers limit the free movement of products by taxation and custom duties or by quotas and licenses. The custom regulations vary depending on the country. Currencies and exchange rates of different countries add even more rules to exporting process. The amount of financial and physical resources creates a competitive advantage and that is why the export is dominated by developed countries. Competition is high because there are always three-faced competition in a market. These include local suppliers, other exporters from own country and exporters from other countries. Exporting requires extensive documentation. (Acharaya et al. 2009, pp 5-7.)

According to Albaum & Duerr (2011) one major problem in music industry is piracy, which can be done by making unauthorized copies from physical formats like CD or by illegal downloading, sharing and broadcasting. Piracy can cost billions of dollars in losses for the producers (Albaum & Duerr 2011, p.18). Nowadays for example YouTube is filled with material that is shared by a user who does not have the rights to share it. Some record companies and publishers have deleted material that is shared without rights, but the problem is that there are so many users sharing the material that is impossible to delete all unauthorized material.

3 Export promotion

3.1 Promotion

Promotion is a communicative activity which objective is to inform and persuade the buyer to accept, buy, use, resell or recommend the product or service that the company is selling. This is done by affecting the buyers' attitudes, behavior, knowledge and preferences toward the product or service. (Hundekar, Appannaiah & Reddy 2009, p. 102.)

According to BusinessDictionary (2016) promotion is the marketing staff's actions encouraging the target market towards buying the product or service by advertisement in the Internet, TV, radio, billboards, posters, flyers or printed form or by direct-mail and sales calls.

The starting point is setting the promotional objectives. The message and the selected channel or media must be decided. When the decisions are made the budget, time and effort that will be used must be taken into account. (Albaum & Duerr 2011, p. 817.)

In promotion, it is not enough to only communicate the ideas and core functions of the products or services, but the customer needs to be persuaded that the product or service is something they actually need and want. Nowadays there are countless of different channels that can be used for promotion, so choosing the most efficient ones can be difficult.

3.2 The nature of promotion

Hundekar et. al. (2009) states that the nature of promotion includes eight levels. Firstly, promotion is an informative process where the customer is informed about the functions, features and availability to help the customer to make decisions. Promotion is a persuasive process where the customer is stimulated to buying the product by creating a positive connection. The third level is that promotion is a motivating process to get more floor space from distributors for example. The fourth point is brand switching where customers using competitor brands are convinced to change the brand. The fifth level is about seeing the promotion as an

investment rather than a short-term effort. Promotion must always be directed toward the specific target group and the preferences of the target group must be known to be able to send the right message through the right channels. Promotion is a large expenditure. The marginal expenditure should match the marginal return. The last level is that promotion includes a lot of activities that must be handled intelligently and carefully. (Hundekar et. al. 2009, p. 104.)

The nature of promotion in music business follows the same ideas. Customer must be informed about the genre and where they can listen to the music of a band. Motivating process can be seen as the radio playing or by getting an own stand in a record store for only one artist. Brand switching is also possible but usually people do not change their favorite band that easily. Seeing the promotion as an investment but keeping in mind that it is a large expenditure is always necessary for making the right decisions. In music business, the target groups can vary a lot. Some people listen to all kinds of music while others stick to only one genre. The most important target group is still the ones that listen to the specific genre that the band represents.

3.3 The importance of promotion

By attracting more customers with promotion, the sales can be increased. Promotion creates co-operation with the middlemen in the supply chain. If the product is well promoted the middlemen will buy more stock and the product will be available to the customers all the time. The sales force will participate more intensively when they are given incentives. Long and short term boost in sales will occur when the promotion is successful and the brand image will become stronger. (Hundekar et. al. 2009, pp. 104-106.)

In record stores the importance of the promotion becomes visible. The record stores are the middlemen and the quantity offered to stock is much bigger when the album is well promoted. When a new album is promoted heavily it will sell more than other albums. As a salesman, it is a lot easier to sell a well promoted album because the customers already know that it exists and they might also know more about it beforehand.

3.4 Essential factors in music promotion

Letang (2013) introduces some key factors about music promotion. Marketing and promoting music is necessary but it does not have to be hard. It takes time and a lot of work. When a band makes good music, the wrong idea is that it will start selling itself. That is not true obviously. The awareness must be raised through promotion. Then the audience will know that the band exists. The next step is to convince people to listen to the music. Nowadays music promotion should be a two-way process because the social media makes it possible. When replying to the comments of the fans or thanking and noticing them in the promotion, the fans will become more loyal and they can even become advocates, thus helping in promotion. One of the most important factors in music promotion is that it is an ongoing process. It is not enough to have campaigns only when a new album is released. Internet is an easy place to promote music but it should not be the only place of promotion. When dealing with partners or when trying to get new opportunities from record companies or distributors, a phone call or a face-to-face meeting is usually more efficient than an email. (Letang 2013.)

3.5 Marketing communication mix

Marketing communication mix includes the different ways to promote a certain company or its products. They are the channels used for promotion. These tools and channels are used to increase the awareness and value, and to create customer loyalty and retention (Smith n.d.). The focus is to communicate to the selected target groups by using the most suitable communication tools. Figure 2 shows that marketing communication mix includes various elements. (Kokemuller 2016.)



Figure 2. Marketing communication mix (Kokemuller 2016).

3.5.1 Advertising

The most obvious tool of the marketing communication mix is advertising. A company pays to some other medium in order to get their messages visible in e.g. internet, radio, TV, magazines or newspaper. Advertising has usually high costs, but it also gives a lot of control ensuring that the exact message that is meant to be delivered is delivered. (Kokemuller 2016.)

Advertising has a relatively low cost per prospect and it can reach masses quickly. The weaknesses of advertising are the lack of credibility in the eyes of the consumers and that it is a one-way communication where the feedback from customers is received slowly. It is not as effective in the end of the buying process as personal selling or sales promotion. (Hundekar et. al. 2009, p. 121.)

All channels of advertising are still used in music business. Those bands that have a large company supporting them can have their ads on TV and radio. The smaller ones can use Internet and social media where the costs are lower.

3.5.2 Personal selling

Personal selling is used usually when the customers need to be persuaded to make the buying decision of a higher-end products and services. Having skilled salespeople is essential, because the salespeople are in direct contact with the customer. The salespeople must be able to inform about the value of the products or services. (Kokemuller 2016.)

Personal selling in music business is primarily the interactions between the band and the audience. The most obvious place for personal selling are the concerts. There the audience can really see what the band looks like live and how they perform and sound. Merchandise is sold in concerts and sometimes the fans can even get to meet the band in autograph session or fan meetings.

3.5.3 Direct marketing

Direct marketing is a straight contact with the customer, it is linked to personal selling and promotions. Usually direct marketing is used for promoting new product launch or when offering customer some special limited deals. These messages are usually delivered to customers by email, direct mail and mobile channels, or by telemarketing. It is easy to reach the existing customer base by direct marketing. (Kokemuller 2016.)

By direct marketing the target market can be easily reached and it is convenient to the customers. For a company, direct marketing is handy. It can be used as a side activity because of low-costs. The disadvantages are that the customers might find it irritating and suspicious if the company doing the marketing is not well-known and they have to give a return possibility because the customer cannot see the product before the purchase. (Hundekar et. al. 2009, p. 118.)

Many bands send their own email newsletters to fans that have subscribed to their email list. The emails contain information about new releases, shows and new merchandise and they can get to know things before it is otherwise public. The most famous bands have their own fan clubs.

3.5.4 Sales promotion and discounts

Sales promotion and discounts are one part of a communication mix. They are linked to the direct marketing and they are usually communicated through paid channels. The most common sales promotion tools are free samples, coupons, membership cards and multi-buy offers. Usually customer gets some percentage discount from specific product. These discounts are made clearly visible in all communication. Some brands do not want to use discounts because it does not suit their image. Discounts are still a good way of handling excess inventory and getting rid of products that are in the end of their lifecycle. (Kokemuller 2016.)

The strengths of sales promotion are that it gives incentives for immediate purchase and it is flexible. Sales promotion is most effective when a new product is introduced, an existing product has new improved features and when the company wants to enhance the effect of advertising. The major weaknesses include short life-cycle and poor impact on building brand loyalty and image. (Hundekar et. al. 2009, pp. 113-114.)

When a band releases a new album, the previous ones are sometimes sold at a discounted price. Bands can have fan clubs and the members receive a discount from concert tickets and merchandise. When thinking about the music business, the free samples can be seen as music videos and free downloads of a new single. It is mandatory to give the free samples.

3.5.5 Public relations

For a brand the public relations can be an opportunity and a threat. Public relations are not paid like advertising and the brand does not always have control over the content. Public relations can be used by influencing newspapers, TV programs, magazines etc. to feature a story about a company or a brand by making interesting press releases and news. (Kokemuller 2016.) Other effective ways are event sponsorship and social service activities like donating money to charity. Those kinds of actions create goodwill towards the company. (Hundekar et. al. 2009, pp. 120.)

Band or artist interviews forms the core of public relations in music business. Other forms are reviews from albums and concerts. Both interviews and reviews can be published in multiple sources such as magazines and the internet. Doing something extraordinary, like destroying a hotel room, might result in publicity.

4 Empirical research

4.1 Finnish music industry

Music Finland conducted a research where music industry professionals answered questions considering the current situation and future prospects of Finnish music industry. Altogether 671 music industry professionals and organizations including musicians, composers, producers, publishers, record companies, event organizers and other operators in music industry answered the questionnaire. (Hiltunen & Ilmavirta 2016.)

The research revealed that the economic development of the Finnish music industry is positive although there are challenges, like the change in consumer behavior and the weak general economic situation. The steep drop in physical record sales and the undefined remuneration practices of streaming services are seen as a threat. Market share of domestic music, exporting, live music sector and the usage of music applications are growing in the future. (Hiltunen & Ilmavirta 2016.)

The share of digital sales from total music sales was as much as 79% from January to June in 2016 (Musiikkituottajat - IFPI Finland ry 2016). This shows how important the digital channels are and it is vital to make sure that the remuneration practices will be developed fairly. The right people should get the remuneration from the work that they have done. One of these possibilities is a user centric model where the remuneration is paid monthly only to the artist that the customer has listened in a streaming service (Hiltunen & Ilmavirta 2016).

Finnish music export value has been growing since 2012. Figure 3 shows the development of the value. The total value of Finnish music exporting was 46.5 million euros in 2015, which is 8% more than in 2014. (Ilmavirta & Muikku 2016.)

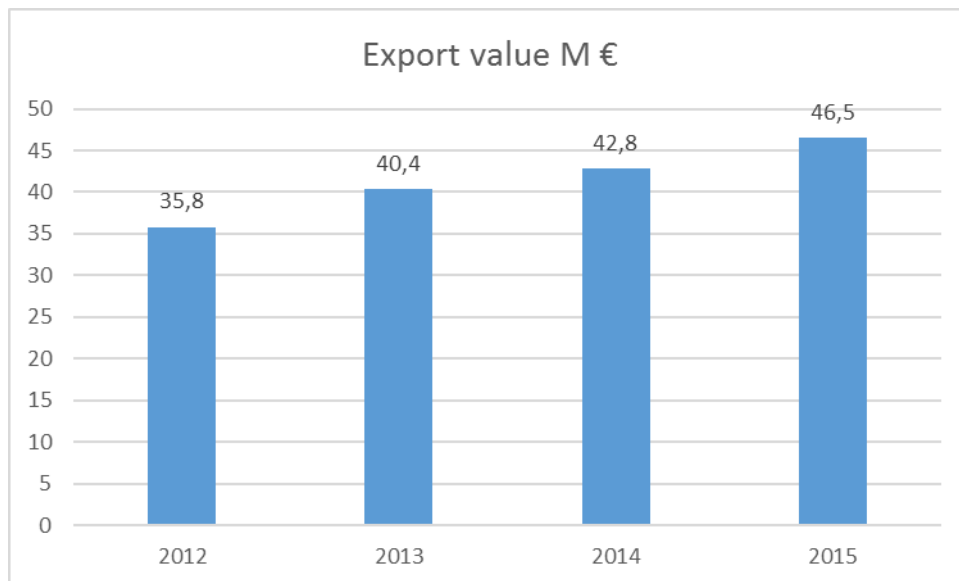


Figure 3. Development of the Finnish music export value (Ilmavirta & Muikku 2016).

The value of live exporting was 13,6 million euros in 2015. The amount is considerably higher than the value of record export value in 2015, which was 6,6 million euros (Ilmavirta & Muikku 2016). The live music sector is crucial for artists since the value is over twice as much compared to record sales. The biggest threats for the growth of music exporting from Finland are the lack of resources and the lack of marketing and productizing expertise (Hiltunen & Ilmavirta 2016).

4.2 Germany as a music market area

Germany is one of the world's most important music market areas and it has the most concentrated live club and event location supply compared to other countries (C.A.A.M.A. 2014). According to Aus Finnland (n.d.c) Germans used about 2,3 billion euros for concert tickets in 2012. Germany was the world's fourth largest music market in 2015 with total revenues of 1,310 billion US\$ (Jacca-Routenote 2016).

The recorded music market grew 3,6% in the first half of 2016 compared to the first period of 2015, although CD sales declined 9,6%. The reason is that the revenue from streaming services increased 88% and vinyl sales increased 46,2%. Figure 4 shows the distribution of revenues between different formats in

the first period of 2016. Physical record sales are the largest part with a share of 60,4% leaving 39,6% for digital formats. (Jones 2016.)

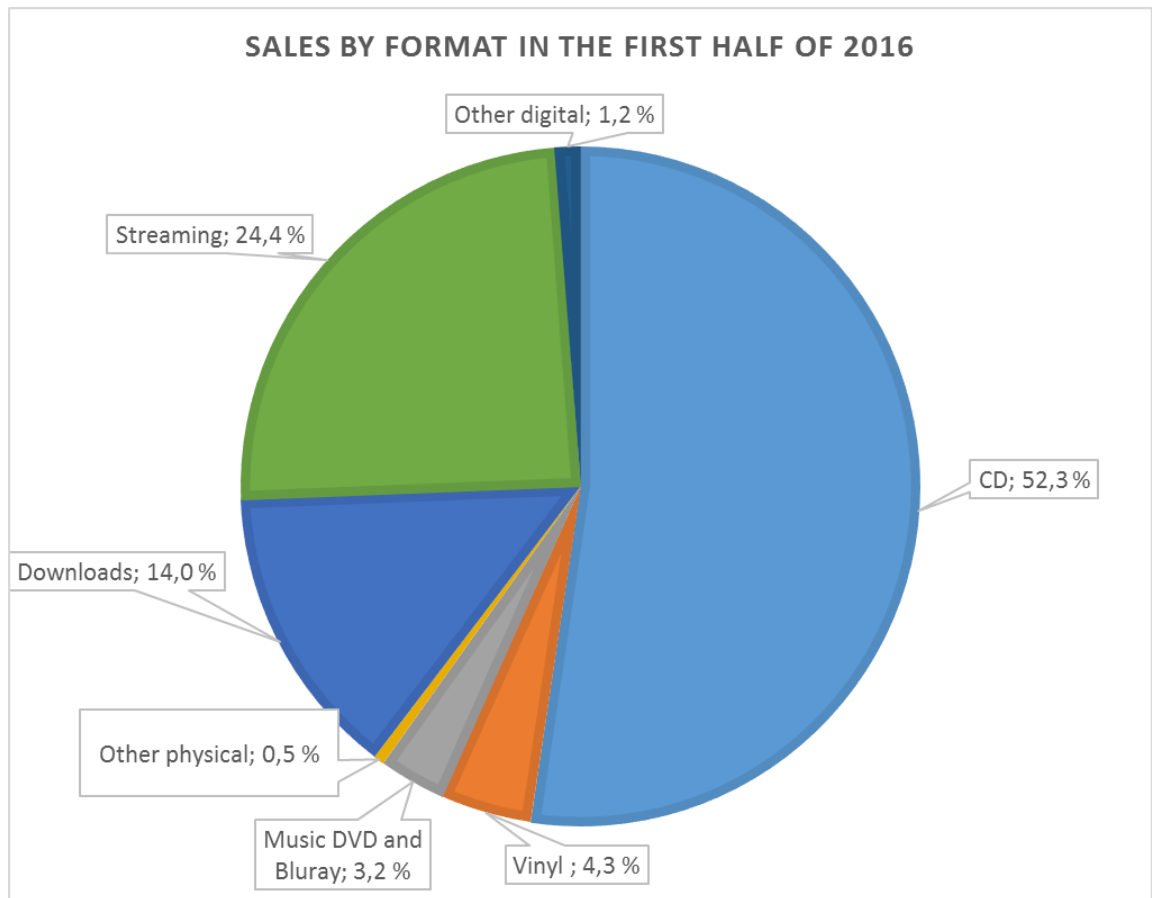


Figure 4. Sales by format in the first half of 2016 (Jones 2016).

From the marketing channels radio is really popular in Germany and both young and old people listen to it. There are eight public radio stations in different locations and a lot of small local radio stations. Radio affects significantly on concert ticket sales. The exception is that heavy metal is not played in the radio. (Aus Finland n.d.c.)

The C.A.A.M.A (2014) has gathered a ten-point tip list for the German music market. These tips introduce how the German music market works and how it should be approached when entering there.

1. It is important to have a domestic home base, releases and live experience before entering German market or before contacting German agents.

2. Face to face contact is crucial when finding partners and the material and discussion should be succinct. Those partners should be selected who have experience in dealing with international counterparts.
3. One should always have a release when going on tour in Germany. Other way around it is insufficient to have a release without a tour.
4. Traditional forms are used in promotion for journals and when doing business. Digital formats have not replaced CD completely. First impression matter and the visual content should be considered carefully.
5. Social Media and homepage should be updated and unnecessary content should be avoided.
6. When making publishing deals for the first time, exclusive right should be granted rarely. It would be more beneficial to have project related deals to find the suitable labels and booking agencies.
7. Buying merchandise and recordings is popular in Germany. Products should be available in concerts.
8. The tours should not include only the largest areas like Berlin and Hamburg. In those areas, the competition is hard, which may result in poor media attention and decrease ticket sales. The mid-sized and small cities can actually provide the fastest way to the biggest stages.
9. When going on tour it is recommendable to use a German booking agency. Using international agencies is slower and can result in additional costs.
10. Booking tours and contacting German partners should be avoided during football World Cup and European Championship.

4.3 Aus Finland project

Aus Finland project is the largest implemented internationalization project considering Finnish music industry. The main goals are to increase music exporting from Finland and increase the visibility of Finnish music in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. The main partners include Ministry of Employment and the Economy, Ministry of Education and the Culture, Music Promotion MES, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Finnish Institute in Germany. (Aus Finland n.d.a.) The project includes six main programs. Those programs are market, visibility, live, movement, art music and jazz and folk music programs. (Aus Finland n.d.b.)

4.3.1 Visibility-program

Visibility-program offers support for growing the marketing know-how and communication in the target market. This includes supporting the purchases of public relation and marketing services to promote a tour, a product or a release. The support is intended for companies who represent an artist or a band, or are re-releasing a product or an album. The program includes counselling and workshops to get information from professionals working in the target market about choosing the partners and planning the communications. (Aus Finland n.d.d.)

The grant for one project is between 1000 and 10,000 euros and it can be used for the purchase of public relation and marketing services including producing the marketing materials, photographs, video recording, translations and spell checking, freight and transportation costs and advertising costs. Travel expenses will be accepted if the operations demand presence in the target country or when the professionals from the target country has to travel to Finland. (Aus Finland n.d.d.)

The prerequisites for applying the grant included that they must be Finnish company or association, representing a band or an artist, that has the resources and capability to do continuous and profitable business. They should be professional enough to be able to implement the project and they must have the export product. The export product can be for example an album of a rock band. The product must be Finnish and it should fulfill the Key Flag criteria. The applicant also commits to report about the project and its results. This includes gathering the needed information during the project. (Aus Finland n.d.d.)

Evaluation of the suitability of the applicants includes the extent on how much effect the project can have to the internationalization objectives of the band or artist. Other issues include how professional the applicant is, how well the plans could be implemented, expertise and knowledge about the target market and its demand and the overall goals of the applicant and how they will measure the goals. (Aus Finland n.d.d.)

4.3.2 Movement-program

Movement-program offers support for touring and performing, as well as for other export related travelling. The program includes counselling and workshops to get information from professionals working in the target market about choosing the partners and planning the communications. The grant can be worth 300 to 3000 euros. It can cover 50% from the total budget at the most. The grant will be paid after clearance about the costs. Receipts must be included. The grant can be used for flight costs, accommodation expenses, airport transportation costs and for instruments' freight costs. (Aus Finland n.d.e.)

The applicant must live permanently in Finland. If the applicant is an association, it must be registered in Finland. The applicant also commits to report about the project and its results. This includes gathering the needed information during the project. (Aus Finland n.d.e.)

The suitability of the applicants includes the evaluation of their professionalism, how well the travelling plans have been made, how engaged and professional the local partners are and how meaningful the trip is for the internationalization of the band or artist. (Aus Finland n.d.e.)

4.3.3 Market-program

Market program offers support for creating an export strategy, using local consult services, market research and organizing buyer meetings and export related trips. Information and advice for creating an export strategy, choosing the partners and growing the networks are also included. The grant can be from 5000 to 20,000 euros. (Aus Finland n.d.f.)

The grant can be used for buying local consult services, marketing and communication and rents, travelling and accommodation if the projects nature demands staying in the market area. (Aus Finland n.d.f.)

The prerequisites for applying the grant included that they must be Finnish company or association, representing a band or an artist, that has the resources and capability to do continuous and profitable business. They should be professional enough to be able to implement the project. The product must be Finnish and it

should fulfill the Key Flag criteria. The applicant also commits to report about the project and its results. This includes gathering the needed information during the project. (Aus Finland n.d.f.)

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4.3.4 Live-program

Live program offers support for touring and showcase performances and supports the Finnish artist to be included in the festivals, tours and concerts in the market area. The grant can be used for costs occurred from production such as using production services and renting needed equipment. The grant can be used also for paying the wages of tour managers and tour personnel such as technicians. (Aus Finland n.d.g.)

The prerequisites for applying the grant included that they must be Finnish company or association, representing a band or an artist, that has the resources and capability to do continuous and profitable business. They should be professional enough to be able to implement the project. The product must be Finnish and it should fulfill the Key Flag criteria. The applicant also commits to report about the project and its results. This includes gathering the needed information during the project. (Aus Finland n.d.g.)

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4.3.5 Implementation

Music Finland has implemented several other projects in different areas such as Great Britain and the Northern Countries before. Germany was chosen as a target area together with the clients, who are the people working in the music industry. Music Finland asked the people in the industry about what could be a good area to focus and what kind of services are needed. People working in the Finnish music industry wanted to have more focus on Germany. That was simply the reason why the project was started and focused on German speaking market. (Salomaa 2017.) More reasons for choosing the area includes that the area has a great potential for exporting more Finnish music and the position of culture and music is strong (Music Finland 2017, pp. 5).

Metal and rock bands and companies representing them have always been active and they were active applicants also in Aus Finnland -project. Although metal is not as popular as in the past, interesting metal and rock bands come from Finland continually. (Salomaa 2017.)

Grants were usually evaluated from the basis of the rules in the application but each applicant was a different case and evaluated independently. The people working in music Finland assessed all the cases and they had to think if it was worth the grant. Good application included a good plan, good partners especially in the market area and the potential outcomes of the case. The level of professionalism and the overall quality of the whole case. (Salomaa 2017.)

For example, when applying a grant for a tour promotion, the quality of the German partner played an important role. The overall team around the band also influenced the possibility to be included in the project. (Salomaa 2017.)

During the project Music Finnland organized workshops and conferences. The focus was mainly on raising the level of knowledge about the market area. Different perspectives were included if needed. Some workshops included the law issues because they are different from market to market, including for example the law about commissions or royalties. Some included getting to know the different festivals in Germany and how to get a band or an artist to perform there. (Salomaa 2017.) Export training included two workshops about metal music. Those were

Metal Export workshop and Metal industry panels and networking. The topic was the current situation and future of the metal music market and culture. (Music Finland 2017, p. 50.)

As a part of Aus Finnland project, Music Finland worked together with Modern Heavy Metal Conference and brought German music industry professionals to the conference. In the conference, they could share their knowledge about German music market, its development and provide tips for efficient exporting. Finnish professionals could also introduce Finnish bands for them. German music industry professionals were also invited to Tuska festival. (Music Finland 2017, p. 47.)

Aus Finnland project included also networking trips for music industry professionals such as managers. For metal managers Aus Finnland included a two-day trip to Metal Hammer Paradise event where the managers could meet German music industry professionals (Music Finland, p. 42).

4.3.6 Marketing

Marketing is always important when talking about a release, a tour and everything else a band does. It is of course hard to do marketing outside of the market area. A local partner and co-operation is basically always required to be able to do marketing in the market. There can be, for example, a local record company releasing or publishing the music and performing the marketing activities as well. Smaller bands usually have domestic record companies and only the distribution is done by a partner in the target market. Then usually a PR agency handles the marketing. The main point of the project was to connect the Finnish representatives to the German partners by helping them to find the right partners and providing financial aid. (Salomaa 2017.)

The media field is still a bit old-fashioned in Germany. In metal and rock, mainly the public relations, press visibility and radio are the key channels of marketing. Social Media is nowadays obviously extremely important. Using printed media is decreasing all the time. In Germany, the printed media still has some meaning and influence. Sometimes to get a magazine to write a story about a band requires buying an advertisement space from the magazine. (Salomaa 2017.)

Music genre special magazines, for example Metal Hammer, are still important because the fans of that genre still buy and read the physical magazines. In metal, sometimes using printed media is relevant, but basically mostly the public relation and social media are the most efficient channels of marketing communication. (Salomaa 2017.)

Doing marketing and the artistic decisions is the responsibility of to the record companies and bands. The material is not influenced by the Music Finland. Aus Finland project is more about creating the possibilities and help finding the right partners and acting as consultants. Thus, providing possibilities for Finnish music professionals to compete in the international market. (Salomaa 2017.)

4.3.7 Results

The goal of Aus Finland project was to enhance the visibility of Finnish music in the long term. Creating possibilities for independent and long-term export activities in the future was the main goal. (Music Finland 2017, p. 8.)

The participants in the Aus Finland saw that the project was successful and they could grow their contact networks. 80% of the participants thought that the project was extremely useful for making new contacts and improving their networks. 75% thought that the project was extremely useful considering future export activities. (Music Finland, p. 13.)

Several cases prove that the Aus Finland had a positive impact on artists. One example is that a rock band Have You Ever Seen the Jane Fonda Aerobic VHS? was represented in several music influencers' blogs and their single was played on the local radio. (Music Finland 2017, p 25.) They also got several showcase concerts and played for example in a Reeperbahn Festival 2016, which is the most important professional event and showcase festival in Germany at the moment. (Music Finland 2017, p. 34.) Action rock band Hard Action made a contract with a concert promotor and festival organizer FKP Scorpion and got a lot of new concerts to the area. (Music Finland 2017, p. 27.)

Media coverage was monitored with Pressmonitor and Meltwater services (Music Finland, p. 15). The internet media hits for Finnish music totaled 9083 in 2016

and the share of metal music was as much as 2877. This shows how active and popular Finnish metal bands are in Germany. In printed media, the total hits were 347 and 75 of those were pop, rock or metal. (Music Finland 2017, p. 60.) The number of Finnish artists played in the German radio increased from 250 in 2014 to 431 in 2016. (Music Finland 2017, p. 12.)

5 Conclusions

The research question was: What kind of assistance metal and hard rock bands representatives get to their export objectives towards Germany from Aus Finland -project? The sub-questions were: What kind of promotion is used in music exporting? and What are the prerequisites and limitations for entering programs inside the Aus Finland project?

Starting from the main research question it can be said that Aus Finland project provided a wide variety of assistance for exporting. Exporting includes a wide variety of decisions and regulations so the information about those kinds of issues is crucial. The aid was of course financial in most of the cases but included a lot more. The project offered valuable information about the German market in the form of workshops, conferences and consultant services.

The most important assistance was helping the music industry professionals grow their networks and create long-term partnerships in the German market. Getting to know the right people to work with is crucial. This means that from the exporting theories the indirect exporting is mainly used in the music business, since it is nearly impossible to enter there without the help of local partners.

This help in networking is valuable for the artists and for companies representing them. For smaller bands that do not have a recording deal or even a publisher do not get much out from this project, which is understandable. Smaller bands could only get financial help for touring for example. Internationalization might be important for smaller bands to get noticed by the record companies. Doing things alone without the support of record companies shows that the band is being serious and ready to devote their own money and time for the music.

The first sub-question was about promotion. Promotion in rock and metal music exporting is mostly done in Social Media and through public relations, once again, relationships matter. Social media links the fans and bands to each other in real time. Creating fan loyalty by being active in social media is crucial. At the same time the borderline between personal and professional is fading away. In music business, this is usually not a problem for artists since they live their life for music.

Radio is another important promotion channel in Germany. Once again knowing the right people is the key to success. The printed media can still be relevant in metal music genre. The importance of printed media is probably going to decrease all the time. Vinyl LPs have come back and it is popular format at the moment, so the magazines could maybe make a comeback someday. One should never forget the power of nostalgia in music business.

The second sub-question was about the prerequisites. There were many things that affected the suitability of the applicant to be included in the Aus Finland project. Usually the overall plan about how the grant could be used affected the most. Other limitations included that the applicants had to be professional enough and the products should be Finnish.

Finnish rock and metal music has a great potential, and organizations like Music Finland do important work. The competition in the world's music market is huge. Finland is a small country and all assistance is needed to be able to compete in that market. According to Salomaa (2017), if an artist, band or company representing them is willing to invest effort to their export objectives, Music Finland is ready to help.

These kinds of projects should be implemented more and more and smaller bands could be helped. For the industry, it is important that the professionals get aid for the business and they can help their own artists that have achieved their deals. But smaller artists could be also helped in order to provide more potential artists for record companies. When a smaller band gets help for the internationalization, promotion and touring they might be able to grow their fan base to a

level where the risk of signing the band would become smaller for the record companies. This could be a benefit for both.

The German market is a good market for Finnish rock and metal. Germans are similar than Finnish people. Finnish rock and metal music is already known in the area and the co-operation with local people in the industry has already been done. The fact that the physical record sales are decreasing around the world will affect the industry even more in the future. In exporting the promotion, being active in Social Media and getting press visibility is important to find the ways of getting the music to the ears of the public.

The persistence in the export activities and creating long-term plans and relationships will able the Finnish rock and metal music to thrive around the world in the future.

Further research could include getting to know other organizations and projects that could help in music exporting from Finland, how the music promotion works in other areas, and if there is some difference in music promotion in different markets. One interesting and important issue is how an artist or a band can earn from music nowadays. How to make sure that the artists get their fair share from the distribution of their music?

Figures

Figure 1. Conceptual market selection framework (Nimble Agency 2016), p. 12

Figure 2. Marketing communication mix (Kokemuller 2016), p. 15

Figure 3. Development of the Finnish music export value (Ilmavirta & Muikku 2016), p. 18

Figure 4. Sales by format in the first half of 2016 (Jones 2016), p. 19

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Appendix 1

Interview questions

1. Why was Germany chosen as the target area for the project?
2. How active were metal and rock bands and their representatives in applying?
3. To what costs were given the most grants?
4. What issues affected the most on whether the grant was given or not?
5. What issues were discussed in the workshops?
6. What channels are important in metal and rock music marketing and promotion in Germany?
7. What marketing communication mix elements were used and most important?
8. What kind of content was created for marketing?
9. How were the results measured and what was achieved?