

**SOCIAL NETWORKING AND MUSIC: THE IMPACT OF MYSPACE AS A  
DIGITAL PLATFORM FOR DISCOVERY AND DISTRIBUTION**

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## DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation is the result of my own efforts. The various sources to which I am indebted are clearly indicated in the references in the text and in the bibliography.

I further declare that this work has never been accepted in the substance of any degree, and is not concurrently submitted in candidature for any other degree.

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## **ABSTRACT**

In a digital landscape, which acts as a catalyst for new technology, it is vital to constantly evaluate how we discover music and the platforms we use for the distribution and engagement of this popular form of entertainment. We face an age of extreme change within the music industry and it is important that we understand current trend alterations in order to perceive the future climate.

This study is an exploration into the success and potential of social networking as a platform for new music distribution and discovery. It considers that previous literature and methodologies do not ascertain reasons behind use, but predict figures without contemplation of reason or consideration of impact. Taking into consideration the current technological media climate, inclusive of debate surrounding intellectual property, copyright, piracy and open access, this dissertation reasons how a society where something is expected for nothing and a commercial industry, focused on materialistic consumer culture, can co-exist.

Through quantitative survey and qualitative interviews this research asserts that social networking could generate a strong future for the distribution of music which would help the music industry to move forward and embrace progression within traditional supply of music entertainment. With particular relation to MySpace as a tool, the study proves that both artists and consumers react positively towards the distribution and discovery of new music through social media platforms. As a result of the research findings, the study concludes that to move forward, within a technological environment in flux and escalating consumer expectancy for free and instant culture, the music industry as a whole must drive towards a media influenced by social networking and access-based business models rather than an ownership of content.

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# 1

## Introduction

### 1.1 Chosen Topic

My dissertation uses the website MySpace ([www.myspace.com](http://www.myspace.com)) to discuss how the relationship between music and social networking has resulted in a digital platform for the discovery and distribution of music. By looking at the opinions of consumers (the discoverers), artists (the distributors) I aim to cultivate and extend current discussion on the topic in academic format.

### 1.2 Background of Chosen Topic

The original ideas that instigated this dissertation were resultant of observing several key changes to a personal and social experience of music:

- An acceleration and blurring of time spent online and using social media
- A change in the way music is being distributed - increased use of social networking
- An acceleration of the Use of MySpace to discover new music
- An increase in news and online discussion about piracy and access and law.

#### 1.2.1 An Acceleration and Blurring of Time Spent Online and Using of Social Media

Throughout the last decade there have been significant changes in how we access entertainment media, yet minimal academic discussion regarding why the internet is a key player within the music entertainment field today in terms of new music acquisition. User generated information is everywhere within our internet culture and social media is at the forefront. Social media is used so frequently that, for many individuals, it has almost become synonymous with spending time online.

#### 1.2.2 A Change in the Way Music is being Distributed: Social Networking

Music companies are changing their business models and refining their skills in bringing artists to an ever more complex and sophisticated marketplace.

(IFPI 2009:3)

In an age where technology is ever changing and adapting, it is important to consider how a social networking site with an emphasis for music could ultimately become a key player for distribution in the music industry. Digital platforms now account for around 20 per cent of recorded music sales,<sup>1</sup> consequentially a successful digital platform for distribution is needed. As social networking is so popular it seems logical to combine the two, and many services already exist.<sup>2</sup>

### **1.2.3 An Acceleration of the Use of MySpace to Discover New Music**

In 2008 MySpace extended its service to include MySpace Music, offering the downloads and free streaming of full-length songs. MySpace created ties with all 4 major record companies (Sony, BMG, Universal Music Group and Warner Music)<sup>3</sup> as well as opening its uploading services to independents and perhaps more importantly the public. This allowed for a certain levelling of music culture to be accessed by millions of users demonstrating the strongest relationship a social networking site has with music.

The slogan for MySpace is '*A place for music*' - what makes MySpace unique ultimately is a social networking site utilising music rather than vice versa. It incorporated music into an established social network, reaping benefits such as an established user base and reputation.

### **1.2.4 An Increase in News and Online Discussion about Piracy and Access and Law**

After years of file sharing and the instigation of piracy the public have expected to gain music for nothing. Music, popular as ever, is being treated as if it does not belong to anyone and no one has to be paid for the creation or ownership of the work. This endangers the role of the supply and demand structure typical of the music industry (Joyce 2009).

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<sup>1</sup> IFPI (2009:4)

<sup>2</sup> Adalo Communications & Technology Services (2008) list the top ten sites, outside of MySpace as: MusoCity, Flotones, Sellaband, Last.fm, Haystack, Mercora Radio, Sonific, Midomi, MOG, iJigg.

<sup>3</sup> Locke (2008), Sandoval (2008), Andrews (2008),

### **1.2.5 Personal Enthusiasm**

Behind my motivation for this topic is a personal passion: listening to easily accessible music online and the discovery of new songs and artists. My interest is shared by many of my peers, and it was the observation of widespread utilisation of MySpace that first pointed me to the potential that social networking may have for new music acquisition.

### **1.3 Area of Research Focus**

Given the discussion above combined with a high interest of music in our culture, it is intriguing that the role and implications of using social networking sites as platforms for distribution and discovery of new music is widely overlooked in current criticism. Whilst people are aware that MySpace is used in relation to music, few people know to what extent this impacts on industry and what it potentially signifies for the future of music; the role music plays in an online culture, its distribution, the technology used to listen to it and the how this positions those within the industry. This dissertation intends to address these topics through exploration of the discovery and distribution of music on social networks, with specific reference to MySpace. The research will not only take a numerical perspective, but consider both public and industry opinion.

### **1.4 Dissertation Structure**

The content is divided into 5 chapters: Introduction, Literature Review, Methodology, Results and Discussion and finally the Conclusion. The Introduction (1) outlines the topic choice and the reasons behind it alongside a brief background. The Literature Review (2) critically explores literature surrounding the topic including: history of music, progression of the new technologies and the internet, increased use of digital platforms, implication of copyright and piracy, the role of social networking and the role of MySpace. The Methodology (3) considers research methods and gives outline of the methodology employed for research. The Results and Discussion chapter (4) details and analyses research findings gathered from the chosen methodology. The Conclusion (5) applies the findings in a wider context to realise how MySpace, social networking and more broadly, social media can be implemented in the future and what this means for current law. By way of reflection this chapter summarises the dissertation.

## **1.5 Summary**

This introduction outlined the topic for study, as well as the interest and background behind it. This included discussion of: an acceleration and blurring of time spent online and using social media, a change in the way music is being distributed - an increased use of social networking, an acceleration of the use of MySpace to discover new music and an increase in news and online discussion about piracy and access. The following section of this dissertation reviews existing literature to help gain further understanding about the topic.

# 2

## Literature Review

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to critically engage with existing literature on the subject of music and developing technologies concerning online platforms and social networking. Imminently, the review will explore the role MySpace plays within this relationship. The review will consider the progression of music regarding technology and evaluate the impact of the internet, and a history of online music distribution. Next, the role of piracy, access and rights will be examined as to provide vital understanding on positioning of the industry today. This will culminate in a discussion of how the nature of social networking promotes distribution, through analysis of usage levels, evaluation of consequences and exploration of criticism to discuss the positioning of MySpace as a key resource. After concluding the analysis of key literature and realising new areas to be discussed, a plan will be made for how to implement the research for this dissertation.

### 2.2 History of Music and Progression of Technology

The music domain has undergone metamorphosis as a result of new technological development (IFPI 2009:4): the means by which we listen to music is subject to constant change. Originally music was delivered through local performance for free, later on globalisation of technology projected music further afield. Capitalism, commercialisation and commodity culture monetised the industry causing it to flourish. Technological development enabled recorded music and radio to be delivered into peoples' homes.

The progression from vinyl, cassettes, (re-writable) record and cassette players, CDs, digital music formats (MP3s) and mini disc appliances to the personal music devices used today has transformed our participation in music culture.

## **2.3 The Progression of the Internet and its Significance Today**

As new media technologies advance, a correlation exists between how music is found and heard. The internet has implemented a huge step in technological culture and offers an extensive and competitive place for music to thrive.

### **2.3.1 Purpose of the Internet**

The internet has always been intended for distributing and sharing information. It was originally designed for exchange of military information, however now plays a part in a unique commercial arena where consumers play an active role turning culture from product to function (Joyce 2009).

Berners-Lee invented the World Wide Web (WWW) in 1989 (W3 2009). The WWW and the internet have become synonymously labelled. The WWW is referred to by many as 'the internet' today. It was produced to enhance the usability of the internet, for the decentralised spread of information and acceptance of differing formats, by linking 'hypertext' documents from a server to the user (Ibiblio 2009). It was initially intended to promote the exchange of knowledge in academic institutions, but during the 1990s its potential was seen for commercialisation and it moved into the public realm, ultimately becoming a tool for e-commerce.

### **2.3.2 Accessibility of the Internet**

The internet is prevalent within western society. It is taken for granted as part of everyday life and has become a powerful tool for "knowledge production, communication and creative expression" (Davidson et al 2008:vi). The provision of digital networking acts to support existing mainstream media, and new skills allow bottom-up distribution and ultimately a levelling of power (ibid). Those who have grown up with the internet primarily turn to it for information (Flanagin and Metzger 2008), especially young people who liken to the internet as it encompasses a decentralisation of authority (Lankes 2008).

### **2.3.3 The Internet as a Marketplace**

The internet is ubiquitous within the consumer world. According to the Global Nielsen consumer report on trends in online shopping, "the internet is no longer a niche technology – it is mass media and an utterly integral part of modern life".



Eight hundred and seventy-five million individuals have purchased something over the internet, a total of 85% of online global users - in comparison to 10% two years ago. The UK are the second largest online market (Nielsen 2008:3).

### **2.3.4 The Internet as an Outlet for Entertainment**

Owen wrote in 1999 that the internet would challenge television entertainment. This is extensively true, however Owen's analysis, merely a decade old, is outdated in its predictions for the entertainment industry. Technologies are updated at an astounding pace, defying expectations of those studying it almost immediately. Although we now realise the capabilities of the internet for entertainment, certain aspects have always been imminent, such as the offer of control (Owen 1999:10). Today audiences have increased freedom due to reduced scheduling. It is not necessary to listen to the radio to hear new music, it is possible to listen online to anything whenever and wherever. Furthermore the internet is key because it allows user based, decentralised distribution without the multiplicity of gate keeping activities which are typical of traditional technology (Steal This Film 2, 2007).

### **2.4 Increased Use of Digital Platforms to Find and Purchase Music**

Music is fundamental to culture and as the internet is regarded as an integral part of how popular culture operates it is crucial to understand how the two unify.

Joyce (2009) states that the internet is so desirable for artists due to its ability for self distribution and self sufficiency. Ultimately the internet "promotes access and awareness of new music." Amongst debates concerning the rights and wrongs of internet distribution, there is one solid truth: music is being revolutionised (Taylor 2008). Shopping trends recorded that 19% of people bought music online globally over a three month period (Nielsen 2008). The British Recorded Music Industry (BPI) have reported the UK singles market is now 95% digital (2009).

The digital music industry is increasing year on year.<sup>4</sup> To understand how we have reached the current digital music climate it is important to understand how it began.

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<sup>4</sup> In 2008 the digital music business internationally saw a sixth year of expansion, growing by an estimated 25 per cent to US\$3.7 billion in trade value" (IFPI 2009:4).

### **2.4.1 Peer-to-Peer Networking and Napster**

Peer-to-peer (P2P) networking is when computers connect without a central server allowing users to exchange and search information (TechTerms 2009). Gao et al (2003) accredit that the conception of P2P and music information retrieval to Napster's Shawn Fanning, who created the programme in January 1999 to share music tracks with his peers. An "accidental empire" rapidly grew gaining 28 million registered users to form Napster Incorporated. The company was sued by major music labels who owned copyrights and reasoned Napster was solely a means of advocating copyright infringement (Evangelista 2000). Albeit being entirely shut down in 2001 by ruling of U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, Napster has had lasting impact, implementing a desire for a new music service (more pointedly: an internet medium offering recorded music), consequentially altering the music media and regenerating supply strategies (Hong 2004). Napster revolutionised how MP3's and the internet are used. Allowing for high exchange of a large number of files, the programme fuelled global sharing of music in comparison to the traditional localised exchange of physical objects (Hall 2003).

### **2.4.2 Additional P2P Platforms**

Napster may have been the most successful but it was not the only P2P network. Other file sharing networks include: Kazaa, Gnutella and Freenet (Evangelista 2000, Gao et al).<sup>5</sup>

### **2.4.3 Commercial P2P**

The potential benefits of using P2P for legitimate file sharing were envisioned due to P2Ps success. Interest surrounding a legal business model has been given a higher profile recently. It is established that 80% of people who are currently illegally downloading would pay for legal file sharing (British Music Rights and University of Hertfordshire 2008). The Distributed Computing Industry Association (DCIA), at the Digital Music and Media Summit, Canadian Music Week 2008, discussed the potential of file sharing applications becoming saviours of the music industry, harnessing licensed distribution in a place where consumers are already looking for music, advising that P2P has:

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<sup>5</sup> Other popular examples from the Napster era include: HackSter, MyNapster, INapster, BeNapster, Macster, Gnapster, Snap, WebNap, Gnotella and MyGnut.

Approximately 55 million regular file sharers distributing 1.1 billion files monthly, which is an exponentially higher number of tracks being distributed on P2P than via iTunes.

(Lafferty 2008)

Academic research has looked to establish these ideas further.<sup>6</sup> Research has not been rigorously extended into actuality, perhaps due to music companies fearing copyright implications. Opportunity to monetise P2P has never come to fruition, although attempts have been made but, true to form, suspended after “anti-piracy” altercations (Orlowski 2009).<sup>7</sup>

## **2.5 Implicated Role of Copyright and Piracy**

Although the digital spread of music has many positives, the format has challenges; primarily the proliferation of unpaid and unlicensed online digital file-sharing.

New technology is routinely received with simultaneous excitement and weariness.<sup>8</sup> Even recorded music was initially regarded threatening within musicians’ unions (Steal This Film, 2006). Hall (2003) notes how fears of piracy circulate with every technological advance, most recently the transition from cassette/CD home recordings to MP3. The progression was not considered more threatening than its predecessors, merely an alternative way for people to share music on a small scale. The dangerous consequence of MP3 files is that they are able to be copied and distributed more quickly, frequently, cheaply and easily than any previous means, without loss of quality. In an age of copying,<sup>9</sup> restriction is exercised by way of copyright.

### **2.5.1 An Explanation of Copyright and Intellectual Property**

Copyright protects creative works from being used or copied without permission being granted from the copyright owner. Sound recordings were first protected by the Copyright Act of 1911. Today copyright automatically protects written musical works in

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<sup>6</sup> Gao et al (2003) explored how MIR could be improved on P2P networks and found it advantageous, especially with improved usability.

<sup>7</sup> ‘Virgin Music Unlimited’ - Virgin’s initiative to launch the first legal P2P file sharing service in Europe or the United States of America.

<sup>8</sup> In ‘Steal This Film 2’ (2007) Rheingold discusses a widespread resistance of new technology and Von Lohmann discusses how progression in technologies has resulted in law suits.

<sup>9</sup> Copying is central to today’s communicative existence (Liang, Steal This Film 2 2007).

any medium for 70 years after the death of the creator. Ideas are protected by intellectual property rights (Intellectual Property Office 2009).

Copyright provides the basis for record companies to invest in new music and is the mechanism through which performers and producers are rewarded for their talent (BPI 2008a).

### **2.5.2 The Impact of Napster Undermining Law**

Napster provided music for free causing “an unprecedented natural experiment of temporarily loose enforcement of copyrights” (Hong 2004). Hong explored the impact on household expenditure on music, findings suggested it is possible Napster concurred a \$2.46 drop - a 33% decrease in total recording sales in 2000. Although the finger is readily pointed at piracy we must consider alternative factors.<sup>10</sup>

### **2.5.3 Cost of Piracy Today**

Multimedia Intelligence valued piracy at \$69 billion in 2007 (fair cost per track multiplied by amount of tracks illegally shared) and predicted an increase of 400% over the next 5 years (Soulxctc 2007a). The BPI state that copyright infringement will cost the UK music community an estimated £200 million in 2009 (2009a).

The Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) equate piracy to theft and reinforce it is not victimless - affecting everybody from artist to sound technician. With approximate total losses of \$12.5 billion (including 71,060 U.S. job cuts and a \$2.7 billion loss of earnings) the RIAA believe the “pirate marketplace currently far dwarfs the legal marketplace.” The association advocate that piracy jeopardises funding for new music and is unnecessary with “ten million licensed tracks available on more than 400 different services worldwide” (RIAA 2009).

It is important to note that these official voices may exaggerate or interpret figures projecting piracy negatively as it is their aim to eliminate it.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Sales had previously fluctuated during the convergence from LPs to CDs in the 1990s and had likely dropped as people accomplished transferring personal collections. Prices has also been slashed throughout the entertainment industry. Hall (2003) also concurs the downfall due to “Napster Effect” and completed replacement of vinyl, and additionally contributed escalated use of CD re-rewriting machines.

<sup>11</sup> “A war on profit is a war to preserve profit” (Steal This Film 2006).

## **2.5.4 Government Intervention**

Geoff Taylor, BPI chief executive, states:

Copyright is the core driver of creativity, and Britain needs a strong copyright framework to provide the right conditions for British music to thrive.

(BPI 2008a)

The British Government implemented measures in support of anti-piracy that included a consideration of copyright extension to 95 years and a recent partnership with internet service providers (ISPs).<sup>12</sup> Other techniques i.e. digital rights management (DRM) have had less impact and received huge negativity, resulting in its removal in 2009 by music industry leaders such as from iTunes by Apple (Apple 2009).

## **2.5.5 The Pirate Bay**

BitTorrent, is a protocol used in P2P sharing to distribute data, a torrent is a file which holds information about what is being shared - this information is also known as metadata. Some websites track these torrents to promote file sharing activities and facilitate 'piracy.' 'The Pirate Bay', is a popular Swedish torrent hosting site. On 17 April 2009 four members<sup>13</sup> of this torrent hosting site were sentenced to one year imprisonment and given a \$3.6m (£2.4m) fine under the Intellectual Property Rights Enforcement Directive (iPRED). They were accused of making illegal files obtainable for sharing. Those prosecuted believe the case was brought to court by industry leaders as a means of scaring the public (Kiss 2009). By way of resistance The Pirate Bay set up a virtual private network service, 'iPREDator', to hide peoples torrent activity (Kdawson 2009a). A site (<http://ipredkoll.se>) has also been constructed to check if people are being watched by authorities (Kdawson 2009b).

## **2.5.6 Can Piracy be Eradicated?**

Even if some people are 'brought to justice' there will ultimately be replacement programmes for file sharing as it would be impossible to close them all down (Evangelista 2000). It is therefore not realistic to entirely wipe piracy out, but instead bring it to a manageable level of control so a legitimate marketplace can flourish (RIAA 2009).

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<sup>12</sup> Beavis (2008) estimates the joint intervention could exterminate three quarters of illegal file sharers and the BPI believe this will provide crucial help in the battle against file sharing (2008c).

<sup>13</sup> Peter Sunde, Fredrik Neij, Gottfrid Svartholm and Carl Lundström.

File sharing is attributed to causing endemic piracy. Lessig (2004) determines that although file sharing single handedly drove internet usage forward it will one day be defunct. As new models develop and the industry is revolutionised, piracy may become less prominent.

### **2.5.7 Is Copyright and Intellectual Property Law Relevant Today?**

While big business and anti-piracy groups hype positivity surrounding copyright, there are views which suggest it is becoming obsolete in its current form.

It is considered that copyright has escaped its original purpose of protecting creativity and now exists to reward big business (Schijndel and Smiers 2006: pp.3-4). Similarly it is suggested intellectual property law retains the same fate – used by monopolies portraying selfish “rent-seeking behaviour” (Boldrin and Levine 2008:3).

Vaidhyathan (2003) suggests that although intellectual property law is constantly updated it always falls short of progression in culture and technology, concluding that intellectual property does not expand creativity and is not necessary to protect the right of the creator (ibid:7). Furthermore, Feigenbaum and Miller (2002) suggest that copying is vital for use in a digital environment and does not equal attempt to violate law, branding copyright obsolete in its current form. Hall (2008) concurs, insinuating all digital material is in fact a ‘pirate’ copy in itself.

Perhaps consequential of such discussion, Epema et al (2008,) predict that music industry income is likely to decrease in the future as P2P becomes more popular than traditional means of distribution and consequentially that backlash of lawsuits against P2P will ultimately result in a lack of creativity. They suggest that there is an immediate need to change copyright laws and that if this does not occur, laws will be unable to be handled in the future.

Overall, as Lessig outlined, the internet is in flux and should not be regulated but nurtured, instead working to reduce the negative outcomes that may occur (2004:323). Because the popularity of file sharing will diminish there is little viability in changing the law to suit the current climate but work to ensure artists get fairly paid (ibid:298).

### 2.5.8 Artist Opinion

The Featured Artist Coalition, founded in 2008, expresses artist concerns as resultant from the digital environment. The alliance aims to harness the control born from a new music climate to ensure fair practice by the record industry and digital distributors. Members want rights put in place that include fair compensation for their work.<sup>14</sup>

Increasingly individual musicians have taken a stance against the industry,<sup>15</sup> some having publicly challenged authorities.<sup>16</sup>

### 2.5.9 Free Culture and Open Access...Can Piracy be Positive?

For the last sixty years, capitalism has run a pretty tight ship in the West. But in increasing numbers, pirates are hacking into the hull and holes are starting to appear. Privately owned property, ideas, and privileges are leaking out into the public domain beyond anyone's control.

(Mason 2004:3)

According to Mason (2004) piracy may alter capitalism yet fundamentally it acts to support the mass market.<sup>17</sup> He advocates that open source technologies are as successful as current governmental and free market at "generating money, efficiency, creativity, and social progress" (Mason 2004:231). Open access and free content may also increase democratisation. Hall refers to the free sharing of goods as "software Communism" (Hall 2003). In his lecture, 'Pirate Philosophy' (2008) Hall promotes the

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<sup>14</sup> The Featured Artists Coalition state artists wish copyright to be licensed to record companies rather than signed over to them in entirety and that they want to be ensured they will receive royalties. Ultimately, as performers, they want to be treated like authors.

<sup>15</sup> Courtney Love (2000) spoke at the Digital Hollywood Online Entertainment Conference concerning artists being taken advantage of by their record labels. Love complemented the digital marketplace stating it gives artists options to distribute their work.

<sup>16</sup> In a landmark case Radiohead are rumoured set to testify against the RIAA (Ernesto 2009).

<sup>17</sup> Comparing pirates to "offshore radio DJs", Mason suggests they create lawless turmoil to ultimately augment a better society - pirates are unafraid to champion alternative ideas, obeying rules to benefit them and their peers, increasing creativity.

free promotion of knowledge, and his theories can be widely applied to the music industry.<sup>18</sup>

Joyce (2009) discusses how sales of physical music are elevated by the provision of free music online, advocating that CD sales have not fallen due to their individual assets. Ridiculing the exaggerated negativity surrounding music piracy, Hall (2008) uses irony to comparatively state “home cooking is ruining the restaurant industry.”

### **2.5.10 The Future of the Music Industry - A Dual Existence?**

It is recognised that the music industry may be more focused on the past than the future. Cellan Jones (2008a) suggests companies should endeavour to assist new digital utilities rather than “lobbying to protect and extend its analogue rights.” The record companies need to be innovative because people can easily replicate what they are selling currently (Ziemann 2003).

Joyce (2009) contemplates a time when art was considered a free, shared culture and envisions the internet can redeem this again. Today, as a result of the internet, music is seen as a free and unlimited entity. There is potential for music to lead a two part existence, both as a commodity in the commercial industry and as a free part of culture in the public realm (Manson 2008).

It is important to work towards models which allow, without piracy, a place for fair music distribution supported by the industry and accepted by consumers.

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<sup>18</sup> Hall suggests the circulation of knowledge could work in an open access model. He evaluates the potential and effects of free content within academia, but many of his theories could be applied to music distribution. He discusses the moral implications of a responsibility of fair distribution and how a break down of barriers between to create a healthy democratic sphere. It could be argued that the monetary restrictions enforced by large commercial record companies are at a disadvantages to those who do not have the financial support to engage with music as fully as they wish. Hall suggests a gift economy whereby knowledge and goods can circulate without cost rather than be commodities. Providing insightful figures to back his arguments, such as, it is between 2 and 4 times more likely for research published open access to be read or cited. If applied to music the ability of free listening may strongly act to support income. Hall also discusses as a new generation competent with technology evolves that new future revolving around decentralised digital distribution will be increasingly evident.



## **2.6 Role of Social Networking in Future Music Landscape**

Social networking, as a new distribution method, offers an innovative way for access to music with many advantages outside of P2P. It offers free exchange of information with charges and legalities in the right places.

### **2.6.1 P2P and Social Networks**

As P2P was popular of its time, so is social networking today - a new relationship formed, born from the combination of the internet environment and a love of music. It seems natural that people using social networking to communicate with peers will incorporate into communication discussion of their taste. Therefore it is wise to have music available to audience.

Social media is now identified by record companies as a vital part of their income. Van Buskirk (2009) and Wallis (2001) promote P2P as a learning curve and suggest features used in social media today were originally created using the distribution technology.<sup>19</sup> Eric Garland,<sup>20</sup> agrees "file sharing ended up being the blueprint", educating users to look for data and instructing the content industry to address networks before users (Van Buskirk 2009).

### **2.6.2 Distribution through Social Networking**

Social networks are fundamentally changing the way we discover, purchase and use music. The dynamics of democratisation, word of mouth recommendation and instant purchase challenge the established order and offer huge opportunities to forward-thinking businesses.

Russell Hart, chief executive of Entertainment Media Research (Soulxtr 2007b)

Webb (2006) acknowledges social networking sites, including MySpace, as "key vehicles for discovering new music." Grimsditch, strategy director at a music strategy

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<sup>19</sup> These include "several aspects of Napster and other early, rogue file sharing networks: buddy lists, user uploads, filtering content by user, viral marketing, ad-supported content and the potential of mining valuable data."

<sup>20</sup> (Chief executive of 'BigChampagne', a company measuring popularity of media on file sharing networks).

agency, interviewed by Webb, agrees social networks are important gateways to music discovery, allowing social recommendation through global connection.

The use of social networking mirrors how people share music outside of digital realms: recommending and exchanging music to discover new music. The music industry is “commercially licensing many of the most popular channels of music discovery” and social networking, namely MySpace, has undergone a key transformation (IFPI 2009:5).

Taylor (2008) agrees that social networks allow music to be widely distributed with more ease and less expense than physical distribution but advocates that just being part of a scene does not mean you will gain success. Taylor, the chief executive of BPI, describes the advance to digital media as “evolution not revolution” (2007).<sup>21</sup>

**2.6.3 Usage Figures**

The figures regarding social networking as a platform for new music are particularly beneficial to this review. The Digital Entertainment Survey, conducted by the Entertainment Media Research Company (EMRC) and Wiggin (2009) is perhaps the most poignant indicator to the current digital music climate.<sup>22</sup> The research realises that social networking is used frequently and in relation to music ref. figure 2.6.3a.

*FIGURE 2.6.3a - Usage of Social Networks and Music Streaming Services*

	Percentage of use			
Activity	Regularly	Occasionally	Rarely	Total Usage
Browse Social Networking Sites	34	23	15	72
Stream Music From Social Networking Sites	12	16	17	45

(EMRC and Wiggin 2008:8)

<sup>21</sup> Taylor realises that it is easier for established artists rather than emerging talent to take advantage of digital platforms for promotion and points out that although bands such as the Arctic Monkeys and Lily Allen appeared to use websites such as MySpace to gain fame, they were in fact already being marketed in the traditional sense by record labels.

<sup>22</sup> The online survey was undertaken by 1, 608 participants in the United Kingdom and is representative of the national demographic.

The usage of social networking disseminates how popular social networking is within entertainment today (EMR and Wiggin 2008). It is clear social networking has grounds for becoming an orthodox means for distribution. 27% of those surveyed see social networks as a “potential main way to access music/video” (ibid:12). Ref. 2.3.6b

FIGURE 2.3.6b - Active Search and Purchase of New Music on Social Networking

Activity	Percentage of use				
	Regularly	Occasionally	Rarely	No but Interested to Start	Total + Future Potential
Searched for New Music	11	19	18	11	59
Searched for Music to Purchase	6	15	14	14	49
Purchased song/album discovered or recommended by a friend on social networking	5	13	14	18	50

(EMRC and Wiggin 2008:15)

It is clear from figure 2.3.6b that social networking could use its popularity to distribute music and holds increasing potential as a popular means of doing so in the future. In the future the survey foresees a 1 in 6 increase of usage and states that almost a third of current users will not change their current activity (ibid:113).<sup>23</sup>

Interestingly, the research proposes that younger generations are more likely to embrace social networking as a means to deliver content. It is clear music companies should target youth markets to substantiate a stable future in social media distribution.

<sup>23</sup> 29% of current users would never/hate to stop (EMR and Wiggin 2008:113).

## 2.7 MySpace as a Key Distribution Platform

One of the most predominant players combining music and social networking is MySpace.<sup>24</sup> Owned by News Corporation, MySpace has “over twenty-five localised websites, in countries including, India, Brazil and Australia” (Andrews 2008). It is widely observed that MySpace has altered today’s music landscape, with artists often valuing their profile higher than an official website (Mason 2008).

Orlowski (2008a) declares MySpace, “backed by the cross-media muscle of Rupert Murdoch's media empire”, is aiming to be the ‘internet’s MTV’ and estimates the site’s value at \$2 billion. Although MySpace may not be the most popular social networking site, ref figure 2.7, its users are most affiliated with having a love of music, attracting a considerable amount of young people who embody this enthusiasm compared to other social networks (Beaumont 2008). The MySpace Music model is at the forefront in the revolution of music distribution.<sup>25</sup>

Figure 2.7 - Top Social Networking Sites

Website	Usage				Percentage	
	Have Profile	Yes, Browse	No, Do Not Use	Never Heard Of It	Actual Usage	Recognition Level
FaceBook	55	16	23	6	71	94
MySpace	39	23	31	7	62	93
Friends Reunited	36	21	33	10	57	90
YouTube	32	46	17	5	78	95
Bebo	24	15	46	15	39	85

(Entertainment Media Research and Wiggin 2008:114)

<sup>24</sup> “Twenty to thirty per cent of MySpace US monthly traffic in 2007 was made up of music destination unique visitors.” Michael Nash, Executive Vice President, Digital Strategy & Business Development, Warner Music Group (IFPI 2009:11).

<sup>25</sup> The partnership with MySpace is another sign that the music industry has decided to embrace the web and digital technology instead of waging war against it (Sandoval 2008).

### **2.7.1 MySpace Music**

The study of MySpace is particularly prevalent, as the company have recently announced the extension of MySpace Music recently, in 2008. Influential partnerships have been made with key players in the entertainment industry (Sony, BMG, Universal Music Group and Warner Music) to offer the downloading and streaming of full-length songs (Locke 2008). The site proved popular from its release<sup>26</sup> and has been accredited success due to its large established user base (Kiss 2008).

DeWolfe, MySpace chief executive lists how MySpace “creates an entirely new business model for the music industry.” He describes MySpace as a rich, user defined approach to discover and listen to full tracks for free online, which can then be downloaded if a user wants full access. DeWolfe implies this also monetises the industry, offering a ‘360 degree music experience’ by incorporating extra information such as tour dates and band information alongside tracks as well as engaging several revenue outputs. The site currently has 110 million unique users per month (ibid 2008).

### **2.7.2 MySpace and Open Access**

MySpace allows open music sampling (IFPI 2009:11), which is then hoped to lead on to sales. This demonstrates the dual existence of open access and commercialism, as aforementioned, in action.

As JayCross (2006) determines finding a new band through a P2P service may involve keying a broad search term and choosing a “file that looks vaguely interesting” whereas MySpace, in effect, allows you to ‘try before you buy’, with added extras of photographs, band description and an insight into other fans.

### **2.7.3 Majors, Indies, Everybody**

There are criticisms that MySpace is not as democratic as it appears, and antitrust questions have arisen and although MySpace are looking to firm relations some consumers are displeased with rumours of independent companies being left out of the running unable to upload songs (Houghton 2008, Orlowski 2008a).

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<sup>26</sup> The service generated more than one billion streams and in the first month (IFPI 2009:11).

As reports unfold about more independent signings, Courtney William Holt, MySpace Music President, stated the “partnerships will allow the MySpace Music community to access even more of their favourite independent music whilst enabling monetisation opportunities for the newly licensed artists” (Cited in Crum 2009). Artists are becoming MySpace savvy to compete with established acts.<sup>27</sup>

Rosoff (2008a) discusses how MySpace is indispensable for independent artists, and how it proved successful in his circumstance.<sup>28</sup> Rosoff believes a network like MySpace has been awaited:

The music industry needs to go where their fans already are, and with 30 million people regularly listening to music on the site, it's a mystery why the labels haven't tried to reach these folks before now.

## **2.8 Summary**

This literature review explored the progression of music and how new technologies, inclusive of the internet, have evolved and affected traditional distribution methods. The impact of piracy on the music industry was also considered. Particular interest was given to social networking and ultimately the positioning and utilisation of MySpace within the current climate. The review established that social networks, inclusive of MySpace, are important devices for distributing music today, as forward looking platforms competing with P2P and consequentially reducing piracy. There is little detailing the use of MySpace itself existent, rather statements of usage levels-acts and figures giving quantitative evidence with no qualitative backing. This is concerning because big firms conducting research (e.g. IFPI, EMRC and Wiggin) may have ulterior motives: using numerical evidence to promote certain industry ‘facts’ which ultimately secure future income. Similarly, as there is lack of wide academic research regarding this recent topic, generalisations about the current state of the music industry may be jaded by the opinions of those in power. My research therefore aimed to discover not only unbiased evidence about usage but a discuss why distribution of music through

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<sup>27</sup> Freeman (2007) discusses how artists can actively maximise chances of fans finding music on MySpace through exploitation of the search engines, for example, recording a cover of a song by a more famous band, allowing the track name to be associated with the bands MySpace page.

<sup>28</sup> “Every band I've played with in the last five years has had a MySpace page, and it completely changed how we did things compared with the pre-Internet days. Getting gigs, maintaining mailing lists, flyering--all of those formerly labour intensive tasks could be accomplished by sitting in front of a computer. One group I played with got 90 percent of our gigs through other bands on our friends list. Another had a couple dozen teenage fans who'd come to every all-ages show when they read about it on our MySpace page.”

social networking is used and consider whether it has future potential. An exploration of views from both the industry and consumers alike was implemented to offer deep examination alongside fair judgement.

# 3

## Methodology

### 3.1 Introduction

The following is an outline of the methodological framework employed for this dissertation which aims to position the reader suitably for understanding the conditions from which the outcome of the later results are constructed.

After considering the literature reviewed, a choice and combination of methodologies was decided upon, aiming to fill gaps within current research through engagement with the chosen research questions. This chapter explains the choice and implementation of these chosen methodologies, inclusive of a brief discussion of the defining attributes and limitations. Clarification of sampling criteria used to confine the dissertation topics to a manageable size is also included alongside a critique of the overall methodology design.

### 3.2 Research Question

Bearing in mind the theory and literature discussed, the following research question aims to outline the major discussion at the forefront for answering the overarching discussion driving this dissertation:

**How and why do consumers and artists use the social networking site MySpace for the distribution and discovery of music?**

This statement acts as umbrella for several considerations:

- Are people interested in discovering new music?
- What are the benefits of using social networks in relation to music?
- What does MySpace offer as a digital platform that traditional methods do not?
- Can MySpace create revenue for the music industry?
- Is it possible for free music to generate income?



Which will hopefully discover and explain:

- The role music plays in an online culture
- The impact of MySpace and social networking
- What this signifies for the future of music distribution, with consideration to the role of artists and record companies.

### **3.3 General Approach**

As realised in the literature review, an independent academic study evaluating the use of MySpace as a distribution platform does not exist. The quantitative research circulating may not be entirely legitimate as it may suffer from industry leader bias. Current qualitative viewpoints are not resultant of academic enquiry but from online opinion and discussion. There is no current methodology combining qualitative and quantitative research to realise the figures behind social network implementing the discovery and distribution of music, and the reasons as to how and why it is used so this is where this research sits. Evidence found from the quantitative research is intended to be an independent and academic baseline for a qualitative exploration of peoples' deeper opinions.

Initially I took a positivist role, seeking empirical answers to gain generalist data although ultimately I did not seek empirical answers, but aimed to take an ontological and constructivist approach to establish how and why people use MySpace, rather than simply stating that usage exists. Silverman (2000:1) states, that although quantitative and qualitative methodologies can be seen as two sides of the same coin, it is best to focus most strongly on the side that exposes your study most precisely. This considered, I mainly used qualitative methods from an epistemological position to explore how and why social networking is impacting on the way we find music. I was not interested in falsifying hypotheses, but discussing processes and contexts, creating grounded theory within my study.

### **3.4 Quantitative Research**

Quantitative research is measured numerically<sup>29</sup> and often in survey format. It aims to be public, objective, empirical, systematic and cumulative (David and Mosdell 2006:11-12). I felt it was important to address the research, at least in certain parts,

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<sup>29</sup> Gunter (2002:210)

from this angle. Although quantitative research may not provide in depth insight, it stipulates a view of a wider consensus and information which would not be attainable by looking at individual responses. Thus information attained from quantitative research can allow for generalisation and comparison on a large scale. Quantitative research eliminates individual bias by examining broader more unified ideas representative of the topic as a whole. Quantitative research will assist in showing the trends within social networking and MySpace to date, as well as projecting thoughts of the future of the social medium in relation to music.

### **3.5 Qualitative Research**

Qualitative research aims to see from the position of those studied (Davies and Mosdell 2006:13). It acts to understand experience, context, and process to create casual explanation. Through qualitative study theory can be generated, and new phenomenon or influences realised (Maxwell 1998). Interviews are considered the best way to extract qualitative information (Altheide 1996, Deacon et al 1999, Lindlof 1995, Silverman 2000). Qualitative research will assist in giving reasons behind why MySpace is used.

### **3.6 Qualitative and Quantitative Methods Combined**

A multmodal method was employed to gather data, which will hopefully have produced a strong rationale as strengths and weaknesses of both qualitative and quantitative study can be realised. According to Glaser and Strauss (1967:17) the methods should present no fundamental clash. It is suggested that combining the methods research can achieve more comprehensible and balanced results (Jenson 2002, Wimmer and Dominick 2000).

The implementation of the two methodologies allow for a more sound conclusion. Results can be discussed and compared from both methods. This is known as triangulation. It is advocated that triangulation should be widely used.<sup>30</sup> With this in mind, a quantitative study was designed to gain facts and grow to incorporate a qualitative angle to find the reason behind the facts found to reveal how and why MySpace is used for the discovery and distribution of new music.

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<sup>30</sup> Denscombe (1998:133-4)

## **3.7 Survey**

### **3.7.1 Sampling for survey**

Cluster sampling<sup>31</sup> was used, selecting respondents according to a specific criterion<sup>32</sup> to gain the best possible ratio of respondent to topic knowledge. In this case social network users were more beneficial to research objectives. Snowball sampling<sup>33</sup> was utilised, by asking the recipients of the survey to pass it on to others, especially those with an interest in the topic.

### **3.7.2 Survey Pilot**

The survey was piloted to ensure it was concise yet understandable for somebody outside of the research to complete. I asked four people, chosen through convenience sampling, to give preliminary answers to the questionnaire which resulted in the word order changing and the structure of the questionnaire being modified. Word changes were made and scales changed to ensure clarification of meaning.

### **3.7.3 Guidelines for Survey**

The questionnaire was partly implemented in a qualitative manner but only as a self reflexivity tool to gain information about its success.

See Appendix A.

The main body of the questionnaire was executed as quantitative, aiming to gather information about those participating in the study. The design predominantly featured closed questions, advocating that the respondent specified a singular response.<sup>34</sup>

To prevent false answers, options such as 'do not know' were incorporated. Not wanting to inflict bias, and to encourage respondents to be more specific in their answers an option of 'other' was provided. This allowed participants to suggest other options that may have been omitted from the design. This was important given the newness and uncertainty surrounding the topic area.

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<sup>31</sup> Deacon et al (2007:50)

<sup>32</sup> Gunter (2002:216)

<sup>33</sup> Deacon et al (2007:54)

<sup>34</sup> A combination of likert scales, semantic difference scales, checklists were used.

The survey was broken down into sections which were easily omitted if not relevant: a mandatory section about personal data and preferences, followed by sections regarding social networking, MySpace and MySpace artist profiles.

See Appendix B.

### **3.7.4 Implementation of Survey**

The web application 'Google-Docs' was used in order to make the online self completion questionnaire. The results were stored here in a spreadsheet format which could be shared with others, and that was later summarised by conversion into charts.

The questionnaire was distributed via a Facebook group page, a MySpace bulletin, through the Cardiff School of Journalism undergraduates and a cultural studies mailing list (Cultstud-L).<sup>35</sup> Brief information was given to outline the project, which also allowed choice of participation, and a link was given to the online questionnaire. One hundred and sixty-nine questionnaire responses were gathered.

### **3.7.5 Advantages and Limitations of Surveys**

Participants were under no pressure, and could provide answers in their own time. This promoted a more relaxed atmosphere, thus there was a higher likelihood that honest opinions would be given. Distributing the survey online enabled zero cost or geographical limitation or influence of bias from the researcher. Nevertheless, questions can be answered carelessly if there is no pressure and done so regardless of order, which is disadvantageous when the survey has been designed to not prime the respondent. Questionnaires may be forgotten about or returned too slowly, to minimise this polite reminders were sent out. Another disadvantage is that questions may not be understood, therefore a contact was provided for further assistance. Hosting the survey on a third-party server, 'Google-Docs', was noted as a potential risk, although the risk was minimised by checking at regular intervals.

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<sup>35</sup> WWW: <http://www.comm.umn.edu/~grodman/cultstud/>

### **3.8 Interviews**

The use of qualitative interviewing aimed to look more deeply within the numerical patterns found within the preceding quantitative numerical data relations and see, from the interviewee's perspective, what the artist thinks about the distribution and discovery of music on MySpace.

#### **3.8.1 Sampling for Interviews**

Given the specificity of the research it was important to target people who would have knowledge and insight surrounding the subject. It is acknowledged by Warren (2001) that finding participants key to the research area is a good technique. As suggested by Deacon et al (2007:54), non random, theoretical sampling was used to source people with knowledge and experience in the area of music distribution who could support or challenge assumptions.

#### **3.8.2 Pilot Interview**

Using convenience sampling, a pilot interview was given to someone who had experience as an artist. Response suggested there were too many questions, and this may put respondents off. The interview was restructured according to have fewer questions, which had to be worded to gain as broad a response as possible.

#### **3.8.3 Guidelines for Interviews**

Asynchronous semi-structured online interviews were chosen. This method is executed by the interviewer sending questions to the interviewee/s who then return responses (Deacon et al 2007:68). Semi-structured interviews encouraged the respondent to broaden answers, the unrestricted format allowing thought to develop on a personal level to draw meaning of "described phenomena" (Kvale 1996:6).

Open ended questions were used to gain the most out of the semi structured interview and to enable opportunity for extension if the participant was willing. Davies and Mosdell (2006:33) believe open-ended questions incorporate qualitative results. When saturation point was reached in responses to common opinion was established, however unique and individual responses were also encouraged with the last question asking if there were any further comments.

See Appendix C.

### **3.8.4 Implementation of Interviews**

I did not expect to get a high response rate from bands so I sent seven questions to fifty bands which I knew used MySpace, as well as asking people I knew if they could provide contacts.

A message was sent, which included a brief outline, to both the artists' MySpace mail account and another email address if one could be acquired. The questions were provided within the email itself and in the style of a survey, designed to make responding effortless. In certain cases the respondents directly answered through the online form, in other cases the answers were sent by email and in one instance the questionnaire lead to further deeper discussion about the role of MySpace over several emails.

### **3.8.5 Critique of Advantages and Limitations of Interviewing**

Interviews are advantageous as they yield a "wealth of detail" (Wimmer & Dominick 2000:122), although a limitation is that people may not say exactly what they think. Interviews can also be affected by the interaction of the interviewer and the interviewee. Face to face interviews may have been most beneficial, however due to limitations such as location, consequential travel expense and time limitations these could not be executed. The implementation of online distribution was free and provided a permanent record of my findings.

### **3.9 Ethical Implications**

This research project does not give cause for many concerns regarding ethical implications as care was taken to follow official guidelines.<sup>36</sup>

The main issue was that using information given by artists may affect their future career. I felt it was important use names as an established artists' opinion my hold more weight than that of a smaller local band. The British Psychological Society (2009) state "information obtained about a participant during an investigation is confidential unless otherwise agreed in advance, so I included an option to remain anonymous, which was only used by one respondent.

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<sup>36</sup> Which state; consent must be given, the participant must not be deceived, misled or uninformed, they must have the right to confidentiality and option to withdraw from the research (British Psychological Society 2009).

### **3.10 Overall Critique**

The respondents may have been affected by social desirability, giving answers they feel are required rather than what they really feel. However, because the discussion concerns a personal issue at the forefront of their success, (ultimately the distribution of intellectual property), they may be more likely to give honest and true opinions.

Rationalism argues that as we are socially constructed we cannot disengage from a study and not everything can be observed. Therefore endeavour to separate personal beliefs from research was necessary. Every care was taken through wording and ordering of questions to not condition or lead participants' opinion but discover it.

It was important to restrain my research due to time limits, this was challenging considering my aim, however I feel the combination of the chosen methodologies allowed the research to progress in ways that other methodologies may have missed.

### **3.11 Summary**

Through the combination and utilisation of the chosen methodologies I feel I was able to provide a wider perspective into my research than if alternative methods had been chosen. The surveys provided not only results that could be quantified and evaluated, but provided a qualitative way of gaining insight to consumers' opinions. The long interviews allowed me to gain qualitative information from artists using MySpace. The individual merits from each choice ultimately allowed me to gather the results and undertake the analysis manifested in the next chapter. This will hopefully help me to discover more about this trend within the current media climate.

# 4

## Results and Discussion of Findings

### 4.1 Introduction

The following chapter will clearly detail the results of both the quantitative and qualitative research; the questionnaire and interviews respectively. It will continue to discuss the reported findings in detail and relation to one another. Ultimately an overview of the research will be provided in context within the debate surrounding the subject as a whole.

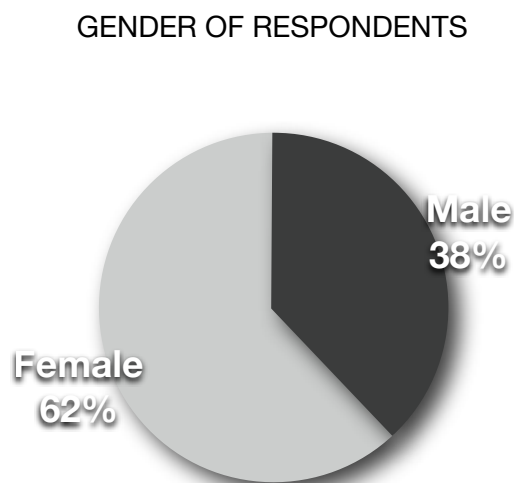
### 4.2 Survey: Quantitative Findings

The survey results provided interesting views from consumers of music. There were 169 respondents.

#### 4.2.1 Respondent Details

##### 4.2.1.1 Gender

*Figure 4.2.1.1*



There were a total of 104 female and 65 male respondents. There is a clear female majority. This may suggest that females are more likely to fill out online surveys.



**4.2.1.2 Age**

*Figure 4.2.1.2*

AGE OF RESPONDENTS

<b>Age</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage of Respondents</b>
16 or Under	1	1
17-20	46	46
21-23	51	30
24-26	14	8
27-29	5	3
30+	20	12

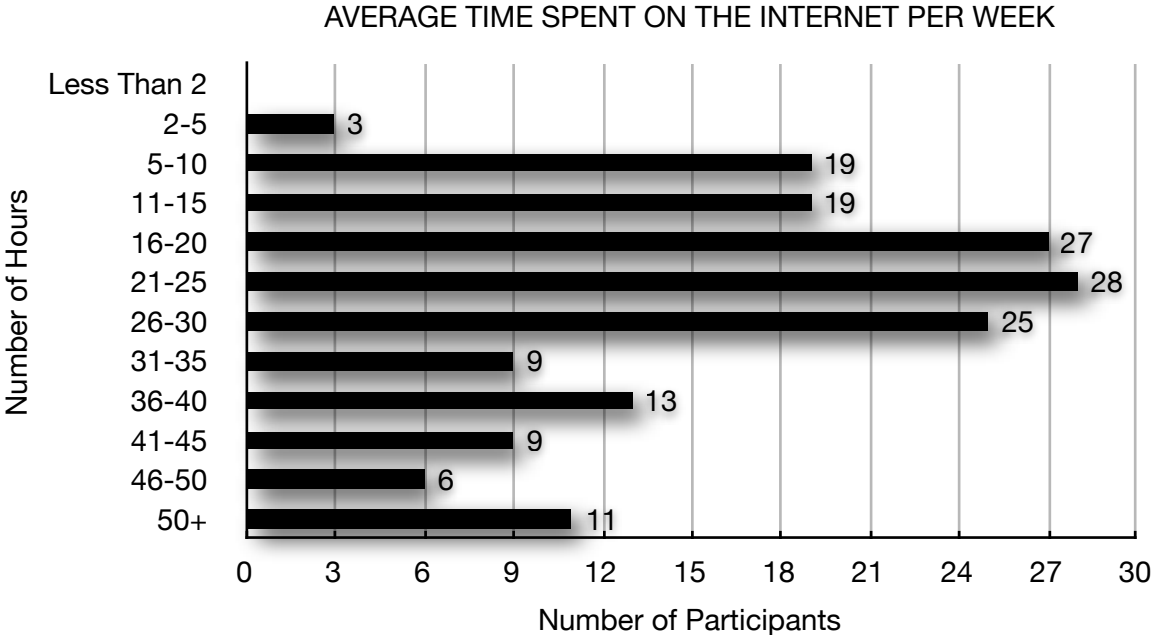
The respondent age was largely young: between 17 and 23. This was not problematic as the research expressed the views of those who social networking is most associated with (this was foreseen hence age breakdown stopped at 30). The findings are somewhat balanced and supported by 23% of more mature respondents. The research reflects the opinions of a generation for which social networking is aimed at.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> As social networking is a recent phenomenon for music distribution, the industry is likely to want to examine the views of younger people to progress usage in its product. Young people are most accepting of change and if usage is established early they may remain loyal to the distribution methods.

4.2.1.3 Internet Usage

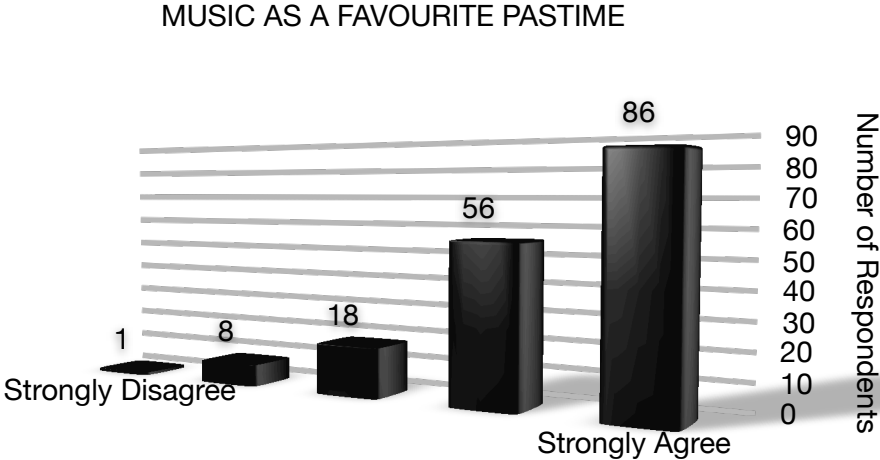
Figure 4.2.1.3



Most respondents (70%) spend between 5 and 30 hours on the internet weekly. The peak usage is between 16-30 hours. All participants used the internet with only 2% spend less than 2 hours online. The average time spent on the internet is approximately 24.5 hours. This suggests that the internet is omnipresent in peoples' lives, whether it be more at a low or high level.

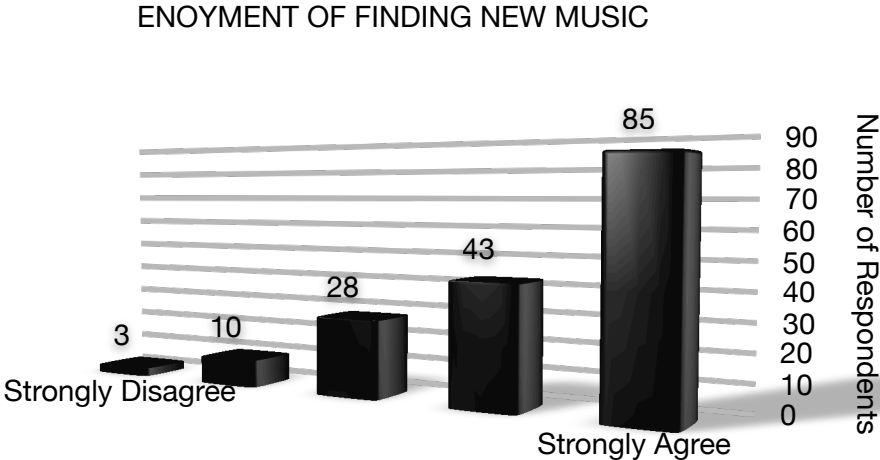
4.2.1.4 Enjoyment of Music Entertainment

Figure 4.2.1.4a



84% of respondents highly rate music as one of their favourite pastimes.

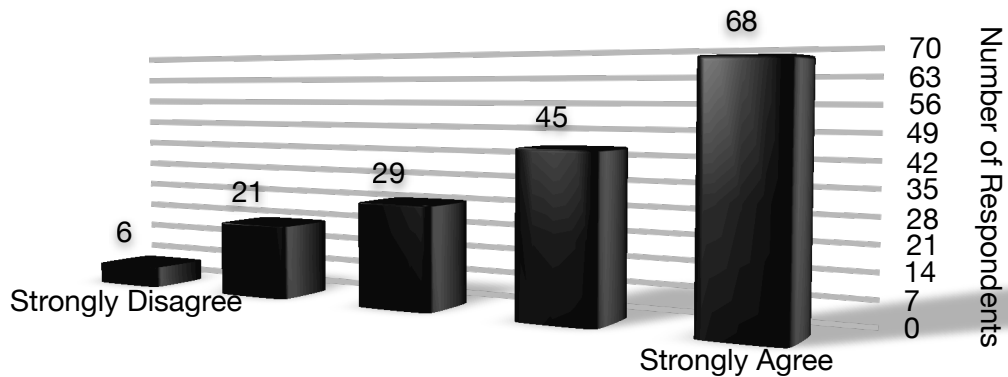
Figure 4.2.1.4b



75% of respondents agree they enjoy finding new music.

Figure 4.2.1.4c

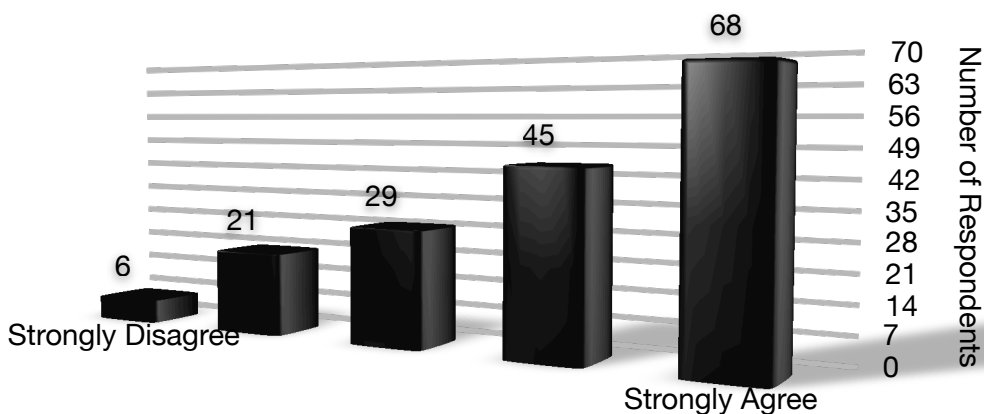
ENJOYMENT OF ATTENDING GIGS BY BANDS NOT SEEN LIVE PREVIOUSLY



65% of respondents enjoy finding new music, attending gigs performed by bands they have not seen live previously and 84% listing music as a favourite pastime the popularity of music is evident.

Figure 4.2.1.4d

ENJOYMENT OF RECOMMENDING NEW MUSIC TO OTHERS



67% of respondents enjoy recommending new music to others.

With over two-thirds of respondents enjoying attending new gigs, finding and recommending new music, and over four-fifths of people listing music as a favourite pastime interest in music is still sustained. It is vital to consider how access is gained to music to understand how the relationship between consumer and industry can be best achieved.

## 4.2.2 Social Networking

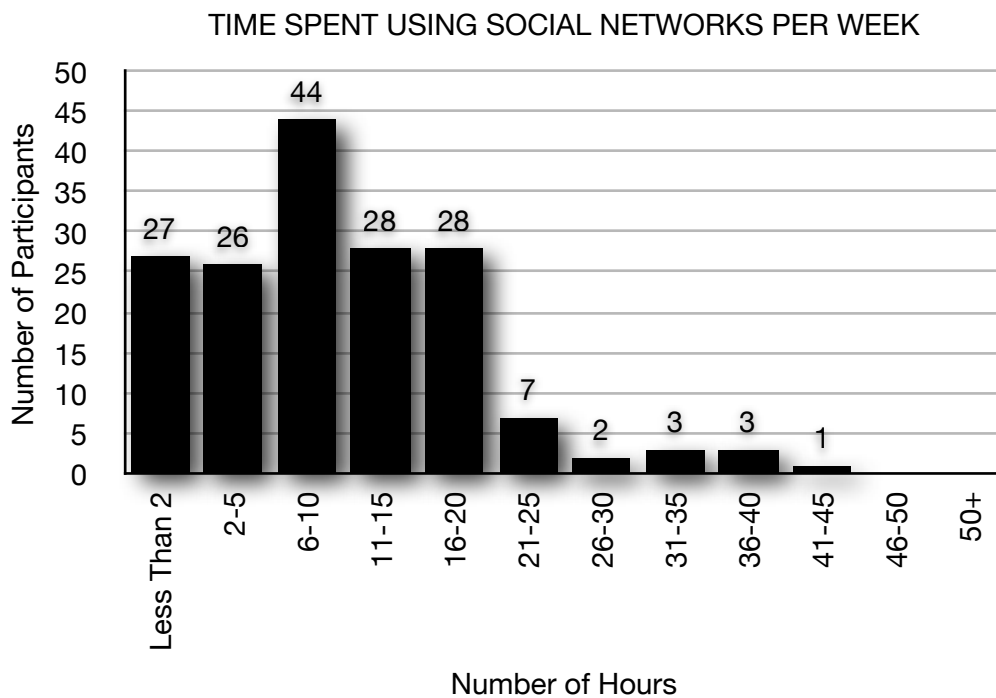
### 4.2.2.1 Use of Social Networking

Figure 4.2.2.1a

Number of participants that <b>use</b> social networking whilst online	168
Number of participants that <b>do not use</b> social networking whilst online	1

Social networks are used extensively with more than 99% of respondents using them when online.<sup>38</sup>

Figure 4.2.2.1b



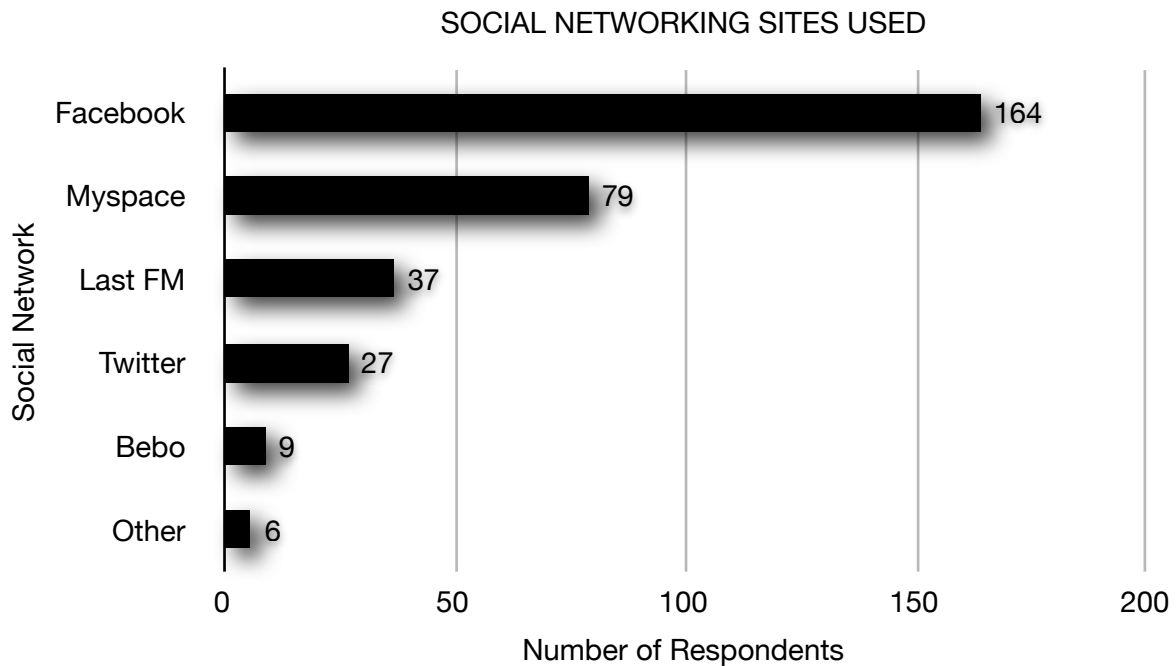
Social networking is used for significant time periods. Out of those using social networking, 64% of respondents do so for between 2 and 20 hours per week, 9% of

<sup>38</sup> As most respondents would have received the questionnaire through targeted sampling the figure is not representative outside this research.

people use it more frequently, but nobody uses social networking for more than 45 hours a week.<sup>39</sup> The average use is around 10.5 hours.

#### 4.2.2.2 Choice of Social Network

Figure 4.2.2.2a

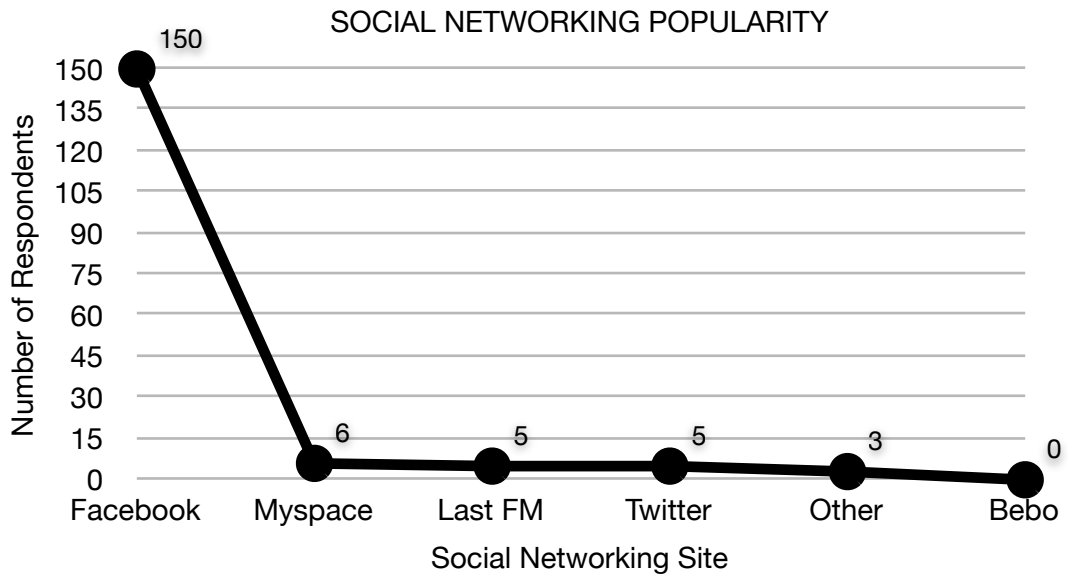


Facebook is the most used social networking site, almost all respondents stated use. MySpace is also a clear leader with almost half (47%) of respondents using the site - the same amount as all other sites combined.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>39</sup> These figures are interesting but debatable as people may classify using as only interacting with the website and others may interpret using as keeping a programme/site in the background and checking it occasionally.

<sup>40</sup> 'Other' includes: Twitter(27), Hi5, Pacemaker.net, Fitlads, LiveJournal (2), Hyves.

Figure 4.2.2.2b

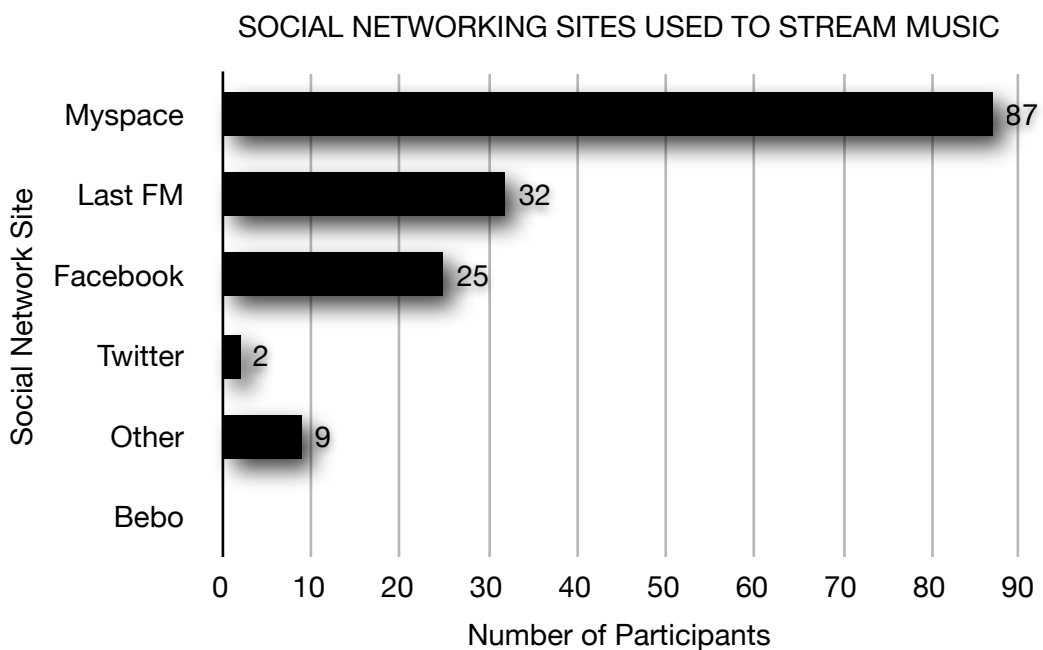


Facebook is the most popular social networking site. 89% of respondents rank it the social network they used most. Facebook may be streets ahead in popularity stakes but it has limited functionality for distributing music.<sup>41</sup>

#### 4.2.3 Social Networking and Music

##### 4.2.3.1 Streaming Music on Social Networks

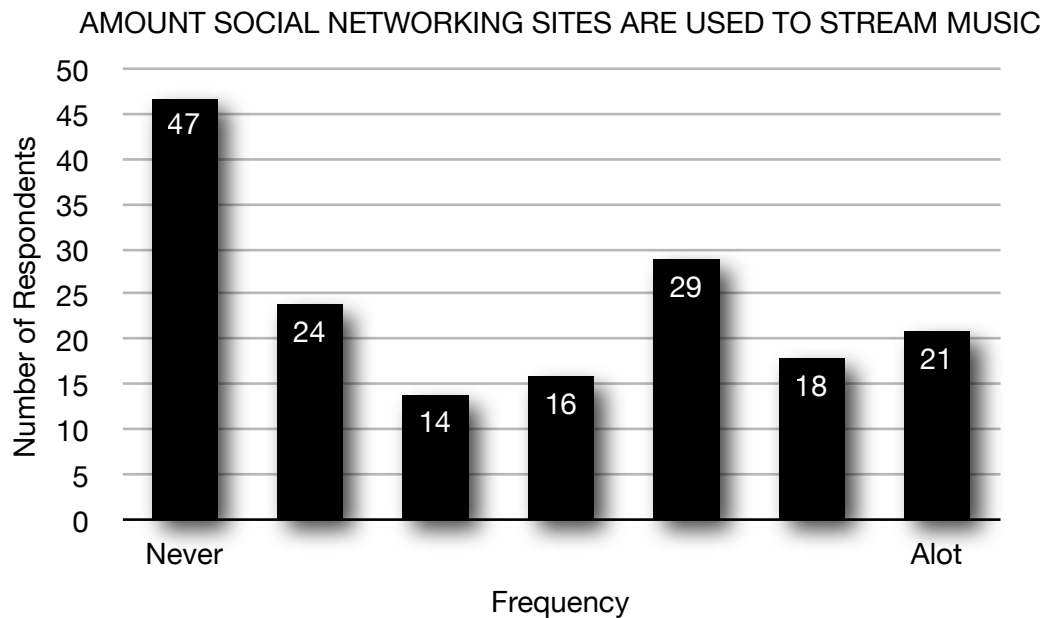
Figure 4.2.3.1a



<sup>41</sup> 'Other' includes: LiveJournal (2), YouTube, Twitter(5).

MySpace is the social network used most for interaction with music. 81% of people having stated use. Facebook drops in popularity with only 23% usage in comparison with its 97% general usage and Last FM rises from third to second ranking with 30% of respondents using the site.<sup>42</sup>

Figure 4.2.3.1b



Almost a third of respondents do not stream music. 28% never partake and 12% partake regularly. There is not a clear trend for the amount people use social networking to stream music. This could be because this is a relatively new way to access music and there is not much stability or commitment surrounding the activity.<sup>43</sup>

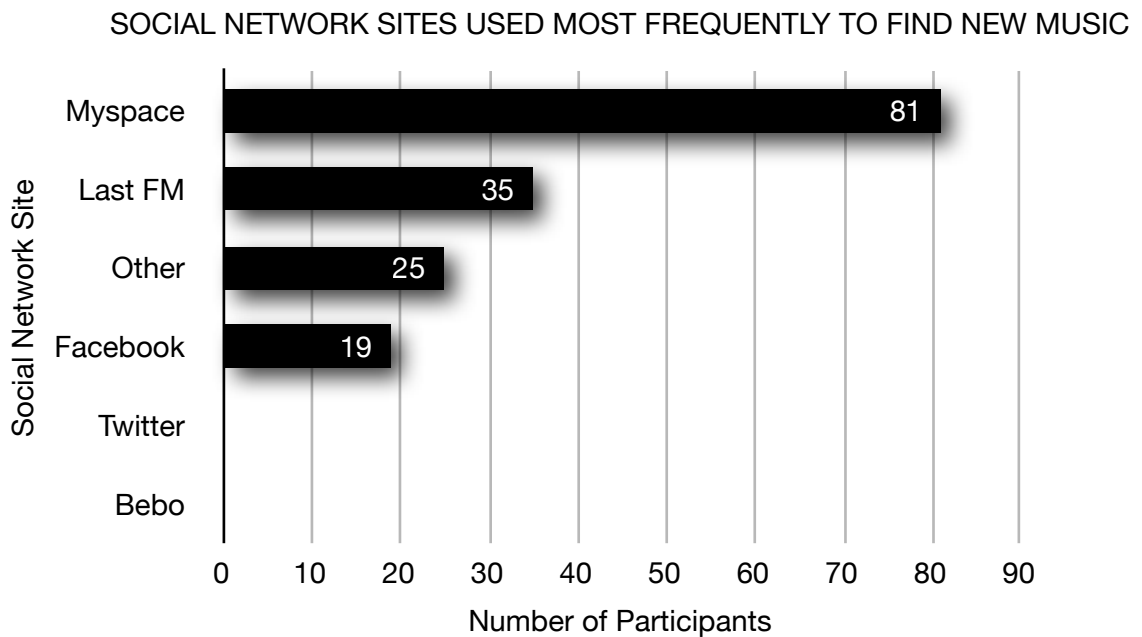
<sup>42</sup> The category 'other' included: Pacemaker.net, Reverb Nation, Our Stage, Pandora(2), Spotify, Twitter (2), Live Journal, htfr.com, mixi, imeem.

<sup>43</sup> On reflection the respondents may have not been familiar with the term 'stream', it may have been wiser to use 'listen' instead.



### 4.2.3.2 Discovery of New Music on Social Networks

Figure 4.2.3.2a



MySpace is clearly the social network most associated with finding new music - 54%, over half of respondents, listed MySpace as their top choice.<sup>44</sup>

Figure 4.2.3.2b

COMPARISON IN GENERAL USE, USE FOR STREAMING MUSIC AND USE FOR FINDING NEW MUSIC

Social Network	Use as Social Network alone	Use of Social Network to stream music	Use of Social Network find new music	Total Usage
Facebook	164	25	19	208
MySpace	79	87	81	<b>247</b>
Last FM	37	32	25	94

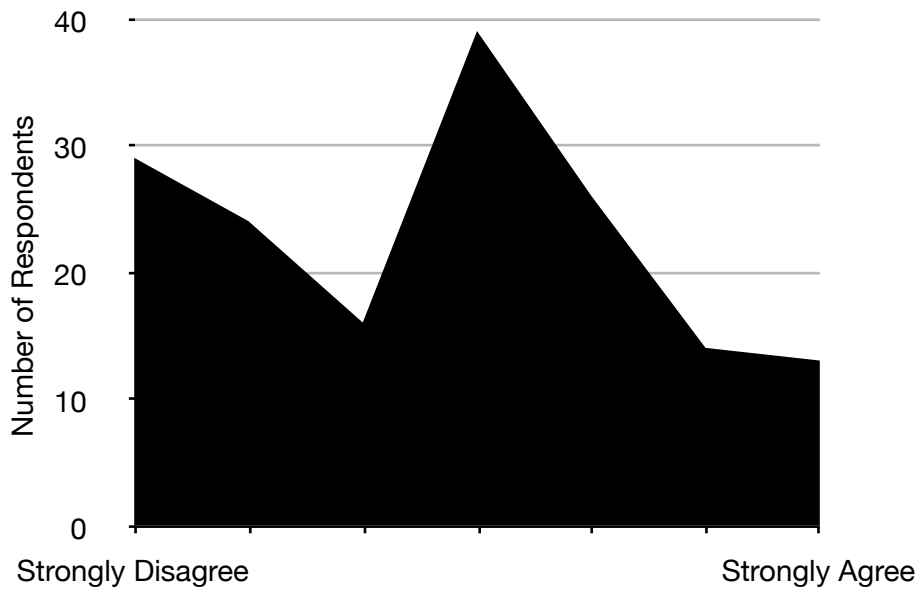
MySpace wins ‘across the board’ in terms of popularity and has heightened use regarding music ref. Figure 4.2.3.2b. MySpace has 124 more unique users accessing music than Facebook and 111 more than Last FM. Considering the domination of Facebook overall, MySpaces’ advantage is it proves a high flyer for both use as a social networking and in association with music, although people are likely to use MySpace as

<sup>44</sup> ‘Other’ included: Pandora (4), CBC, Radio 3, Specific band site, YouTube (4), Live Journal, Spotify(4), Juno, Tunes, htrf.com, Jango, Radio 1(2), Beatport, Reverb Nation, pacemaker.net, Hype Machine.

a musical reference book than a base. Overall, MySpace has a stronger, more stable user base than Facebook, where the huge imbalance of users may suggest the site is more of a fad.

Figure 4.2.3.2c

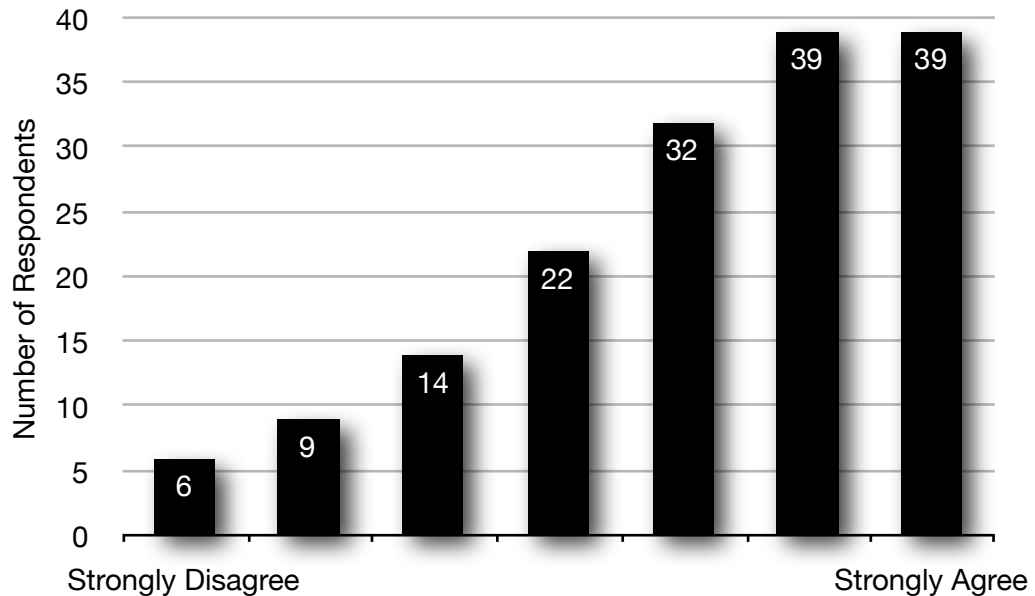
PRESENCE OF LOYALTY TO SOCIAL NETWORK USED TO FIND NEW MUSIC



There is no real loyalty given to sites used to find new music. More disagree (43%) than agree (33%) that loyalty is present although the majority of respondents do not have a strong opinion. A loyalty scheme could be employed by the social networking websites promoting discovery of music, perhaps rewarding regular users with free downloads.

Figure 4.2.3.2d

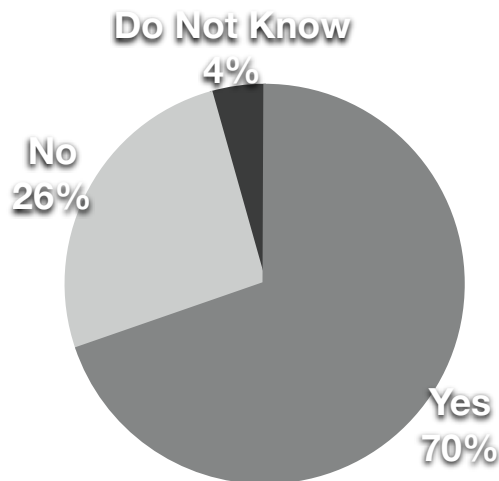
DISCOVERY OF MUSIC VIA SOCIAL NETWORKING ALLOWS MORE CONTROL OVER MUSIC CHOICE



Discovering music through social networks offers control. Respondents largely agreed they had control over music choice and ultimately their music experience. Consumers seek music entertainment which is convenient and can be moulded to suit them.

Figure 4.2.3.2e

FAVOURITE SOCIAL NETWORKING SITE (NEW MUSIC) USED TO FIND ARTIST PAGE

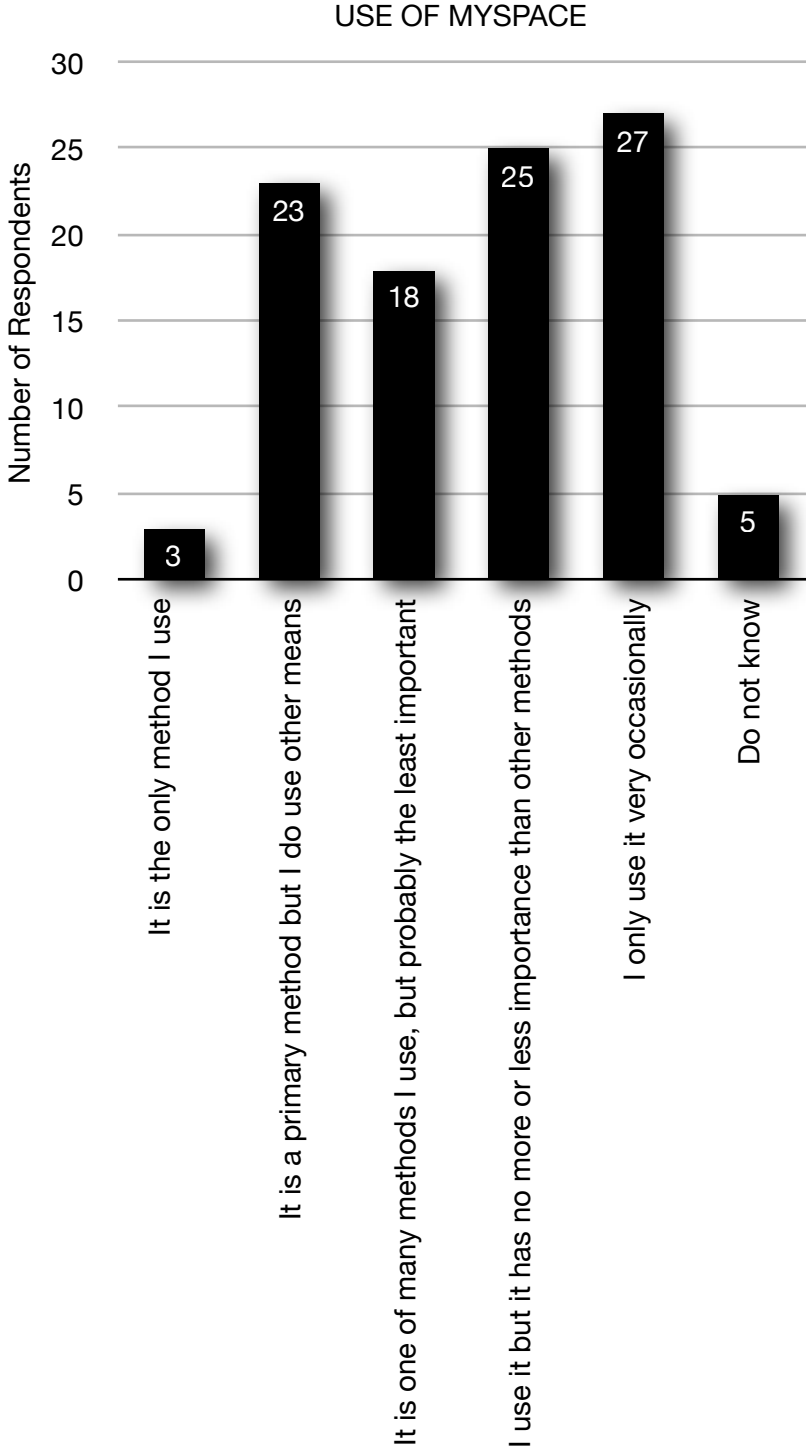


The majority (70%) of social network users search for artist pages through their favourite social network. This shows the audience plays an active role in finding music.

4.2.4 MySpace and Music

4.2.4.1 Discovery of New Music on MySpace

Figure 4.2.4.1a

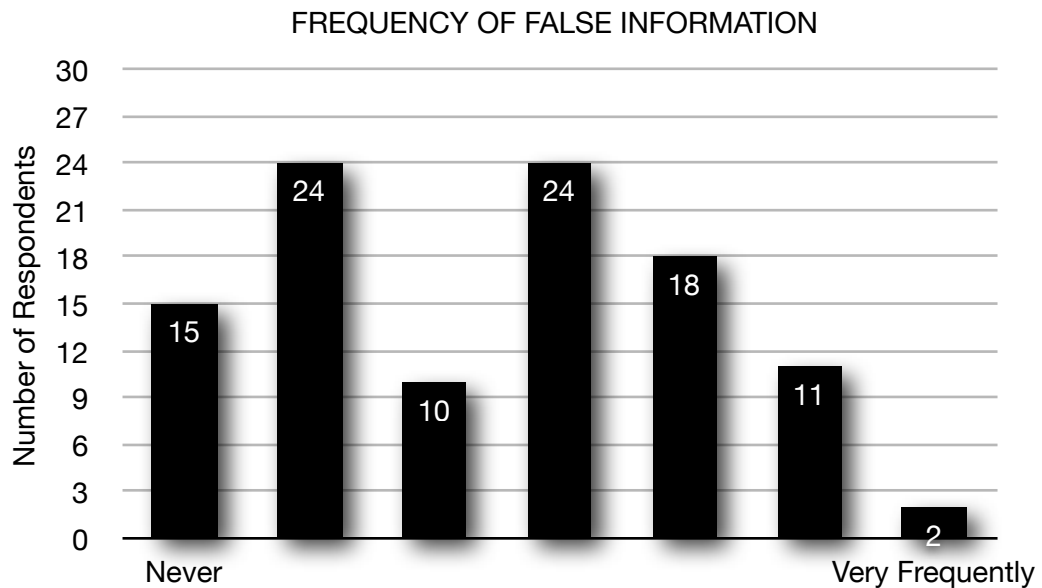


Over half of respondents value MySpace as an important way of discovering new music. 3% exclusively use the site to discover new music, 23% use it as the primary method, and 25% use it equally alongside others.

MySpace has 14 ways in which users can discover new music. Almost half of people using MySpace find music by searching the friends of bands they know or listen to music on a friends page. This suggests the social aspect of MySpace strongly promotes the discovery of new music.

See Appendix D.

Figure 4.2.4.1b



Most of people never or rarely experience problems with incorrect information given on MySpace. 47% have experienced no problems. Around a third of people suggest they frequently find errors when searching for bands, and about a quarter take the middle ground. The wide range of answers may reflect the teething problems of a new model. MySpace has not long been established, and seeing the large scale of the music database it would be hard to resolve all inconsistencies immediately however this may improve with time. It may also be hard for MySpace to regulate the input of user submitted data.

**4.2.4.2 Revenue Created By MySpace**

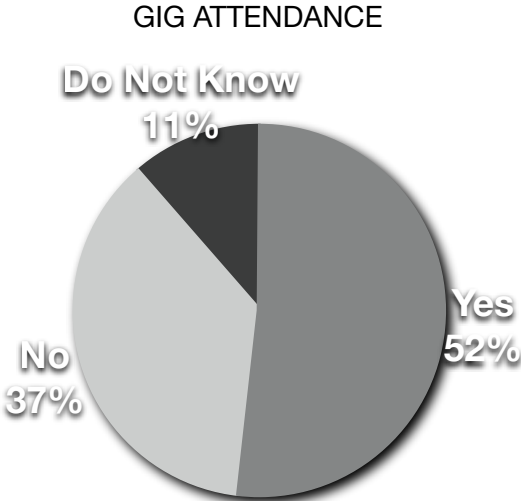
Figure 4.2.4.2a

PURCHASE OF DIGITAL COPIES THROUGH MYSPACE

Ranking	Purchase?	Number of Respondents
1	No	40
2	Yes, a digital copy from an entirely different online source i.e. Itunes/other MP3 sites	38
3	Yes, a physical copy from a shop/ordered online	33
4	Yes, through links on the artists page	10
5	Other	3
6	Yes, through MySpace itself	2

The majority of respondents have purchased a digital copy of music after finding it on MySpace. 81% of people discovered an artist which resulted in them purchasing their material. This shows that not only is MySpace a tool for discovery it is also a tool for distribution and revenue, thus supporting the music industry.

Figure 4.2.4.2b



Over half the users of MySpace have attended a gig after discovering new music on MySpace, confirming that MySpace has a positive affect on revenue and the music industry as a whole.

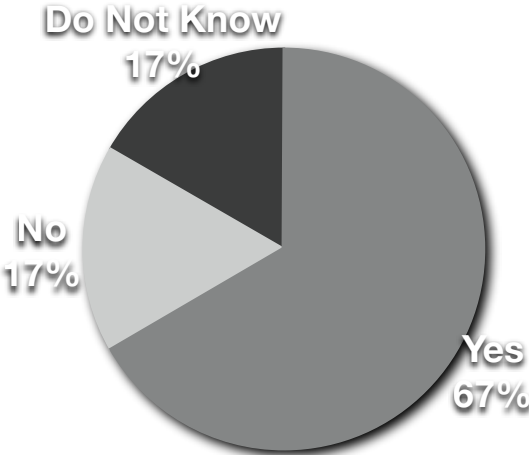
MySpace creates revenue on at least two platforms, if not more.

**4.2.5 Artist Perspective on MySpace**

**4.2.5.1 MySpace as a Tool for Distribution and Promotion**

*Figure 4.2.5.1a*

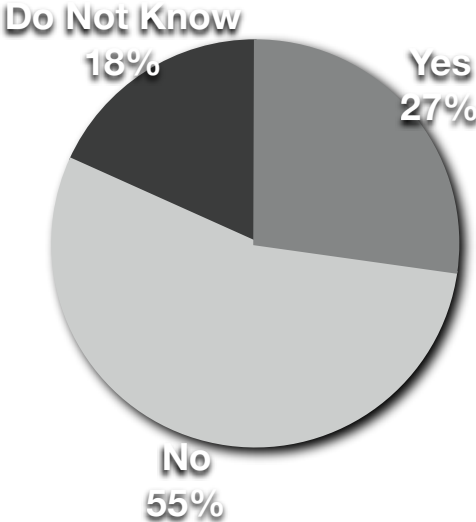
PERCEPTION OF MYSPACE AS AN EFFECTIVE TOOL FOR DISTRIBUTION AND PROMOTION



Over half of those who had MySpace artist profiles felt it was an effective tool for the promotion and distribution of their music.

*Figure 4.2.5.1b*

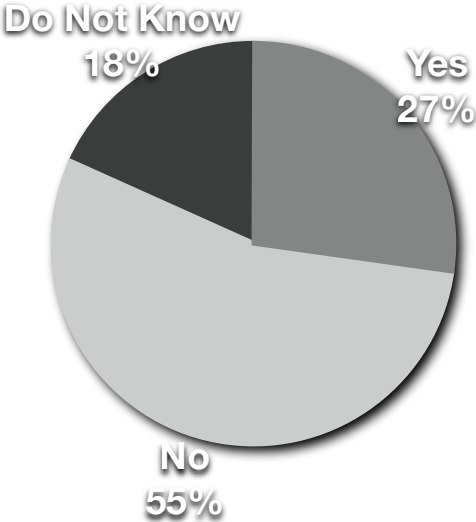
ARTIST PERCEPTION OF MYSPACE PROMOTING HIGHER CHANCE AT SUCCESS



Although a high percentage of artists felt MySpace was an effective way of distribution and promotion only just over a quarter of respondents thought the social networking could offer a more democratic music platform.

Figure 4.2.5.1c

ARTIST PERCEPTION AT CHANCE OF COMPETING WITH ESTABLISHED ARTISTS



The majority of artists did not feel they could compete alongside established acts.

These figures suggest that while MySpace helps people to distribute and promote their music, it is only an aid in doing so and to succeed you need more extensive help than MySpace can offer.



### **4.3 Artist Interviews: Qualitative Findings**

Nine responses were gathered. One respondent wished to remain anonymous and will be labelled Participant A. A balanced perspective is given as respondent included a variety of artists: one who has been signed to a major record label, some signed to independent labels and local unsigned bands.

#### **4.3.1 Fan Base**

Live music performance was considered a priority when it comes to gaining fans. MySpace in a small part was considered to play a role; “MySpace has also helped with gaining fans” (Hillside Heroes). Direct marketing, radio play, featured plays on other media, and street teams handing out free merchandise and word of mouth were also techniques described.

See Appendix E.

#### **4.3.2 Gig Attendance**

It was noted that the success rate is not calculated so it is hard to tell exactly how MySpace impacts on gig attendance: There is no “opportunity to find out who found out about a gig on MySpace” (the Doll Pins/The Fluffs\*). However, it was felt that fans are likely to check a MySpace page before an official page to find gig listings. This may be because “they know what format they are going to find the shows listed in” (Stephanie Dosen) or because “people seem to expect it to be updated more regularly than the official site” (Apartment 26). It was thought it would be a “wasted opportunity to not post the gigs up” (Doll Pins/The Fluffs\*).

MySpace was deemed in some part successful at higher gig rates:

It is a good tool in the way that it allows people to listen to our music before they attend the gig. It enables venues to listen to your music before you play the gig so they often tell punters about the type of band that is expected that night.

(The Delahays)

See Appendix F.

### 4.3.3 Promotion and Distribution Using MySpace

In comparison to traditional distribution methods, MySpace seems to offer more control, both to artist and fan:

MySpace really relies on the people who use it. If they are really into the music then they'll find you.

(Doll Pins/The Fluffs\*)

This control can also increase creativity. There is "no restriction to what you put out, there's no need for a radio friendly version" (Nizlopi).

In a similar way that email affected post, MySpace has impacted on postering and flyerling. The traditional method still remains but the new method is quicker and more cost effective: "It is free to use and it distributes your material worldwide" (Participant A). "It is...a lot easier and more convenient than going round your local town/city flyerling" (Hillside Heroes).

Since there is no charge smaller bands have a chance. MySpace "gives bands a level playing field" (Nizlopi) and "allows unsigned bands to get themselves promoted just as fairly as the larger bands" (participant A).

MySpace also works well because it has a large user base:

It's just a popular website that people know about and go to hear new music. That's why it works so well for promotion.

(Bon Iver)

It is convenient:

The traditional methods of radio play, street teams and playing shows relies on potential fans being at the right place at the right time. With MySpace, there's a recognised and centralised place where fans are able to come to the group and hear the music at their convenience.

(Apartment 26)

It has a number of facilities in one space:

MySpace is very effective with promotion as you can display posters on your profile or display picture and also in fans comment boxes.

(Hillside Heroes)

MySpace pages hold a bands identity. Its image, music, information for gigs, personal information are all displayed on their MySpace page. So it allows

people to create an idea into what the band are like, not just their music and when they are playing which is often what is gained through a flyer.

(The Delahays)

And it is social: "It allows fans to feel a part of the band almost as a community" (The Delahays).

MySpace acts as the ultimate distribution tool:

Most bands list a MySpace address on other promotional material anyways, so it leads you there 9 times out of 10.

(Doll Pins/The Fluffs\*)

See Appendix G.

#### **4.3.4 Virtual Communication**

MySpace enables artists to communicate virtually with their fans. This can make promotion work easy and accessible in one communal place: "It is certainly easier to speak to fans, having a central hub like MySpace" (Apartment 26).

MySpace allows current information to be quickly updated; "it's quicker and easier to promote yourselves" (Participant A), and accessed; "people can always check up on what you're up to" (Hillside Heroes).

MySpace creates a sense of community through virtual communication:

I think the key to this is that it's a networking site...on MySpace you're part of a bigger community than your own and that's the higher level of interaction.

(Doll Pins/The Fluffs\*)

Communication through MySpace allows a closer relationship with fans:

I guess the fans would feel that they can relate to us more if they believe that they were talking to us.

(Participant A)

It links with fans to find out what they want...in fact you tend to structure your promotion round the feedback and as it's immediate to you, you can just get on with it rather than be out of touch.

(Nizlopi)

Communicating with fans through MySpace can make promotion both more and less personalised:

Think it's great to make the time to get back to fans... It also means you can tell your fans with no middle person what you doing why you're doing and most importantly what's in it for them.

(Nizlopi)

You never feel that special as you know 1000 other people have received the same information.

(The Delahays)

In terms of virtual communication, MySpace can also help to maintain privacy: "I can answer mail on MySpace without it getting too personal (Stephanie Dosen) and be used as a recruitment tool: "We managed to organise street teams, get support acts and also find out where people wanted us to play (Nizlopi).

See Appendix H.

#### **4.3.5 Something for Nothing**

Artists were asked their opinions of giving tracks away for free and gaining income through other revenues. Opinions were mixed even from individual artists: "Good and bad. It has a very hippy connotation but the reality is hard work" (Doll Pins/The Fluffs\*),

A free demo is a great way to advertise your music and this will always lead to popularity and hopefully the purchase of tickets and band merchandise. However a lot of your market will be satisfied with all the free music they a receiving and will not bother purchasing any other items.

(The Delahays)

Some thought that it will never happen and others thought it was a good model. "The best and only way forward to get yourself recognised" (Participant A), "that's what I've been doing for the last 8 years and it's worked fine" (Jens Lekman).

I whole heartedly believe in giving a few tracks away I've found loads of bands that way and then bought their albums.

(Stephanie Dosen)

We...give away tracks, podcasts exclusive new tracks so that fans can get a feel of what we're doing and if they like it hopefully buy our album or see our gigs.

(Nizlopi)

Others felt it was necessary but not ideal or better for smaller bands:

Currently, you have to give away some music in order to attract any attention...Bands are already increasingly reliant on their merchandise sales and other means of bringing in income, giving away more and more music for free. I think the tracks should still be sold.

(Apartment 26)

For bigger recognised bands it doesn't really help them as most people are willing to pay for the music.

(Hillside Heroes)

See Appendix I.

#### **4.3.6 Opposition to MySpace**

The use of MySpace may not suit all artists as a distribution tool. Jens Lekman is an artist who opposes MySpace finding it “distasteful, grotesque and an insult to everything that i love about pop music. everything that is personal and sincere.”

Lekman believes MySpace is impersonal, making a musician “a stock trader rather than an artist. You collect "friends" like investments”.

Rather than increasing communication Lekman believes MySpace decreases it cutting length of conversations dramatically. He states “touring” and “communication I offer through email and letters” are the best ways to gain new fans because “people are so hungry for something real. Something to make a connection with”.

Despite Lekman's opposition to hosting his own profile he does not mind if there are unofficial pages in his name on MySpace. He states, “it is out of my control. So I don't waste time on it”. Like other artists Lekman is not sure whether these pages impact on attendance at gigs: “It might be super effective, I don't know.”

See Appendix J.

### 4.3.7 Further Comments

MySpace is the leader in this model of distribution:

So far it seems that none of the other social networking sites have embraced the idea of music promotion to the extent that MySpace has.

(Apartment 26)

MySpace clearly works not only in distribution but discovery not just for consumers but record companies too: Stephanie Dosen was discovered on MySpace.

See Appendix K.

### 4.4 Synopsis of Findings: Triangulation

From a consumer perspective:

- Music is a popular means of entertainment.
- Social networks are used extensively, and for about half the time that people spend online and are widely used to stream and find new music.
- MySpace is the top music social network, it is used as a discovery and distribution tool and creates revenue for the music industry. However it may have problems with false information and a lack of loyalty.
- The employment of user submitted data encourages people to share their own music but may be disadvantageous due to the falsities it may incur.
- There is an emphasis on the social when it comes to music distribution and want control over their music experience.

From an artist perspective:

- MySpace is a useful tool for distribution and promotion but does not offer a place for democratisation within the industry - major record labels still dominate overall.<sup>45</sup>
- There are advantages and disadvantages of giving music away for free, it takes away from revenue but also increases it. Some kind of free exchange is often needed to gain initial interest which will progress to purchase.
- MySpace is a good tool for virtual communication as it creates a communal fan base, relates information quickly, easily and cheaply and therefore allows smaller bands to compete with larger ones. It creates personal relations with fans yet helps the artist keep their own private life private. It can however at times feel distant.

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<sup>45</sup> This is similar to Wallis' argument that although digitalised media and distribution have the potential for artists to embrace global audiences there is not a correlated diversification of music (2001).

- Promoting through MySpace has many advantages over traditional methods offers control, convenience, is quicker and more cost effective, creates a more democratic way of distribution and can access a large fan base through a variety of channels.
- Many artists still value live performances as the best way of gaining new fans and say MySpace has probably increased the attendance level of new fans at gigs.
- MySpace may be a successful tool for most, but like with any technology it does not work for others.

#### **4.5 Summary**

This chapter provided the findings discovered through the implementation of the chosen methodology.

In sum of the above synopsis, several findings can be perceived.

- MySpace is successful as it offers many features that create bonds between artist and fan within a centralised environment which is quick and easy to access.
- MySpace promotes control over music experience (both for artists and consumers).
- MySpace impacts positively on the number of people that attend live music.
- MySpace encourages the discovery of new music.
- MySpace can be used to distribute music for free and still creative revenue.
- MySpace works because it is social, and connects not only artist to fan and vice versa but fans to one another.

These findings and discussion will lead to the concluding chapter, which will consider their impact through broader evaluation.

# 5

## Conclusion

### 5.1 Introduction

This dissertation sought to discover how the discovery and distribution of music on social networks impacts upon the music industry. The research affirmed that there is interest in discovering new music, there are benefits of using social networks in relation to music and that MySpace does offer a digital platform that can generate revenue for the music industry by using free music. This chapter will consider these results to suggest what they signify for future distribution, the prominence of music culture, the technology used to listen to it, and the hierarchical relationship between artists and record companies and law.

### 5.2 Limitations of Study

Although the findings are poignant, limitations are present. Firstly, MySpace may supernova at any time. Secondly, although extensive music can be accessed through MySpace, it is restricted by law.<sup>46</sup> Thirdly there is, as seen in the results, criticism and dissatisfaction of the site.<sup>47</sup> Fourthly, the findings and their implications have no inclusion or benefit for those outside of an internet environment; broadly speaking western culture. Fifthly, MySpace is in flux making any hard facts unsustainable.

### 5.3 Findings of Study in Context

#### 5.3.1 Copyright and Intellectual Property Rights

In an age of ‘gatecrashing’ ‘piracy’, ‘hacking’, ‘cloning’<sup>48</sup> and free content, how does the move to social distribution affect current rights protecting artists creativity?

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<sup>46</sup> I.e. As Reuters reported, an application called ‘Project Playlist’ allowed users of social networking sites, inclusive of MySpace to create, store and share playlists of their favourite songs. However major record companies threatened to sue the company over copyright right, even though MySpace can legally play tracks from these artists (Mischabarrett 2008).

<sup>47</sup> I.e Rosoff (2008b) suggests that MySpace is a “too-little too-late” move to capitalise MySpace, that it is a topdown service, which does not have the largest catalogue or variety of music or enough facilities to buy tracks.

<sup>48</sup> Barry (2009:105).



This research advocated that social networking creates a realm for free exchange of music. Berry (2008) describes how within digital culture inclusive of free sharing, big business is losing and individual freedom is gaining and the meaning of intellectual property (IP) is changing. He agrees that the trends like those shown in this dissertation are beginning to effect culture in a more significant way (e.g. the use of MySpace as a space to create and distribute music for not only majors but everybody).

Results showed there was continued interest not only in music but discovery of new music. MySpace creates a space whereby market expansion through creativity can be encouraged. Barry (2001) confirms IP creates creativity. IP is meant to protect investment and indicate creativity within the economy. IP claims organise technological spaces, defining access and how they are used for innovation and as a money making tool. This creates connection between social product and technology, encouraging creativity. Yet IP rights are complex and should not be thought of as a “stable legal framework”, as technological boundaries are hard to determine, maintain and secure. The IP and the technological space in which it is defined is in flux and it is hard to grasp ownership of something that is constantly metamorphosing, such as MySpace Music with users easily manipulating and adding new data. Currently we treat intellectual property and copyrights in the same manner we would physical objects - taking without permission it is stealing. However, rights are not physical entities and cannot be treated as such in a digital realm of mobile and rapid change. On MySpace, free exchange of music does not equate to, or even get labelled as piracy.

Creative Commons licensing (2009) started in 2001 and offers a new global initiative way of altering copyright, opting for work to have a “some rights reserved” option rather than all or nothing. For example you can give permission for people to use your works non-profitably or even profitably if they acknowledge your part.

Revenue is created through MySpace by the free exchange. Although there are still attempts to make standard law apply to digital realms,<sup>49</sup> the influence of a free culture and open access, has demonstrated “the cash is not in the copyright” (Every, see appendix L). Direct results of this are that artists give away music for free, the latest big

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<sup>49</sup> There has been suggestion of "private copying levy", which would mean a tax on all technology capable of making copies (Cellan Jones 2009).

band to do so being Coldplay (BBC 2009), and other artists are encouraged to be more independent.<sup>50</sup>

### 5.3.2 Reduction of Piracy

This is the future. Television shows, movies and music will all be primarily distributed online. Some will be ad-supported, some will be pay-per download. Once this marketplace has been established, the argument against piracy starts to look like a slam-dunk.

(ABC News 2009)

If permission is not granted, technological borders will be illegally crossed to receive what is desired (Barry 2009) but over a decade since Napster first brought file sharing to a mainstream audience and defined the model of music distribution today, MySpace and indeed social networking is an alternative for P2P, creating a space for free exchange of music without the need for piracy.<sup>51</sup> Also see Appendix M.

### 5.3.3 Free Culture

The results of this research show MySpace can distribute music and social networking offers a new way for distribution of information overall. Given the current economic climate, views have changed regarding distribution. As explained by Cruddas and Rutherford change from a neo-liberalist society to socialism is vital; recalling markets and institutions into a social realm to induce widespread, democratic involvement by all (2009:7). They believe:

The new division is between those who believe that privileging the market and individual self-interest is the best way to govern society, and those who believe that democracy and society must come before markets.

(Ibid:19)

Applied to music we can see both those interested in profit from music and those who want to access it as free culture exist simultaneously. However, a division is not necessary: as proven with social networks, revenue can be secured from the realm of the free.

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<sup>50</sup> Last.fm (2009) now operate a service where royalties can be paid to users uploading music.

<sup>51</sup> People may have only pirated because they want something for free or that is not provided or is restricted by current society. Make it accessible to offer it for free before they notice its not there then piracy will diminish.

The paradigm of the free and the capitalistic leads to new practices for “organisation and innovation” and increases cultural output (2009:58). This creates competitive and creative opportunities for fulfilled ‘producers and consumers’, the recent development of open source also providing fresh ways for exchange of information in regard to cultural information. Opportunities can thrive simultaneously with the current market or use advertising as funding (Perez 2009:63). Capitalist notions are still existent alongside free culture and advertising is central to capitalist production (Harms and Kellner 2009). Although the future of ‘semi-market’ relations is not certain, it will impact upon future business model design (Perez 2009:64). The success of MySpace has set up new business opportunities, as well as social spaces, such as the creation of [www.bangingdrum.com](http://www.bangingdrum.com), which allows users to share thoughts about music, but is not provide music or seek to be as mainstream as MySpace.

#### **5.3.4 Access Is Key**

Britez and Peters (2008) relate openness to transparency, observed as “access to information...within organisations, institutions and societies”, which can be ‘intellect’, ‘openness to experience’ or “associated with appreciation of art, curiosity, adventure and the imagination”: techniques and positions certainly administered by MySpace.

“Technology shapes and is shaped by society” (Perez 2009:61). Technology develops at a rapid pace. During the time it has taken to research this dissertation, new platforms for digital music distribution have emerged into the mainstream.<sup>52</sup> Alongside other access initiatives,<sup>53</sup> Spotify is an up and coming programme, which is supported by user fees or advertising:

Spotify appears to have created a successful version of the universal jukebox  
– and best of all, it's legal.

(Arthur 2009)

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<sup>52</sup> Lessig pre-empted that streaming to user demand would become necessary, emphasising that accessibility will ultimately become commonplace over download and store mechanisms: “content services will compete with content sharing” (2004:298).

<sup>53</sup> According to the IFPI, models based around monetising access include methods via internet service providers (i.e. Danish telecoms company) and mobiles (i.e. ‘Nokia comes with Music’ -launched October 2008) (IFPI 2009). Sainsbury’s is also set to offer a competitive music bundle to compare with Nokia comes with music (Orlowski 2008b). As well as BSKyB aiming to infiltrate the market dominated by Apple (BBC 2008).

#### **5.4 Personal Reflection**

This study enabled me to deeply understand the impact of social networking on distribution and discovery of music. The results gave stronger indications of success than imagined; I am immensely pleased with where the research has led. I am hopeful the study will provide insight into how social media can be advantageous not only in terms of music but wider distribution of other cultural products.

#### **5.5 Methodological Reflection**

The methodology successfully created a balanced overview of the position of discovery and distribution in connection to social networking, through focus on MySpace, which also encompassed broader ideas regarding the entire music industry. This research could be reinforced and broadened with further methodological inclusions, which could be used to extend the study in numerous ways.<sup>54</sup>

#### **5.6 Overall Reflection**

This dissertation has shown that social networking acts to support and enhance the distribution of music online. MySpace has endeavoured to monetise revenue from the provision of free music and in doing so, has proved digital outlets highly successful distribution platforms. The key finding is that MySpace encourages the existence of commercialism alongside, and even as a product of, free culture and open access and consequentially may reduce piracy. Music can prosper online as a simultaneous flow of information and sale of goods.

#### **5.7 Recommendation: Future Digital Platforms for Discovery and Distribution**

I predict progression of the distribution of music to mobile access. Currently Spotify is reliant on computer access, however with moves towards a ubiquitous wireless network alongside the ongoing development of mobile phones which have a high standard of cellular and wireless internet accessibility as well as applications capable of playing music at amazing quality,<sup>55</sup> it is probable that music lovers will soon be able to access a

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<sup>54</sup> Wider study could be implemented, e.g. an exploration of how social media will affect an access based model, or more specific studies could be implemented, e.g. a deeper ethnographical exploration into the number of people who actually attend gigs as a result of using MySpace or this research could be extended within itself, perhaps qualitatively considering consumer opinion through interview.

<sup>55</sup> "The problem is neither speed of processing or available network speed. It's battery life. So soon I would say" (Peter Every) See Appendix L.

portable, all encompassing music catalogue whenever and wherever they choose.<sup>56</sup> This is certainly Spotify's goal.<sup>57</sup> There are new platforms in development, enabling the experience of digital music to be as liquid as possible.<sup>58</sup>

However, Spotify, unlike other online distribution media,<sup>59</sup> does not have the advantages of a social media. Recommendations for new music are given by the website itself, yet no personal views are available for comparison, other factors that are prominent in MySpace such as the listing of gigs are also absent. This dissertation has shown that social networking, and indeed social media, allows a sharing of information, vital to keeping the distribution and discovery of new music alive. To achieve the greatest heights of music experience I would suggest an incorporation of social communication; allowing fans to not only maximise what they can listen to but broaden their music tastes, sharing and recommending with others thus reaffirming and calling for the creation of new talent which allows the music industry to thrive.

## **5.8 Summary**

This dissertation explored, with reference to MySpace, how music is discovered and distributed through social networks. Through researching this topic and by grounded theory, it has become apparent, as discussed in this conclusion, that social networking provides advantages to discovering and distributing music. MySpace is successful from the point of view of both the consumers and competitors within the music industry and future digital platforms can take valuable lessons from the advantages that the union of social networking and music has provided.

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<sup>56</sup> [www.evernote.com](http://www.evernote.com) already executes a mobile model of distribution - files can be uploaded from a home computer and then accessed anywhere online and through an application on mobile phones.

<sup>57</sup> Spotify (2009) state that although they are still advancing their new system exclusively in term of computers, they will be looking to a "solution that will work smoothly on your mobile and other platforms as well" and state: "Our dream is to let everyone listen to whatever they want, whenever and wherever they want".

<sup>58</sup> An application called 'Lala' will allow users to upload music collections to 'the cloud' - an internet space the is everywhere - an access it whenever they please via mobile devices (Kincaid 2009).

<sup>59</sup> YouTube, an Internet protocol television, another fore fronting distribution incorporates not only social aspects but visual alongside audio. Cellan-Jones (2008.b.) highlights that the digital music survey 2008 details social networking and the importance of the visual with YouTube becoming increasingly popular for music lovers as pretty much all music videos can be found and some participants listed YouTube as a place they first looked for music.

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## **APPENDICES**

## **APPENDIX A Respondent Opinion on Survey Design**

All of the respondents finished the online survey in under ten minutes. The majority (88%) of respondents completed it within 5 minutes.

97% of respondents found the questions clear and 98% of people did not object to answering any of the questions.

The majority of responses were positive and suggested the questionnaire was quick and easy to complete.

However there were some suggestions:

In terms of the options regarding new music on Myspace, there was suggestion of other inclusions: some fans may find music by entering the bands name after the [www.myspace.com/](http://www.myspace.com/) prefix. However one respondent felt the list was already too large and offered too much choice.

It was suggested that although a time limit was listed as a week for hours spent on the internet, some people did think this should be again specified for social networks for clarity. One participant suggested it would be easier to account for this on a daily basis.

Another suggestion advised reversing the scale to run from disagree to agree, and perhaps make the scale smaller.

A clearer definition of stream was suggested and of new music, as some people did not know whether to interpret as brand new release or just new to them.

As not to mislead or prime respondents I did not detail that the questionnaire was result in a study of MySpace, albeit this being clear at the end of the survey. Respondents suggested a broader focus, however due to time constraints I feel the survey did the research justice.

13% of respondents felt certain topic areas were omitted for example, discussion of what genre is mainly searched for, opinion on legal file sharing, and coverage of repeated use of streaming on MySpace as a tool for accessing music listened to previously. Participants noticed that Spotify and YouTube were excluded, however this could have been entered as an 'other' option. Another respondent suggested the areas of revenue linked to MySpace could be further explored. Wider topic areas were gain suggested, such as a consideration of music blogs or non digital platforms, however these were not present as they were not relevant to my research.

One respondent suggested it would have been interesting to establish whether respondents would pay a fee to use social networks. In hindsight I feel this is the best suggestion for improvement.

There was a high interest in the offer for a copy of the report after completion. I will distribute it through the sae channels as I did the questionnaire to ensure it is available.



## APPENDIX B Online Survey Format

### Questionnaire

My name is Zoë Baker, I am a third year student studying Journalism, Film and Media at Cardiff University. I am conducting a project about new music and social networking sites.

This questionnaire aims to gauge your views on the matter and will take about 5-10 minutes of your time.

All participants have the option to remain anonymous and are able to leave the questionnaire at any point.

Any information on this topic is greatly received, if you could fill out the answers as honestly as possible it would be greatly appreciated.

Feel free to contact me at bakerza@cardiff.ac.uk with any queries or for further information.

Thank you for your time.

\* Required

#### SECTION A - Name

Feel free to leave anonymous

#### Gender \*

- Male  
 Female

#### Age \*

- 16 or under  
 17-20  
 21-23  
 24-26  
 27-29  
 30+

#### On average how many hours do you spend on the internet per week? \*

- Less than 2 hours  
 2-5  
 5-10  
 11-15  
 16-20  
 21-25  
 26-30  
 31-35  
 36-40  
 41-45  
 46-50  
 50+

**Do you use social networks whilst online? \***

I.e. MySpace, Facebook, Bebo or other

- Yes
- No

**If so, for how many hours? \***

- Less than 2 hours
- 2-5
- 5-10
- 11-15
- 16-20
- 21-25
- 26-30
- 31-35
- 36-40
- 41-45
- 46-50
- 50+

**Which social networking sites do you use? \***

Select all used

- MySpace
- Facebook
- Bebo
- Twitter
- Last fm
- Other:

**Which do you use the most? \***

- MySpace
- Facebook
- Bebo
- Twitter
- Last fm
- Other:

**Music is one of my favourite pastimes \***

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Agree      Strongly Disagree

**I enjoy finding out about new music \***

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Agree      Strongly Disagree

**I enjoy attending gigs played by bands I have not seen live previously \***

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Agree      Strongly Disagree

**I enjoy recommending new music to others \***

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Agree      Strongly Disagree

**Do you ever use social networking sites to stream music? \***

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Never        Alot

**If so, which social networking sites do you use?**

(These can be different from the one's you use most for social networking)

MySpace

Facebook

Bebo

Twitter

Last fm

Other:

**Which site are you most likely to use listen to new music?**

(This can be different from the one you use most for social networking)

MySpace

Facebook

Bebo

Twitter

Last fm

Other:

**Do you feel loyalty towards this site?**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree        Strongly Disagree

**Do you use this site to find band/artist pages to listen to new music?**

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

**Finding new music in this way gives me more control over my music choice**

(rather than relying on radio/TV/chart shows)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree        Strongly Disagree

**ONLY ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IF YOU USE MYSPACE TO LISTEN TO NEW MUSIC - IF YOU DO NOT PLEASE CONTINUE TO SECTION B**

Which techniques do you use to locate new music on MySpace? Select as many as is relevant.

- Through the music player on a friends page
- By looking at what bands your friends have added as their friends
- By looking at bands you already listen to and searching through their friends
- Through looking at a bands profile to see which bands they say they are similar to or sound like
- By having a band add you as a friend
- Through the use of search criteria by genre on the MySpace Music home page i.e indie/folk /pop/rock etc
- Through searching using your own criteria on the MySpace Music homepage search
- Through the recommended artist of the week
- Through the recommended video of the week
- By listening to the artists that have recorded live/acoustic tracks for MySpace Transmissions
- By searching to see which bands are in the MySpace chart
- By looking at what music is recommended on forums
- By using a secondary search engine which links you to an artists MySpace profile i.e. Google/Yahoo/Ask
- Other:

**How would you describe the role of MySpace in terms of how you find new music?**

- It is the only method I use
- It is a primary method but I do use other means
- It is one of many methods I use, but probably the least important
- I use it but it has no more or less importance than other methods
- I only use it very occasionally
- Do not know

**Have you ever experienced incorrect information given on MySpace?**

E.g. Not being able to play a song/song cuts out/artist and tracks are mismatched etc

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Very Frequently        Never

**Have you ever proceeded to purchase music by the new artists you have found on MySpace**

- Yes, through links on the artists page
- Yes, through MySpace itself
- Yes, a digital copy from an entirely different online source i.e. Itunes/other MP3 sites
- Yes, a physical copy from a shop/ordered online
- No
- Other:

**Have you ever attended a gig as a result of finding a new artist or band on MySpace?**

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

**ONLY ANSWER THE NEXT QUESTIONS IF YOU HAVE A MYSPACE ARTIST PROFILE ONLY - IF YOU DO NOT PLEASE CONTINUE TO SECTION B**

Do you produce your own music and upload it onto your artist/band profile?

- Yes
- No
- I do not know

**Do you feel that using MySpace has helped you promote and distribute your music easily to more people?**

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

**Do you feel that this means of distribution makes music more democratic and gives you more chance of succeeding?**

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

**Do you feel you have any chance of competing with the established acts who have music on MySpace?**

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

**SECTION B** Thank you very much for your time, please could you take a couple of minutes to tell me what could be improved in this questionnaire.

**How long did it take you to complete?**

- Less than 5 minutes
- Between 5-10 minutes
- Between 10-15 minutes
- Over 15 minutes

**Were the questions clear?**

- Yes
- No

**Did you object to answering any of the questions?**

- Yes
- No

**In your opinion were any major topics omitted?**

- Yes
- No

**If so, what would you recommend to be included?**

**Would you like a copy of the report once finished?**

- Yes
- No

## APPENDIX C Artist Online Interview Questions

### QUESTIONS FOR ARTISTS REGARDING DISTRIBUTION AND PROMOTION VIA MYSPACE

\* Required

1. Artist/band name \*

2. Do you wish to remain anonymous? \*

- Yes  
 No

3. What are your most successful ways of gaining new fans?

(i.e. live performances, record sales, free access to music, advertising etc)

4. How effective do you think that your MySpace page is at getting more people attend your gigs?

(e.g. in comparison with your official website?)

5. How would you suggest that MySpace is more effective than traditional styles of distribution and promotion?

**6. What do you think of the idea that MySpace allows you to communicate virtually with your fans with your fans on several different levels - making promotion work easy and accessible in one communal place?**

(i.e. virtual flyering, band updates, tour dates, links to merchandise, blogging etc)

**7. What do you think of a strategy allowing fans to find new music which would involve giving away tracks for free and gaining revenue not through individual track sales but exclusively through other income?**

(i.e. ticket sales, album sales, merchandise and special edition releases etc)

**8. Do you have any other views about music, social networking and/or MySpace you feel are important as an artist?**

Submit

---



## APPENDIX D Techniques Used to Find New Music on MySpace

Ranking	Technique	Number of Respondents
1	By looking at bands you already listen to and searching through their friends	49
2	Through the music player on a friends page	48
3	By using a secondary search engine which links you to an artists MySpace profile i.e. Google/Yahoo/Ask	43
4	Through looking at a bands profile to see which bands they say they are similar to or sound like	36
5	Through searching using your own criteria on the MySpace Music home page search	26
6	Through the use of search criteria by genre on the MySpace Music home page i.e indie/folk/pop/rock etc.	22
7	By having a band add you as a friend	22
8	By looking at what bands your friends have added as their friends	20
9	By searching to see which bands are in the MySpace chart	10
10	Through the recommended artist of the week	7
11	Other	5
12	By listening to the artists that have recorded live/acoustic	4
13	By looking at what music is recommended on forums	3
14	Through the recommended video of the week	2

## APPENDIX E Responses Regarding Acquisition of News Fans

What are your most successful ways of gaining new fans?	
Artist	Comment
	Touring, performances are direct marketing.
Doll Pins/The Fluffs*	Word of mouth and through friends' friends' acquaintances etc.
Participant A	The best way we found was via MySpace. Using this service allowed us to add people who were situated across the globe, however we did try to stick to people who were local. We also found that people added us after we had played gigs. (The support slot for the Underground Heroes for example)
Apartment 26	Radio play has probably been the most successful, along with being featured on film / video game soundtracks. Playing gigs in support of more successful bands and having street teams hand out free CDs at other gigs have also been really important in that sense.
Nizlopi	At the grassroots level and in a way a deeper level I have to say live performance, there's nothing like seeing a live performance, the communication between performer and audience is special and obviously in the moment and only that moment. Fans from gigs if moved by you tend to stay and be less fickle as the ones who hear you on the radio.
Hillside Heroes	Live gigs are generally the best way but MySpace has also helped with gaining fans.
The Delahays	Live performances and access to our music through our MySpace
Stephanie Dosen	I'm not too sure! maybe playing out? i do get a bit of "new fan" mail on MySpace so I'm sure that helps too!

**APPENDIX F Responses Regarding the Effectiveness of MySpace at Gaining Gig Audiences**

<b>How effective do you think that your MySpace page is at getting more people attend your gigs?</b>	
<b>Artist</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Bon Iver	Very effective. From the beginning, Bon Iver has used MySpace as a place for fans to listen to the music and interact. It's one of the only websites that lists Bon Iver's shows.
Doll Pins/The Fluffs*	I never really knew because we didn't have an opportunity to find out who found out about a gig on MySpace. Perhaps if we had done our own questionnaire we could have gotten some information. it'd feel wrong and a wasted opportunity to not post the gigs up though. no doubt there's always a few.
Participant A	I believe it did help but not as much as many believe. Most of the people that came to our gigs were family and friends and people in the local area. I do however think that it is a very effective tool if you are a small band looking to grow. As you are quite obscure, MySpace allows people to check out your music for free and see where and when you are playing. The positive of it is that it gets your material out there. The larger bands already have that fan base so therefore they do no need to advertise their music as much.
Apartment 26	MySpace has been useful as people seem to expect it to be updated more regularly than the official site, so they tend to check there first for information on gigs. It's difficult to know exactly how effective it is, but I have spoken to people who only found out about the shows, and indeed the band itself, through MySpace.
Nizlopi	I think MySpace has been a great way for bands and artists to share music getting your music out there via fans/interested people creating ticket sales/ cd sales etc.. without even having to spend much money, certainly gives independents a chance. I think MySpace is so user friendly and so much less corporate feeling than band websites I know I tend to go to MySpace sites to check a band as there is usually more interesting fan input and tracks.
Hillside Heroes	I think that MySpace is a very good way of communicating with your fans, as fans are always on it checking out new music and networking where as fans do not usually use our official website so much.

**How effective do you think that your MySpace page is at getting more people attend your gigs?**

The Delahays	Yeah it is a good tool in the way that it allows people to listen to our music before they attend the gig. It enables venues to listen to your music before you play the gig so they often tell punters about the type of band that is expected that night.
Stephanie Dosen	I think people check out MySpace for gigs before websites.. because they know what format they are going to find the shows listed in... its a lot easier than navigating a new website for every band.

**APPENDIX G Responses Regarding Comparison of Distribution on MySpace and Tradition Distribution**

<b>How would you suggest that MySpace is more effective than traditional styles of distribution and promotion?</b>	
<b>Artist</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Bon Iver	It's just a popular website that people know about and go to to hear new music. That's why it works so well for promotion.
Doll Pins/The Fluffs*	MySpace really relies on the people who use it. If they are really into the music then they'll find you. Street promotion etc's always a little annoying and is only going to catch your attention if you already know a band. At least on MySpace there are demos and other info to check out. Most bands list a MySpace address on other promotional material anyways, so it leads you there 9 times out of 10.
Participant A	Well it is free to use and it distributes your material worldwide within seconds. Distribution and promotion can be a long hauling process and costly whereas MySpace requires no money and allows unsigned bands to get themselves promoted just as fairly as the larger bands.
Apartment 26	The traditional methods of radio play, street teams and playing shows relies on potential fans being at the right place at the right time. With MySpace, there's a recognised and centralised place where fans are able to come to the group and hear the music at their convenience.
Nizlopi	Not to sure it's more effective but like I said before it gives bands a level playing field you don't need a fancy campaign to get people to hear your songs or read your thoughts, think it works really well when bands start to form collectives, go out on tour together bringing more people together. Also there's no restriction to what you put out, there's no need for a radio friendly version.
Hillside Heroes	MySpace is very effective with promotion as you can display posters on your profile/display picture and also in fans comment boxes. It is also a lot easier and more convenient than going round your local town/city flyering.
The Delahays	It allows fans to feel a part of the band almost as a community. MySpace pages hold a bands identity. Its image, music, information for gigs, personal information are all displayed on their MySpace page. So it allows people to create an idea into what the band are like, not just their music and when they are playing which is often what is gained through a flyer.

**How would you suggest that MySpace is more effective than traditional styles of distribution and promotion?**

Stephanie Dosen

I'm not sure about this one.. i think nothing beats a tv ad, feature at a record store, billboard..or a magazine cover!

## APPENDIX H Responses Regarding Virtual Communication

What do you think of the idea that MySpace allows you to communicate virtually with your fans with your fans on several different levels - making promotion work easy and accessible in one communal place?	
Artist	Comment
Bon Iver	It's cool.
Doll Pins/The Fluffs*	I think the key to this is that it's a networking site. It's easy to get yourselves an official web page, people can join to be forum members etc. but on MySpace you're part of a bigger community than your own and that's the higher level of interaction. People finding you through a gig invite they received from another band etc.
Participant A	Its a great idea as its quicker and easier to promote yourselves. In addition I guess the fans would feel that they can relate to us more if they believe that they were talking to us. The MySpace page is great too as it shows the dates of gigs so therefore advertisement is a lot more easier rather than advertising in local newspapers or magazines.
Apartment 26	It is certainly easier to speak to fans, having a central hub like MySpace, and it's very useful for keeping the band to appear to be active and current. (Even when they're not)
Nizlopi	Think it's great to make the time to get back to fans, we get a lot of wedding requests and to sign this or that for people it's great when you can do this and no one really trusts band e-mail addresses or record label ones. It also means you can tell your fans with no middle person what you doing why your doing and most importantly what's in it for them, I love hearing what artists are listening to reading etc... We managed to organise street teams, get support acts and also find out where people wanted us to play, in fact you tend to structure your promotion round the feedback and as it's immediate to you, you can just get on with it rather than be out of touch booking tours in wrong places or wrong capacity venues etc...
Hillside Heroes	People can always check up on what your up too i.e.; through blogs or videos. They can also check out where we will next be playing on our gig listings.
The Delahays	It is a great idea however a lot of people like the personal approach, its kinda like a group text message, you never feel that special as you know 1000 other people have received the same information. But for those who like to just know the date of gigs e.t.c and for keeping people up to date with the band it is a great idea.

**What do you think of the idea that MySpace allows you to communicate virtually with your fans with your fans on several different levels - making promotion work easy and accessible in one communal place?**

Stephanie Dosen

its nice to have a place you can actually contact bands that isn't an email address.. i can answer mail on MySpace without it getting too personal.



## APPENDIX I Responses Regarding Free Music Strategy

What do you think of a strategy allowing fans to find new music which would involve giving away tracks for free and gaining revenue not through individual track sales but exclusively through other income?	
Artist	Comment
Bon Iver	I don't think it will ever resort to that.
Doll Pins/The Fluffs*	Well this is often shown to be the way the industry is heading. Not necessarily giving music away but many artists are being forced to rely on other means as their main income. Especially live. Even Madonna signed a new deal that incorporates all of her shows and merchandise because the companies know that music alone won't get them big bucks anymore. So what do i think of it? Good and bad. It has a very hippy connotation but the reality is hard work.
Participant A	To start of with its the best and only way forward to get yourself recognised. Once that has developed you would then hope that the people listening to your music would come to your gigs and then in the long run you would hope they would purchase your albums and merchandise. So in that sense giving the music out for free is a great way as its the only way a band can start off.
Apartment 26	<p>Currently, you have to give away some music in order to attract any attention. Fans have come expect to hear music instantly to decide whether or not they like the band.</p> <p>Bands are already increasingly reliant on their merchandise sales and other means of bringing in income, giving away more and more music for free. However, with declining revenues in music generally, record companies starting to take a percentage of these forms of income, and the fact the fans seem to want to buy individual tracks on itunes etc., I think the tracks should still be sold.</p>
Nizlopi	Income is getting harder to come by for bands and artists, we were so lucky with our timing when we broke we were able to be in control of how people get our music and where that income went to. We and a few of our fav artists give away tracks, podcasts exclusive new tracks so that fans can get a feel of what we're doing and if they like it hopefully buy our album or see our gigs. I'm not sure albums create much income anymore people tend to buy individual tracks which means album sales are plummeting. It all depends if you want to make money or not from your art sharing music that you believe in should be given space to.

**What do you think of a strategy allowing fans to find new music which would involve giving away tracks for free and gaining revenue not through individual track sales but exclusively through other income?**

Hillside Heroes	I think as a band starting out it is amazing promotion and getting your name/sound out there. But for bigger recognised bands it doesn't really help them as most people are willing to pay for the music.
The Delahays	I think its down to personal choice if the band is happy giving their music away then they can. A free demo is a great way to advertise your music and this will always lead to popularity and hopefully the purchase of tickets and band merchandise. However a lot of your market will be satisfied with all the free music they a receiving and will not bother purchasing any other items.
Stephanie Dosen	i whole heartedly believe in giving a few tracks away I've found loads of bands that way and then bought their albums...

## **APPENDIX J Jens Lekman Interview**

**Most importantly, what are the reasons for you not having a MySpace page yourself?**

I find MySpace distasteful, grotesque and an insult to everything that i love about pop music. everything that is personal and sincere.

**Or have you had one previously and not found it useful? (I notice there is a link on your official website)**

Yes. i kidnapped the html code to my website eventually. but kept it empty. just so people would get the point.

**Are there negative implications of having a MySpace page?**

It makes you a stock trader rather than an artist. you collect "friends" like investments. communication is cut down to two word conversations - you rule / you suck. also, it fucks up your brain (I've got some of the most respected neuroscientists backing me up on this).

**Are there other ways of distributing your music which you find are more effective?**

Touring and communication.

**Do you think that MySpace has the potential to be more effective than traditional styles of distribution and promotion?**

MySpace is the standard by now and it scares me.

**Do you not feel the global nature of MySpace is appealing in gaining fans from overseas?**

NO. the only way to actually make an impact in a new country is by touring. you might sell a million records if you have your song in a commercial but you will be completely forgotten by next year unless you play every living room in the nation. people are so hungry for something real. something to make a connection with.

**Do the people that operate this site have permission from you to distribute your music in this way?**

You mean one of my unofficial MySpaces ? i have encouraged people to make as many Jens Lekman clones as they want. i have no concerns about that. i find it cute.

**Are you happy with the material that is distributed there?**

It is out of my control. so i don't waste time on it.

Some of the questions in the existing questionnaire may be relevant too:

**What are your most successful ways of gaining new fans? (i.e. live performances, record sales, free access to music, advertising etc.).**

Live performances and my own website. the communication i offer through email and letters.

**How effective do you think that your MySpace page is at getting more people attend your gigs? (e.g. in comparison with your official website?) - even if it is not your page!**

It might be super effective, i don't know. but i really don't want people who listen to songs for five seconds to attend my shows. those people don't usually stick around. though I'm glad you still remember me (and yes, i remember the birmingham show, nice one!)

**What do you think of a strategy allowing fans to find new music which would involve giving away tracks for free and gaining revenue not through individual track sales but exclusively through other income? (i.e. ticket sales, album sales, merchandise and special edition releases etc.)**

Well, that's what I've been doing for the last 8 years and it's worked fine.

## APPENDIX K Further Comments From Artist Interview

Do you have any other views about music, social networking and/or MySpace you feel are important as an artist?	
Artist	Comment
Bon Iver	Facebook is a great promotional tool as well.
D o l l P i n s / T h e Fluffs*	<p>I think it's important to not distribute music on mobile phones. That's just terrible. Sounds terrible. Until technology is equipped enough to provide download and CD quality on mobiles. Is that irrelevant?</p> <p>i do think that a lot of young bands these days, looking for a quick deal and an easy fan base can rely much to heavily on MySpace and the like. Not everyone is going to get Arctic Monkey's legends attached to them. Very few are. But it can provide a good base to allow you to continue making music with good support when that deal never comes. I know a few bands who are becoming increasingly self reliant and the internet as a whole is aiding in that.</p>
Participant A	Nope
Apartment 26	So far it seems that none of the other social networking sites have embraced the idea of music promotion to the extent that MySpace has. When I'm looking for information about a band as a consumer, I find that I go to their MySpace page first even when presented with an official website as an option. It wouldn't even occur to me to look at other social networking sites, for example Facebook or Bebo, for information on a band.
Nizlopi	MySpace, worked so well for us in respect of getting to our fans, but really working on your craft as a musician/ songwriter is so so important it's so easy to be bogged down by telling people to buy things but you've got to have something worth selling.
Hillside Heroes	Nope!
The Delahays	I think that Facebook is much better at letting people know about up and coming gigs as more people use their facebook pages and events can easily be set up on facebook. Even though through accessing facebook people cannot listen to music, word spreads quickly when facebook is involved and everyone knows everyone's information.

**Do you have any other views about music, social networking and/or MySpace you feel are important as an artist?**

Stephanie Dosen

i was actually discovered on MySpace... I was in my living room in Nashville Tennessee when Simon Raymonde from Bella Union in London messaged me and asked if i needed some help with production or a label... I was signed to Bella Union 6 months later.. it changed my career and my life... so in that respect i wouldn't be doing what I'm doing if not for MySpace!

## **APPENDIX L Discussion with Peter Every (Lecturer of Creative Computing at Coventry University)**

### **Is free data a good or a bad thing-is it viable that piracy can provide a positive form of distribution?**

I suggest you look at the very birth of copyright and what it was for - to stimulate the creator to produce more, on the basis of a modest return by means of copyright, so that they could enjoy brief ownership and exploitation of their work. Everybody else was to benefit as it would mean more 'works' in circulation.

Situation now is that authors rarely own their own work - the corporations that buy their stuff do. (c.f. film "the harder they come" - Jimmy Cliff is given \$5 for a song by the owner of the studio. That's it.)

Freely available content means that new business models are required (Brian Eno: The music will be free - you'll have to pay for the packaging). The business model for up and coming bands is tour, sell T-shirts, tour some more. The cash is not in the copyright.

Is this viable? Who knows? Lots of us are having lots of fun 'sticking it to the man!'. Will this mean less content available? - not on the existing evidence c.f. jamendo.com, iplayer etc.

Creativity, the production of stories, the production of art is a part of the human condition. We can no more give it up than we can give up breathing. Financial bottom line or no, people will make content. It might shut Mariah Carey up though.

**Does negativity surrounding digital music exist because it is a relatively new media platform in terms of distribution? Will it soon be yesterdays debate as newer faster technologies appear more threatening to current copyright protection? i.e. CD's were are first considered bad for the music industry.**

Good question. The 'industry' has used technology as a defence against piracy in the past. Follow this: CD's are audibly better than mp3's. Internet speed increases > Pirates start distributing in .FLAC (lossless audio). Industry starts putting out 24 bit

CD's (about 1 gig for 45 minutes). Internet speed increases. Pirates put out 24 bit .FLAC's.

Same with video - Blu Ray films can be in excess of 9 gigabytes - that's nothing to a 'pirate' on Virgin's 20 mb broadband.

There is some debate about the quality of digital vs. analogue 'sound' - (e.g. vinyl was better) That stuff comes from old duffers like me. We'll be dead soon.

**From a creative computing point of view how far in to the future is a mobile device capable of downloading high quality music tracks?**

The problem is neither speed of processing or available network speed. It's battery life. So soon I would say.

**Will there ever be such an ideal as a free exchange of culture in a commodity society or will consumerism always give big music companies power to resist change?**

Try going to the pub this Friday. THERE HAS ALWAYS BEEN A FREE EXCHANGE OF CULTURE, it just gets spoilt by the breadheads. Subtle point coming up. Culture is the experience of everyday life. Part of that life is tied up with creativity in a cultural form - song, writing, painting. Some of that culture is valued by an elite (the art world, the music industry) However, who is to say that they are the arbiters of taste? There's a story that Jungle music died the day some idiot committed it to vinyl - can you see that? A vital culture as long as it went unrecorded. To some, fixing culture with a commodity value = the death of culture.

This is why, to some old lefties, social network and, ahem, culture sharing is so important. It provides the possibility of ALT culture - not run by consumerism, or the industry, or by Simon Cowell.

**Is it viable to suggest that intellectual property is becoming less valuable?**

NO. But you have to think of property differently. What if Picasso's art teacher had said 'You're Shit, give up now". We do what we do and we 'own' what we own ... In other cultures the storyteller is paid for their stories - do they own them? Not really, but people will pay them to tell them anyway. Er, here's a better example (and I know



nothing about football) Beckham is a football artist, he is grace personified. Is it sensible to say that Beckham 'owns' his football artistry? Its nonsensical. The sooner we wake up and realise that creative people should be paid for being creative (without all this 'ownership' rubbish) the sooner we can get on and enjoy a rich, rewarding culture.

**Because the Internet can be used as a tool for decentralised distribution is there a potential for music to be more creative?**

Hell yes. Anecdotally I know: My last 'record': <http://www.aslw12.dsl.pipex.com/> is, in popular terms unlistenable. It's been downloaded over 1000 times now. Back in the day, the most I ever sold was 500 x 7" singles - and that was quite listenable pop/reggae. My next album (out next week, folks!) is, in some regards, more difficult than the first - how do I know I can push this ... because my last record got downloaded > 1000 times. Of course I haven't made a penny - I'm not looking for that. Now check vimeo.com - the next Scorsese is there, now check youtube.com the next Nick Broomfield is there.

There are new platforms. Platforms that reach further than ever. Of course people will use them.

I believe the problem (in the domain of creativity) for the 21st century will NOT be one of production or creativity - it will be one of discovery and meaning. Talent no longer bubbles to the top, as it did under a managed 'industrial' system - talent is everywhere (just log on....).

What is good? What will last? What will speak to eternity? How do we find the next Arctic Monkeys? (there were at least 5000 the last time I looked....).

Only 20 years ago you would have the next big thing rammed down your throat by people out to make money from it. Nowadays, who is doing the ramming? Try Google.

## **APPENDIX M Extract from Discussion with Gary Hall's Regarding Pirate Philosophy**

### **MUSIC PIRATE PHILOSOPHY**

I have watched your lecture 'Pirate Philosophy' and it strikes me that the points of discussion surrounding academic publishing could apply to the realm of digital music or indeed already exist there.

I am interested in how piracy can be positive, allowing access to more listeners and creating a more democratic sphere where music can be distributed to more people. I feel that music should be freely available and no one should be discriminated against and that the gift economy argument can be applied to the distribution of 'free' music. The popularity of new platforms such as IPTV has prevalence in music. For example, respondents from my questionnaire have stated a popularity of youtube, and that there is a preference for people to watch videos and find new music this way.

Of course there is a resistance towards these changes by the established authorities, in this case the major record labels, as it would challenge their authority. As we have seen it has been hard to prevent file sharing of music despite efforts from the government and the recent involvement of ISPs. As it stands artists are reliant on record companies for initial start up and recognition - meaning that ultimately those companies hold royalties to artists music. However these companies have started experimenting with loosening copyright. We have seen, social networking sites, such as MySpace, experimenting with free track downloads in order to encourage later popularity, thus proving that the income of an artist is through the recognition of their music not just profit alone. If permission is given more widely by record companies for this style of behaviour, i.e. free streaming sites such as Spotify, then a new realm of music distribution is hinted at. Ultimately more people would be likely to listen to music in the first place, even if this encourages profit from other areas such as the attendance of gigs or buying of other merchandise. If anything the digital format of music is more valued than its original physical format - although of course there is the observation that fans will always buy physical copies of their favourite bands for the emotional connection.

Whether it is ultimately possible for record labels to still sign artists and act as the 'authority' in the equation, and agree to distribute music widely and free may be too

much to consider. No matter how idealistic this view is, I feel that due to the restraints of society today it is unlikely to happen in the foreseeable future. Ultimately discourse of the industry would have to change and that would require less emphasis on capitalism and consumer society. In such a big money business it is unlikely that the morals of existing companies would adhere to such protocols. Perhaps if a anonymous group of artists were to defy the record labels, and post an original copy which would later be deleted when it entered the realm of public p2p sharing (as you suggested with academic material), then it would be another step towards free culture- with an emphasis on the artist -but a death of large record companies. Music would have to call for new type of flexible record label.

Of course music is already distributed in this way through P2P networks, but this would be a move to a more official realm where artists are more recognised. It is interesting to consider that challenges to existing authorities will ultimately make the music we listen to and the way it is distributed more authentic and legitimate rather than having big artists who write 'hit' songs to particular formats to score highly in the charts and therefore get large amounts of cash in their back pockets. On MySpace, band pages can be made by anyone and music uploaded by even the smallest of artists.

The technology that is most popular for listening to music today is evident that the younger generation of music fans have a strong connection with the digital format. As new artists are born from this era they may turn to digital distribution as an initial port of call. Perhaps, consequential of this, the structure of the format in which music is released will change - albums will become a thing of past and singular tracks will be released if and when recorded. This would perhaps encourage more creativity.