

# The European Hard Rock and Heavy Metal live music market

A closer look at the development of emerging bands through live  
performing

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*This master's thesis is carried out as a part of the education at the  
University of Agder and is therefore approved as a part of this  
education. However, this does not imply that the University answers for  
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## **Abstract**

The present study is set out to provide a better understanding of the current situation regarding career development in terms of live performing for emerging Hard Rock / Heavy Metal (HR/HM) bands in Europe, and to find out how these bands have been impacted by changes in the live-music economy.

Previous research conducted concerning the live music industry mostly consists of overall figures and general turnover over years. Such research is segmented only by country, and mainly focused on the United States, United Kingdom or Europe as a whole. It also focuses on the economies of the so-called “Super Stars”. This particular study pretends to provide a different perspective of the live music market in Europe by focusing on the economies and artistic development of emerging bands within a niche music genre.

The project has a qualitative approach and will be based on the testimonies from several interviews. The interviewed subjects were HR/HM live music industry-men and women, established bands, and medium sized and emerging bands; which are currently building their careers by live-performing in Europe. This study will analyze specific cases based on experiences and ongoing “live oriented” strategies, and it will draw conclusions about how these bands are approaching the current industry.

There are several important findings in this research, which will be stated as follows: Medium sized and emerging bands don't necessarily have to tour more today, in comparison to past decades, to meet their financial expectations; but they have to tour and perform live with a more strategic approach. The access to the market for these bands has been increasingly limited year after year, since the collapse of the recorded music industry at the beginning of the century. The amount of festivals across Europe is having a negative impact in the expected audience for tours and club shows. The chances of becoming a fully professional band within the HR/HM European market, in the present time, are extremely low.

## List of Abbreviations

HR/HM	Hard Rock / Heavy Metal
ISPs	Internet Service Providers
GEMA	Gesellschaft für Musikalische Aufführungs- und Mechanische Vervielfältigungsrechte (German musical copyright monitoring body)
A&R	Artist & Repertoire
CPI	Consumer Price Index
DIY	Do It Yourself
EPK	Electronic Press Kit
CMOs	Collective management organizations
P2P Platforms	Peer to Peer Platforms

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# 1. Introduction

This study focuses on an apparent paradox relating to the live music scene. Self-promoted and small-medium range Hard Rock and Heavy Metal bands have been facing a profit decrease even though they are experiencing positive results either in their fan-base growth rate, ticket-sales, number of shows in a tour, popularity, or other factors that should be increasing their profit instead of decreasing it.

This somewhat surprising postulate has emerged during the period 2012-2014, via several informal discussions with industry leaders from the live music sector, emerging bands both in Norway and in Germany, music scholars and music followers. After having the opportunity to evaluate some of the offers made to the same artists by the same promoters in consecutive years, it was evident that offers for 2013, 2014 and 2015 were lower than in previous years. This issue has raised so many questions that it became the driving force behind a desire to start academic research aimed at understanding how emerging Rock bands in Europe are building a career through live performing at the present time. Can such careers ever be sustainable or can sustainability be reached at a faster, slower or equal rate than in the 90's or the first decade of the XXI century.

The initial goal was to gather testimonies from key live music industry actors including representatives from artist management, booking agents, concert promoters, club-venue bookers and the bands themselves to be able to have a panoramic view of the current state of the live music industry for small and medium size Hard Rock / Heavy Metal (HR/HM) bands located in mainland Europe. Also to confirm or deny that such bands are experiencing the situation exposed earlier and to bring out the reasons behind this.

Hard Rock / Heavy Metal genre has been chosen for this project because of its unique features when it comes to audience reception. Rock music has been linked to a collective

identity resource (Gay & Lynxwiler, 2000) ; (Hill, 1991) ; (Dotter, 1994) ; (Hansen & Hansen, 1991). For decades it has been associated with a strong fan-base that value live performances (Weinstein, 2000), who attributes a higher perceived music value to the products they consume, and who tend to support bands through long periods of time.

During the 90's, the popularity of HR/HM music decreased among the niche music followers, both in the underground music scene and in the Rock media (Weinstein, 2000). Metal music was under the radar, specially in the U.S.A music charts such as Billboard (Weinstein, 2000). For many journalists Metal music was dead but the reality was that it was more globalized than many other music genres that emerged in the 70's and 80's. Metal music was already part of many youth cultures around the world. In the book, *Metal Rules the Globe* (Wallach, Berger, & Greene, 2011) the authors explain how this genre became a source of meaning and identity for many disempowered youth groups and how these individuals maintain a high level of loyalty to it throughout time, gaining a sense of belonging with these communities that are spread around the globe.

Youth sub-cultures (Bennett, 1999), started a deep relationship with genres such as Heavy Metal and Punk (Hansen & Hansen, 1991), and its consumption amongst the different music providers such as festivals, clubs, booking agencies, and the end consumers will be a central focus along this study. Theoretical frameworks, as presented by Larsen, Lawson and Todd (2010) will be discussed. They start their text by citing Hesmondhalgh (2008) with the following excerpt:

Music provides a particularly interesting example of modern relations between consumption and self-identity. Many people report that music plays a very important role in their lives. This role does not appear to have diminished with industrialization, commodification and the mass consumption of music: if anything, it has grown. (Hesmondhalgh, 2008)

The authors argue that: "*Music appears to be a special case of symbolic product.*", and conclude that the framework of the consumption of music as self representation formulated in one of their previous studies (2009), is a useful tool for analysing music consumption. Also (Sinclair & Dolan, 2015) provide a further analysis on Heavy Metal consumption based on the consumer culture theory by Norbert Elias.



It will be central for the discussion to assess the current live music consumption practices for this genre in Europe and compare it to the how these emerging bands are developing their careers from the live performance point of view. Based on the consumer characteristics, mentioned above, especially in mainland Europe, it would be necessary to analyze the career development, financial sustainability and profit making among such bands to be able to confirm or deny the claims stating that live performing would be a solution to the recorded music industry crisis that followed the internet revolution (Burrell, 2007), since live music market revenue has exceeded recorded music sales in recent years (Page, 2011) ; (Holt, 2010).

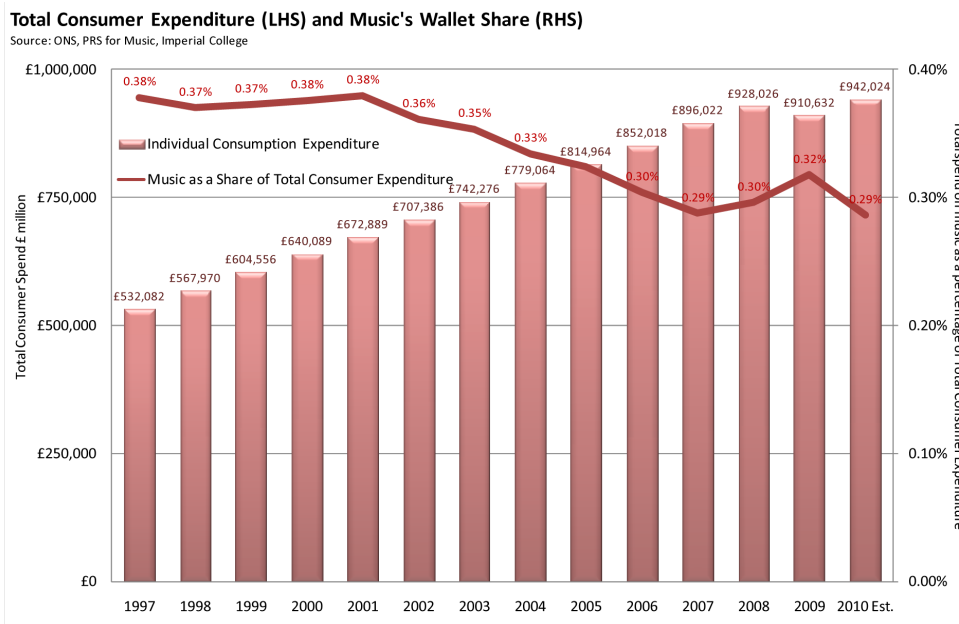
This study aims to contribute to the ongoing attempts to evaluate the current state of the live music market in Europe after the reports of declining live music market revenue during the last couple of years ("Spain's Music Industry in Crisis as Music, Ticket Sales Plummet," 2012) ; (Rabe, 2011). At the same time, it tries to provide a better understanding of how live music consumption patterns have changed throughout the decades, how are these bands dealing with the current state of the live music market, and finally, to try to make predictions about how will the future present itself for such bands.

## **1.1 Problem statement**

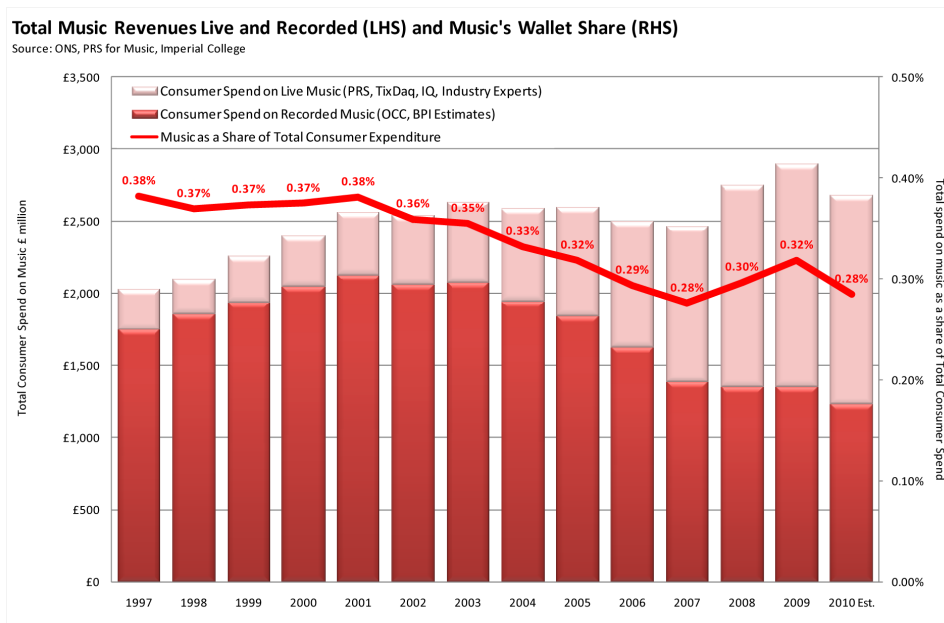
After the recorded music industry collapse in the early 2000s, the main source of revenue for the performing artists have gradually shifted to the live music scene. The decrease in the physical recorded music sales world wide, forced the whole music industry to reevaluate the economic approach (Purifoy, 2009), creating a landscape that in 2015 is complex and varied.

Total sales of physical and digital products came to roughly 650 million Euro in the first six months of 2011, 1.5 percent down on the same period in 2010. On the whole, sales of recorded music in Germany had already declined 4.6 percent in 2010 to about 1.67 billion Euro, while worldwide shortfalls in the industry came to about 6 percent. Compared to the figures for 2001, the domestic industry is now turning over a billion euros less per year. Net profits of 20 percent, as in the 1980s and 1990s thanks to the transition from vinyl to CDs, are no longer even conceivable. (Rabe, 2011)

Since mid 2000s the live music market has grown to exponentially bypassing the recorded music industry. In his report for PRS for Music, Will Page (2011) shows how in the UK, the consumption of recorded music have declined and the live music consumption have raised throughout the same period of time. (See chart below<sup>1</sup>)



At the same time, Page presents how music consumption as a whole is put against the individual consumption expenditure. (See chart below<sup>2</sup>)



<sup>1</sup> Taken from: (Page, 2011)

<sup>2</sup> Taken from: (Page, 2011)

And the trend in has continued in the same direction.

But take a look at music's £3.5 billion contribution to the UK economy in 2013, and live industry revenues are firmly ahead of every other sector across the industry. According to recent UK Music figures, while recorded music saw revenues of £618 million over the year and music publishers claimed £436 million, live music sales rose almost 20% year- on-year to £789 million. (Pakinkis, 2014)

The current European live music market appears to be saturated by the large amount of festivals, and touring bands of all sizes and all nationalities (Rabe, 2011), looking for the opportunity to continue all their operation mostly based on income from live performance and merchandise “merch” sales at shows (Pareles, 2002). It is then arguable that emerging artists<sup>3</sup> from the HR/HM genre are facing a situation where it is harder than during the 90's and early 2000's to find a place in the live music market and co-exist with the so called “Major and Medium Sized Acts”. Throughout the 90's, during the development of niche Rock sub-genres like Grunge in Seattle, most of the bands were dedicated mainly to live performing. In the documentary: Metal Evolution: Grunge (Dunn & McFadyen, 2011), Mark Arm (Vocals/Guitar, Mudhoney/Green), Jeff Gilbert (DJ/Journalist) and Kurt Danielson (Bass, TAD), explain how bands during that period where performing and influencing each other and connecting with the audience in a very intimate way. Shows were held in clubs that allowed physical contact between the audience and the bands, they explain how the city also provided the right conditions for this type of music to develop. In essence, Grunge bands in Seattle were creating a sound and building bands from the ground of live performing. At this time of history, recorded music was still the predominant source of income, and independent record labels like Sub Pop were closely involved in artist development, such as the case of Nirvana (Serpick, 2001), but bands careers were built from the stage.

Since the collapse of the recorded music industry, the live music market has been saturated and the offerings have exceeded the demand (Rabe, 2011) ; (Page, 2011), even in Europe and North America where audiences have a greater wallet share dedicated to culture and live performances (Page, 2011).

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<sup>3</sup> “An emerging artist is someone who's in the early stage of their career, someone who's caught the eye of an art critic and/or gallery, but hasn't yet established a solid reputation as an artist amongst art critics, art buyers, and art galleries.” (“Differences between Emerging, Mid-Career, and Established Artists: Professional Practices for Visual Artists,” 2009) The reference is used to define Emerging artists and bands even though the author refers to visual arts.

In the present HR/HM European scene, the amount of shows per day in the major cities, and even in the smaller cities and towns (Rabe, 2011) is presumably creating the phenomenon explained by Barry Schwartz, in his book *The Paradox of Choice* (2009), where consumers overwhelmed by the vast amount of product on offer, in this case concerts, stay with the known product or not choosing at all, generating a problem for emerging and independent artists in order to present their art.

At the same time these established music acts and medium range artists tour now more than ever (Rabe, 2011), reaching more cities and performing more times per year at the same venues to keep up with the annual revenue expectations that the recorded music and publishing no longer provides. This, phenomenon might be an influential factor for emerging and independent bands to having a reduction in their offers and limited booking options in clubs and venues, mainly because of competition. To this matter, Primary Talent founding agent Dave Chumbley and agent Matt Bates say for the Music Week Article (Pakinkis, 2014):

“Competition in the live industry is more fierce than ever,” says Primary Talent’s Chumbley and Bates. “With all the advantages the digital age brings, there can also be a negative side. There are more bands and more agents but still the same amount of disposable income in a country. (Pakinkis, 2014)

It is then important to conclude whether or not this phenomenon is related to the alleged profit decrease of smaller acts as stated in the introduction.

In Europe, a common practice among independent and emerging acts is to join relatively bigger bands in their tours as support bands, but it is not clear, due to the lack of bibliography and written material, if this practice has changed and could be affecting the finances of emerging acts. It is clear that the competition for these has increased as many more amateur and smaller bands exist now thanks to the accessibility to technology in music creation as Chumbley and Bates say.

It is also arguable that the established circuit (many times small capacity venues and clubs), is now mostly booked during the whole year to host established international and medium size acts who were performing at theatres, auditoriums and major arenas, in the 90s. Emerging acts who already have an incipient fan-base and can perform though different cities are allegedly having to tour for longer periods of time to meet their financial expectations in comparison with the 2 previous decades.

Consequently, musicians who do not rank among the handful of top dogs in the industry have got to be prepared to perform all over the country to make a living. But everyone's been hard hit by the shortfalls in the recorded-music business, so nowadays all the artists in every genre are constantly on tour, not just newcomers or musicians who've just released a new album, but even the old idols, too. And all of them are facing a saturated market that is not growing without limit – as well as an entertainment industry that has long since become thoroughly professionalized. Well aware of its vital importance to the artists' livelihood, the industry now tries to pay the lowest possible fees. That is one reason why it's more crucial than ever nowadays for musicians to hold all the copyrights to their songs, says Konrad von Löhneysen, managing director of Berlin's Embassy of Music label and spokesman for the associate members of the German Music Industry Association. (Rabe, 2011)

## **1.2 Hypothesis**

This paper seeks to test the hypothesis that in the European HR/HM scene emerging artists have to tour now more than ever to meet their financial expectations when compared to the decades of the 90's and first decade of XXI century. Possible reasons for this might be: lower fees for performances, reduced space in clubs and venues, reduced slots for smaller acts at festivals all over Europe. More festivals appear to be focusing on booking bigger acts, which have been active for more than a decade, leaving a small budget for the smaller acts and newcomers. Diminishing physical record sales is another possible factor.

If this is a correct description of current developments, then we could be witnessing the creation of a bottleneck effect where small size acts and emerging artists are being pushed away from the music market revenue flow, causing premature dissolutions. Many authors have suggested that this could lead to an artistic stagnation in the long term. Concerning the last argument, Wilkström (2005), has referred to the recorded music industry explaining how the new growth strategies carried out by the major record labels will lead to lower product diversity, as the Artist & Repertoire (A&R) scoping strategies have changed from the

“*Buckshot*” theory of managing the catalogues of many artists and keeping while keeping the recording rights and watching after which of those artists brings the revenue, to a “*Hit Potential*” strategy that in search for new artists, impose a certain criteria that has to be met and that is that the artists music has already proven that has a strong selling potential. Wilkström argues that this new strategy represents a great damage for new music and music diversity. It is then arguable that these conducts are leading to musical homogeneity and it will be necessary for this research to draw some conclusions about this and see if this could be affecting the HR/HM scene and genre.

In relation to the information provided by Wilkström, in a leaked Wikileaks document named Music strategy-confidential from inside Sony Records, a consultant advises the senior management to avoid a wide diversity of output (thereby enable a cut in head count - i.e. staff) and concentrate on cheaper produced materials that live a long life due to its “*Hit Potential*” - Country and Rock music for example.

By confirming or denying the above mentioned hypothesis, the project could lead to a better understanding about the question that this research intends to further discuss; How are emerging HR/HM artists building a sustainable career out of the live music market in the present time in mainland Europe?

### **1.3 Research questions**

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Main research question

- How Hard Rock/Heavy Metal emerging bands have been impacted by changes in the live-music economy?

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Secondary questions

- Seen from the perspective of live performing: How will those bands develop their careers and reach self-sustainability / professional careers during the next decade?

- How difficult is it for emerging bands of Hard Rock / Heavy Metal in Europe, at this point of history, to reach the self-sustainability point through live performing as their main activity, compared to one and two decades ago where the circumstances were different?
- How do the different purchasers and providers (gatekeepers) in the live music market affect the participation and economy of emerging HR/HM bands in Europe?
- How do the audience, the complementarities sells and online platforms affect the participation and the economy of emerging HR/HM bands in Europe?
- What role do funding agencies and governments are currently playing in the live operation of emerging bands in Europe?

A prime aim of the following research will be to provide an overview of the current circumstances that such bands are experiencing through the testimonies of a handful of industry representatives and via its analysis produce predictions of the future in the short-medium range. This will enable further research on the matter or a second part of the project that focuses on the measures and strategies that the genre's live music industry could take in the future to secure a balanced operation.

The main concern is to understand if the conditions in the future will be apt for emerging bands to develop a long lasting career and build a self-sustainable financial system that can allow the creation of new artistic forms and provide sufficient funds for such bands to operate entirely on the income derived from their musical activity and if they can aspire to become professionals.

## **1.4 Project Objectives**

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General Objective:

The research intends to provide further understanding of the present situation regarding career development connected to live performing of emerging (aspiring to become fully professional) Hard Rock / Heavy Metal bands in Europe.

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## Specific Objectives:

- The project also intends to bring out the testimonies of key actors of the live music market in the manner of an academic text rather than the more traditional music magazine interview through a journalistic perspective.
- To establish a comparison between the situations experienced by emerging bands from the 90's and actual emerging bands. Although it is not the main objective of this study, it will be necessary to understand the present situation for such artists and to be able to provide an analysis under several perspectives.
- To provide a better understanding of the strategies and decisions that emerging Hard Rock / Heavy Metal bands based in Europe are taking in order to confront the challenges that the industry presents at the moment.

## 1.5 Justification

The live music market is one of the most important aspects of the music industry nowadays, but academic research focusing on live performing started only fairly recently (Holt, 2010, p. 244), and even then with little attention being paid to the emerging scene of niche genres. In most previous research, the music industry has often only been associated with the recording music industry with a focus based on recorded, or prerecorded music, a term (Montoro-Pons & Cuadrado-García, 2011) have used. Literature concerning live performance mostly consists of overall figures and general turnover over years, segmented only by country and mainly focused on the United States, United Kingdom or Europe as a whole. It is important to highlight the need for further research around the live music market, the present situation for the emerging bands, and live music within niche genres on a global scale.

Studying this area of the live music market, focusing mainly on an experiential and testimonial approach with the involved parties of the European live music market will provide a better understanding of how will new talents will come to emerge in the market. The project is also aimed at impacting a very concrete group of individuals, mainly the starting bands and artists within this music genre that could benefit from having an insight of



the current situation of the market, specifically for them as a group. This will hopefully promote or encourage new strategies or further study so solutions to problem areas can be found and applied in the near future.

## **2. Research Background**

### **2.1 The rise of ticket prices and collapse of complementarities**

First it is necessary to start this section with a breaking point that has been attributed by many as the pivotal event that led the live music industry to its current state. The digital revolution that changed the recorded music industry will be taken into account as a point of reference at this stage. Even though this subject will not be covered in this study, it is important to understand how it finally led the live music industry into the number one source of revenue for the music industry. As Simon Frith explains in his analysis of the live music industry in the United Kingdom (2010), live performances and touring are no longer a means of support for record sales and by 2007 they were merged as a one music industry. Also Montoro-Pons & Cuadrado-Garcia (2011) add to this discussion that in the past, live performances were a way to promote pre-recorded music but due to illicit file sharing and track based online purchases the profitability of the recorded music market diminished, ending in live market consolidation and integration (Live Nation and Ticketmaster merging for example). At the same time it brought a change in the relationship between the artists (live acts) and the new established live music corporations.

According to Krueger (2005), ticket prices exploded from 1996 to 2003, a period in which the ticket prices increased 82% while the Consumer Price Index (CPI) increased 17%, marking the beginning of a monopolized live music industry. In his text, Krueger provides several causes for the increased ticket prices during this period, concluding: *“The decline of the complementarities is the main cause of the surge in concert prices”* because of file sharing and CD copying. Although in his text, Krueger focuses mainly on the so called “Super Stars” of Rock and Pop-Music, the period in which these bands moved all their revenue expectation into the live music industry, is key to an understanding of how the “live” ecosystem works today and will be addressed throughout this section of the text.

To have a better view of the concept exposed by Krueger, the study took revenue data from concerts between 1981 - 2003 from Pollstar Database of live performances based on The Rolling Stone Encyclopedia of Rock & Roll, a database of 1786 artists. (See chart below<sup>4</sup>)

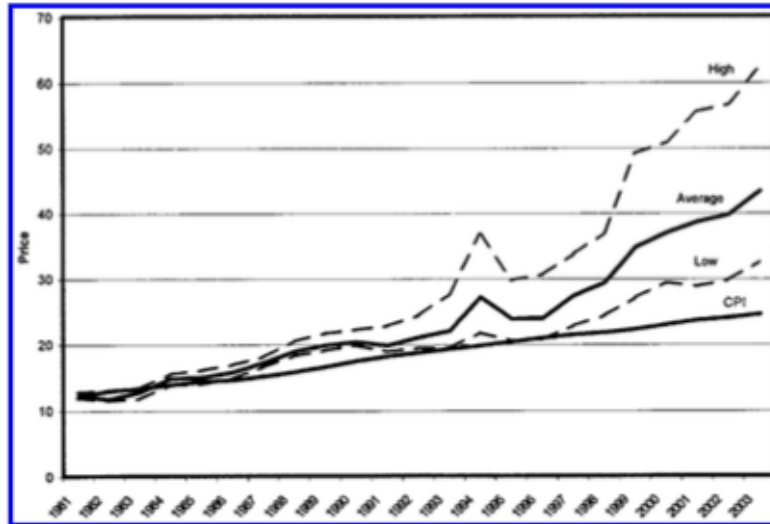


FIG. 1.—Average price per concert ticket, high- and low-price tickets, and overall inflation rate, 1981–2003.

Montoro-Pons & Cuadrado-Garcia (2011) also discuss the behavioral aspect of live music consumption. The authors refer to Earl (2001). In his analysis, Earl determines that “*The demand for live music cannot be explained as the demand for an information good*” Since there are other “more efficient” ways to collect and process the same information through recorded audio-visual material, attending concerts is presented as an “inefficient way of music consumption”. Nonetheless it involves “*risk attitude, curiosity and sampling and the social ritual*” that involves a live performance.

## 2.2 Adaptation to the new environment

In this study, the rise of the live music industry in the late 90’s and the early 2000’s will be taken into account in order to better understand the current situation of the Hard Rock / Heavy Metal live music scene in Europe. When the phenomenon exposed by Krueger started, all the Major acts of Pop and Rock music that were already selling large amounts of records were the firsts to adapt to the situation and moved their income expectations to live performances. The record labels adopted “360 degree deals” or “multiple-rights” or “all-

<sup>4</sup> Taken from: (Alan B. Krueger, 2005)

rights-contracts” (“A change of tune,” 2007), to compensate for the revenue loss through records. Before the decline of the complementarities, bands were touring and performing live in order to push record sales, gradually after that, bands started making records in order to push ticket sales.

This is of course the wide panorama, focusing on the “Superstars” as Krueger calls the Major Acts in the music industry, but how was the situation for niche genres and underground music that was not associated to massive record and ticket sales like in the HR/HM scene? This genre has an ecosystem within itself, that goes from the major acts to the amateurs. Before the internet revolution, selling records was also a major part of the business within this scene, specially for bands like Metallica, who have sold over 16 million copies of their self-titled 1991 album only in the USA (Caulfield, 2014) and 30 million worldwide (Perry, 2013). The band spent nearly 3 years touring to promote the album and its sales with 3 tours (Wherever We May Roam Tour, Nowhere Else to Roam and Shit Hits the Sheds Tour) (“Metallica (album),” 2015) that started in early August 01, 1991, and ended in August 21, 1994.

According to (Black, Fox, & Kochanowski, 2007), artists tour for three main reasons: To earn money, to expand their fan base, and to satisfy existing fans. These authors highlight the importance of tour revenues by referring to Krueger (2005) when saying that an estimate of 80% of records fail to recoup their costs.

After the collapse of the recording industry’s reliance on physical sales, independent artists and niche genre also had to adapt to the ever increasing numbers of artists performing live and touring rather than focusing on recouping recording contract advances. Sponsorships and commercial agreements have been present for a long time in the music industry but smaller and emerging acts had to start looking for such contracts. As Jack Conte (2014) explains, emerging artists touring endeavours involve sponsorships as a vital tour support since many brands want to connect with the live concert audiences. Frith (2007, p. 7) also comments rock and pop subsidies from commercial sponsorships that see in the live music audience a potential customer for products or services. At the same time, online presence has helped

these artists to connect with their fans and gain knowledge about how to adapt touring and live performing according to the preferences of their fans.

### **2.3 Live performing in bands early career**

As a general rule, bands within the HR/HM genre, developed their career until achieving a self-sustainable, semi-professional or professional<sup>5</sup> level through live performing. During the 80's and early 90's bands were not expected to sell large amounts of records during early stages and first records (Azzarad, 1999). Instead, those bands grew their fan base through non-mainstream channels. Since the beginnings of Heavy Metal in the 70's this was done mainly by performing live and appearing in non-commercial radio stations (Straw, 1984). In the case of Alternative Rock of the 90's and other independent and niche genres, some independent record labels were responsible for putting exciting emerging bands in the scope through independent radio, like the label Sub Pop, which featured Nirvana and Soundgarden in their Box Set, and according to Thomas Bell in his analysis of the Seattle role in the alternative rock development, without this 'Indie' label, these two bands might not have been discovered. (Bell, 1998). Before the Internet became an important promotion tool, emerging bands performed live to gather enough followers to start a successful career. This was even true of Metallica in the early stages of their career. Bands like REM invested much time in live performing in the early 80's, often in collaboration with student clubs (Broad, 1996). How different is it today with the professionalisation of the live industry (Brennan, 2010), and the advent of many new business models and parties that act as "Gatekeepers"?

Bell explains in his article that the role of the artist and repertoire person (A&R) was fundamental to independent labels to discover those new talents, this was done mainly at live performances in clubs and small venues. Today this discovery process seems to be more complex as multiple platforms, businesses and entrepreneurs populated the live music market.

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<sup>5</sup> Self sustainable refers to the ability of an artist or band to maintain itself by independent effort. A semi-professional musician or artist receives payment for an activity but not relying entirely on it for a living. A professional artist or musician engaged in music activity as its main paid occupation rather than as an amateur.

There are considerable differences between the present day and previous decades as the internet has opened the ground for a vast amount of new business models and promotion alternatives. Live performances are not any longer the main source for A&R executives to spot new talents, as now not only record labels are in charge of promoting and developing the career of an artist. It is expected that the present study provides a better understanding of how emerging artists and new talents find the right team of professionals to develop a successful career in the current time and place.

## **2.4 Live performing as a solution**

Several discourses about how the live music industry was going to save the music industry appeared when the recorded music industry crisis arrived after the internet revolution started to impact the record sales. The media was positive about the music market as a solution calling bands and artists to rethink their business model and to start focusing on live performance and merchandise sales (Burrell, 2007).

In March 2006 Music Week had anticipated the annual meeting of the International Live Music Convention by reporting that ‘the live industry is in rude health’ and predicting continued growth on the back of two years of record-breaking ticket sales. (Frith, 2007)

In the article from Music Week (Pakinkis, 2014), As The Agency Group’s managing director Geoff Meall is cited:

“Due to the decline in recorded music sales, more onus has been put upon the agents to generate income for artists to replace lost revenue. We do this in a number of ways but never lose sight of the artists’ long term live careers. Keeping an artist’s live career longevity buoyant is one of the most important skills we work on, especially in the face of the threats of digital music consumption.” (Pakinkis, 2014)

As the article explains, the revenue transition from the record sales to the live music market was expected by artists of all sizes. It was generally accepted by the artist community, that the main source of income would have to come from music performances.

But even then, there was the concern about the concentration of ownership of venues leading to higher ticket prices and falling attendance, calling the attention of Britain to not follow the

path of North America as this could impact the live market (Burrell, 2007). More formal research about the venue circuit in Europe and the economy of those businesses is necessary. Jehnny Beth from the British band, Savages wrote an article for The Guardian (2014), in which she states that the lack of resources for independent venues in the UK is decreasing standards in comparison with the rest of Europe. In the Independent Venue Week organized by the Music Venue Trust, she proposed a solution that Andy Inglis, co-founder of the well known venue The Luminaire in London, which had to close its doors in 2009, had formulated. The solution was that the live music industry should support the small clubs and venues. Other project discussed in the meeting was to reduce taxes for these venues.

Along several discussions at the University of Agder in Kristiansand, Norway, Andy Inglis explained how The Luminaire came to end. There is yet another article in The Guardian<sup>6</sup> and a Youtube video<sup>7</sup> to learn more.

## **2.5 Touring, the only alternative**

In the article from The New York Times, Jon Pareles (2002) Interviews David Bowie, and 2 phrases creates big resonance within the music industry media and academy.

"Music itself is going to become like running water or electricity," (...) "be prepared for doing a lot of touring because that's really the only unique situation that's going to be left."

These phrases would later have a strong repercussion in research based on the future of the music industry and at the moment of its publication it gave a clear message about where the music industry was heading. This concept will be presented in detail during the theoretical framework of the research.

On her article in The Guardian, Karen Pirie (2014) points out what are some of the normal practices for starting and emerging bands when it comes to live touring and performing.

As music sales return diminishing revenues, we need new models for touring and commissioning. Beyond-mainstream artists need more young people to come to their gigs, to compensate for

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2010/nov/28/luminaire-london-concert>

<sup>7</sup> <https://youtu.be/MW3wqfPlqng>

smaller product turnover; advances at the digital frontier need to be exploited to get more people to gigs (and to spend more money when they're there). (Pirie, 2014)

Pirie, explains among other things that these bands often crash on stranger's sofas to reduce touring costs. The "Pay to Play" model is apparently an ongoing practice, Elbow's Guy Garvey called out action from the U.K. government to stop these practices:

Speaking at the In The City music conference in Manchester, Garvey called for penalties against promoters operating such concerts. He said: "There needs to be something really strong in place if a promoter is found to be ripping off young bands. It's really, really unfair. It's basically playing on the hopes and dreams of people who are at the very first hurdle of their musical careers." ... "Quite often promoters would promise you that scouts would come in from different record labels. So you would put up with anything that they told you to do." (Martin, 2010)

Pirie also comments that the younger fans are also being affected for the rise in ticket prices, having in mind that this audience is central for the development of newcomers and emerging acts. Pirie discusses that for any band that is looking after quitting their day job, touring is the most important thing to focus on, but this presents a paradox because an individual with stable daytime employment has a limited amount of permission to leave the job for touring. So how are these musicians managing their day jobs alongside with a band that requires them to be on the road for the most part of the year? There is always the threat that if the band is not active by touring throughout the year, they can easily loose their attention as, the media is presenting everyday a new trend or band.

## **2.6 How online platforms affect the live music market**

For the last 50 years the relationship between recorded music and live music has forged the popular music industry (Frith et al., 2010). Based on that presumption, and with the changes of the concept of recorded music of today, with streaming services, file sharing and YouTube where live performance videos are changing the concept of albums and recordings; how does the recording, the album and the video being perceived as part of the live music market entrance or career development for emerging artists and bands?

In their study, Montoro-Pons & Cuadrado-García (2011), provide solid evidence about the fact that internet use has a clear negative effect on pre-recorded music consumption without

affecting the concert attendance. Of course in 2011 legal subscription based music services were not as predominant as they are today. They also provided evidence leading to the connection between illegal downloads through P2P platforms and live performances attendance. *“In other words, internet downloads can increase artists revenue through live performances.”* Many researchers and organizations have used Montoro-Pons & Cuadrado-García results to demonstrate that illegal downloads were affecting the pre-recorded music industry, including the RIAA in their Piracy Impact Studies<sup>8</sup>.

Frith (2007, p. 7) also analyses the impact of the mediated forms of music under the cultural value of music.

Mediated forms of music have not displaced live performance. Rather, it has adapted itself to new economic and social circumstances. Indeed, one could argue the converse: the record industry itself was shaped by consumer understanding of recorded music as live music. (Frith, 2007)

## **2.7 Funding agencies and state regulation**

State funding of the arts has a long history in Europe. Many European countries support their artists in different manners as the arts are considered a cultural heritage that must be preserved and promoted. France, Germany and Norway present a wide range of state involvement while in the USA, state funding for the arts is not part of their policy (Mulcahy, 1998). State intervention in the arts has been under debate for many years, and for this research the main question is whether it is necessary for emerging bands and up to which degree. The United States is one of the major suppliers for music in the world and state involvement in the arts is minimum. Then it is relevant to question other models in Europe where the state involvement is much higher and put under analysis how artists rely on these funding models.

The budget established by the European Union for the cultural and creative industries for the period 2014-2020 is €1.8 billion (Eger, 2013). But how are niche genres bands and artists taking advantage of this model?

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<sup>8</sup> [https://www.riaa.com/keystatistics.php?content\\_selector=research-report-journal-academic](https://www.riaa.com/keystatistics.php?content_selector=research-report-journal-academic)



According to the EU Commission's Creative Europe proposal, it would enable: 300 000 artists and cultural professionals and their work to receive funding to reach new audiences beyond their home countries; Thousands of cultural organisations and professionals would benefit from training to gain new skills and to strengthen their capacity to work internationally; (Eger, 2013)

In the article for The New York Times, (Leeds, 2006), reviews how different world governments support musicians and present them as cultural ambassadors. The article mentions how The Hives, a rock band from Sweden, that was funded by the state:

They got the gigs, but to a large degree their home country got the credit: "Sweden Rocks," declared Rolling Stone. (Leeds, 2006)

It is evident that artists in Europe, as Pelle Almqvist from The Hives says, are good at funding requesting;

To many artists, even to many bands involved in these programs, federal financing may not initially seem very rock 'n' roll. After the Hives took Sweden's money, the band's lead singer, Pelle Almqvist, fumed that tax-financed rock was "like working for the Man." (...) "Plus," he added, "we were" — well, they weren't very good — "at filling in all the paperwork." (Leeds, 2006)

But how are these artists economies affected when economic crisis strikes their governments? Or policy makers update or regulate the funding policies? To what extent is it positive for small artists to rely on these funding models or take advantage of them as much as possible? Further reading on the matter can be found in (Mulcahy, 1998) and (Rushton, 2003).

Rushton (2003), provides an extensive analysis of the public funding of the arts from an economical point of view. In the article, the transaction costs of organizing cultural funding through the public sector are reviewed and stated that as diversity in the arts grow, also the transaction costs grow. Although Rushton does not urge governments into adopting his proposed model, suggests a mixed model where the private sector is also part of the arts funding to reduce the transaction costs and increase cultural diversity.

Pirie (2014), raises an important question about the role of the state when it comes to helping the clubs and small venues that host smaller acts and emerging bands, she says that stadium shows are thriving but smaller music venues are going through a bad moment. Should the state be involved in the commercial operation of such venues? Pirie states in her discussion with Jen Long, of Radio 1's BBC Introducing show that due to the recession, those smaller clubs rely heavily on alcohol sales, and that leaves out the underage community that is so important for starting bands. This rises the question of how can the state intervene so the cultural offer is still valid for this community. Could teenagers impact positively the starting artists career if the age for entering venues or clubs only for concerts were reduced? What legislations and funding should be considered in such case? The question is relevant due to the fact that as stated by Pirie: "*The latest BPI (British Phonographic Industry) research shows that 13 to 19-year-olds are the second biggest market after those in their early twenties.*" Several attempts in the UK have been made to promote over 14 year old shows but the local authorities are discrete over the matter (Cloonan, 2010).

Beth and Inglis propose an alternative to support small clubs and venues in the UK, would it also be reasonable for the live industry to unite for a legislation concerning taxes so promoters can apply to a VAT reduction when a deal is for a certain amount, or depending on the age of the band (Beth, 2014)? Perhaps this requires an enormous amount of effort and resources and even a promoters association across Europe but maybe it can help promoters to pay better fees to newcomers and emerging bands when on tour.

After presenting these issues, it is still important to mention that different governments across the world are aware of the economic importance of the live music industry. In 2004, the Live Music Forum was set up in the UK by the government. And by 2006, there was a major interest in providing training to the different sectors of the live music market (Frith, 2007). Not only to preserve its cultural legacy, as in many European countries do, governments are now concerned about supporting new business models that can impact positively in the nation's economy.

## 2.8 Audience involvement

The “Metalhead” is a very particular music fan. According to the heavy metal fan profiles identified by Arnett (1993), to a certain type of metal fan the HR/HM concert is a ritual, it involves many extra musical reasons to attend such as slam dancing or mosh. Arnett reviews the different theories on how youth subcultures emerge and attribute the name “*Metal Subculture*” in his conclusions, stating that the three profiles identified in his study vary in their adoption of the subculture.

In their discourse about identification through authenticity Weisethaunet & Lindberg (2010), explore many types of authenticity and how people relate with music. The “*authenticity*” as *transcendence of the everyday* states that rock music has the ability to create a whole new experience every time a song is performed, and that action is an attempt to authentication. “*It borders on body authenticity but stresses a mental rather than a physical experience*” (Weisethaunet & Lindberg, 2010, p. 476). So the mental impact of music and a scape route to the routine of daily life defines this kind of authenticity.

As stated in the introduction, the heavy metal fan is in many cases very engaged and creates a life style and identifies him or herself with a subculture. This is reflected when collecting physical and audiovisual material from a band of his/her preference.

Artists are relying on their fans more than ever, platforms for crowdfunding have been developed through recent years having Amanda Palmer as an example of success. Jon Webster, chief executive of the Music Managers Forum, said to The Guardian that this model might be more appealing for new artists instead of the more established ones (Topping, 2012). In the same article Managing director of Pledge Music, Malcolm Dunbar says:

"Selling direct to fans will be an integral part of the industry. Fans are an artist's lifeblood so it is increasingly necessary to engage with them and give real value for money."(Topping, 2012)

And Peter Guy, a Liverpool music writer and creator of the Getintothis blog says:

"That DIY spirit has just become the norm," Guy said. "Artists and people in the music game don't have to rely on that old record label infrastructure; people are just coming together, working collaboratively and doing it for themselves." (Topping, 2012)

Taking advantage of the engagement of fans is a common practice for many musicians today and having already described the Heavy Metal fan, it makes sense for emerging bands in this genre to harvest a close relation with its audience, but what else can the audience do? How involved is the European HR/HV fan? It is necessary to ask the bands themselves about how the audience impact positively or negatively in their economies in the present time, having in mind the saturation of the market with venue concerts and the large offer in festivals across Europe. This study will deal with this question during the interview phase.

## **2.9 Purchasers, suppliers and Gatekeepers role in today's market**

Festivals, promoters, clubs and venues, record labels and the different businesses associated to live and recorded music economy have changed their roles throughout time regarding to niche genres. It is necessary to undergo more research to establish how these players have changed their relationship with the emerging artists of niche genres in comparison to how it took place in the 21th century.

(Foster, Borgatti, & Jones, 2011) Provide an extensive analysis on the Gatekeeper theory connected to the cultural industries. The authors define the concept like this:

Gatekeepers are brokers who mediate between artists and audiences; however, cultural production research contains at least three different definitions of the gatekeeper role: as co- producer, as tastemaker, and as selector. (Foster et al., 2011)

In their study, the authors discuss the importance that social networks have for the Gatekeepers during their search, selection and curatorship processes. They conclude that networking among talent buyers of the same kind is in many cases very close, keeping a sort of straight forward competition, but at the same time the relationship with the product or chosen acts is relatively more distant. Ben Gallan (2012), refers to gatekeeping the night spaces in his study based on "Oxford Tavern", a live music venue in the Australian city of Wollongong, where the author describes the development of a strong economic music scene based on local talent around this city and describes the booking practices based upon local

talent that lead to such success. During the discussion, it is stated that because of the gatekeepers started to abandon such practices, the decline of the scene was imminent.

Such discussions and theory raise many questions. How can these gatekeepers, who are so important for the economic well-being of the live music scene, take calculated risks that can influence the rise or fall of niche genres, new talents and emerging acts? Booking, promotion, production and showcasing practices when deliberately worked hand by hand can develop a strong industry that harvests new talents into the bigger acts of the future. So the question is: How coordinated and forward oriented is the gatekeepers work within the HR/HM genre across Europe? Will the new generation of artists that brings new artistic statements be able to endure the career building stage at the present time in history? How is the now more professional live industry building artistic currents and movements across Europe in comparison to past decades?

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## Record labels

In the past, the different waves of new music in England tended to have a particular record company identified with them. First Island, then Virgin, started almost at street level, before growing. Despite the alleged ideology of one or two of them, many of the punk bands will doubtless aim (like the Sex Pistols) for the big corporations and the big advances. Those who reject all that will gravitate to the new, still tiny companies like Chiswick and Stiff Records who are trying to deal as fast and simply as possible with the new bands, on their own level. (Denselow, 2015)

Denselow refers to the record labels advances that were necessary for such bands during the 70's 80's and 90's, but how are these advances relevant for emerging bands today when it comes to tour promotion and support? How involved are record labels, publishers and other copyright related businesses when allegedly most of the revenue comes through live performing? Is HR/HM any different for these companies? Unfortunately there is no reliable or unified source of information available at the moment to be able to prove how involved they are.

In past years the debate for the split of the revenues for record sales between artists and record labels have been long discussed and it has been controversial as many artists turned to the online media to show the actual figures. In 2000, Courtney Love created a controversy with a breakdown of the production, distribution and selling costs and revenue of a record (Love, 2000). In her text, Love shows how hard is for artists to get a share of the profits as normally there is a long period of recoupment for the label investment. Although this matter is not central for this study, it is worth mention that this issue represents a difficulty for bands of all sizes and raises the question about how is this working in the present time for the HR/HM genre in Europe. Nonetheless, Masnick (2010), does an interesting review of the subject. During 1969-1996, record labels were investing in touring costs to promote record sales in the UK (Brennan, 2010),

Labels like EMI and RCA started presenting free concerts to promote their new acts, and by 1970 the Marquee Club was booked every Monday night exclusively for record label promotion concerts. (Brennan, 2010)

So how are HR/HM labels involved in the touring activities of their artists? There is not much literature about this subject but apparently the record labels are no longer as involved with tour support as before the record sales fall. According to Montoro-Pons & Cuadrado-García (2011), there is no evidence of a link between concert attendance and pre-recorded music demand.

Second, we do not find evidence of a direct causal link from live attendance to prerecorded music demand. To test for it, we include live attendance in the prerecorded music equation, the specification labeled as model 2. Neither Table 4 nor 5 show significant results, an outcome that prevents us to reject the non existence of a direct connection between attendance and purchases for both the average and the frequent consumer: empirical evidence does not support a higher probability of purchasing music as a consequence of attending to live concerts. This finding is consistent with Krueger's tentative explanation of the price dynamics in the live sector.

In an interview with Artists House Music, Brandon Bush, member of the Grammy-winning band Train, provides some insight.

Artists House:

You've toured with several major-label artists, including Train. What kind of tour support can one expect from a major label these days? What kind of activities does the label set up for you to do, in a marketing capacity, to help sell your record?

Brandon Bush:

I've been fortunate enough to tour on many levels, from van and trailer to buses and trucks: from asking people for a floor to crash on between sets to relaxing in cushy hotels. The job is really the same, but once you've reached a certain level, the day just gets a bit easier. Show up, play your music, meet some people and move to the next town. Once you get beyond just trying to cover gas money to afford to make it to the next town, the economics of touring can quickly become a challenging business to manage. Labels sometimes offer tour support to help cover costs in hopes that by touring you will sell CDs, and promote the band. But if that cost is recoupable, which in most cases it is, you are basically taking a loan to tour. In that case, you need to make sure that you are going to new markets and making the most of your time in a particular city to promote the band. Visiting radio stations, playing in record stores or even just meeting some local promoters and club owners for lunch can go a long way towards spreading your name in that market. Think of the tour support as an opportunity, not a necessity. (King, 2006)

With his answer, Bush already shows that in 2006 the involvement of record labels in tour support was not always present. On the other hand, Nick Light, SVP of artist development at Sony Music and former VP of Artist Development and Touring at Warner Brothers Records in interview with Artists House Music (2010), states that major record labels involvement with touring is much more complex today as they are more involved with planning, costs and promotion than before, taking advantage of each tour date possibility to promote records in each city with the coordinated action of their sales, publicity and radio departments. But still, many emerging artists like Pomplamoose, do not have a major record label or a record label at all to provide any tour support (Conte, 2014), so there are many possible situations depending on the size of a band and the type of label that supports them. Later in the discussion the record labels involvement will be discussed based on the interviews.

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## Clubs, venues and promoters

How are clubs, venues and promoters playing an important role in the career development of emerging artists? King Tut, the venue in Glasgow, received much attention and established itself for discovering and pushing the careers of many aspiring bands (Webster, 2010). It operates as a local venue but it is owned by a national promotional agency, DF Concerts. The

venue is known for the loyalty that artists have for it, and so DF Concerts started a long lasting relationship with the emerging artists at an early stage of their career, showing “*the developmental role of the promoter*” (Webster, 2010). So the question is; how many of these venues are existing in Europe and how are their economies? It was earlier discussed that the economies of the smaller independent clubs and venues is at risk, at least in the case of the UK. On this, James Walsh, back in 2010 was already calling out for awareness because London was loosing many of the small venues quoting Stacey Thomas, owner of The Lexington and Buffalo Bar:

"There's now so many fees. It's not just the cost of promotion, it's all the licenses you need. Premises license, rates, plus 6K a year to get our rubbish collected ... You pay a lot more for your electricity, you need a license to operate, you need a license to put a chalkboard outside to promote your gigs ..." (Walsh, 2010)

(Black et al., 2007) conclude that in North America small scale promoters gradual revenue loss contributed to the concentration of promotion at a regional and national level. “*By the mid- 1990s, 20 promoters accounted for almost 74% of concert sales in the United States (Hull).*”(Black et al., 2007). In a more extensive research it would be relevant to study the current state of venues and concert promotion businesses in Europe in relation to their independence and if their current revenues allows them to endure time independently. Although in their study, in North America, an increase of entertainment venues has been reported, the authors suggest that there is evidence stating that smaller venues may be providing fewer shows than in the past due to increased production and transportation costs. In Europe these smaller venues are of great importance for emerging acts and their space for shows is always required, but as reviewed earlier, those venues appear to be in risk.

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## Festivals

In their study, (Black et al., 2007), analyze the reasons why audiences attend to concerts in the first place. They suggest that going to concerts is accessing to new information and it is a process similar to learning something new. Like getting to know someone in person, attending to a concert provides a connection with the artist at a personal level. A concert provides insight on the meaning of the artist’s music. Later in their article, the authors state



that for the audience that attends to an emerging artist concert, and if set in the context of festivals, it is relatively low commitment (associated with buying pre-recorded music), giving the possibility to scope the new artist's music (Black et al., 2007). This means that festivals that hosts smaller acts and emerging artists provides an ideal ground to build new talents, but how much of this newcomers quota is really taking place in the HR/HV festival across Europe?

It is now commonly accepted that festivals became the most important means for promoters to grow their audience. At the same time, major festivals are now a key asset for portfolios of many of the international corporations that now dominate the market in the UK. (Frith, 2007, p. 4).

Since Leighton-Pope refers to the present amount of festivals, it is relevant to question if this amount is interfering with the capacity of small acts and emerging artists to attract enough audience to their club shows during the year. Mainly because of two reasons; the first being that the audience could be saving their budget to spend it on festivals during a certain period of the year. And second, that the audience might expect those acts to be showcased in a festival leading to a decreased willingness to attend to an isolated concert.

“Ticket prices and income from the shows are increasing to compensate artists' rising costs, and this is making it difficult for the buyer to go to as many shows as he would like,” says Carl Leighton-Pope - founder of the Leighton Pope Organisation, a boutique agency that includes the likes of Bryan Adams, Keith Urban and Michael Bublé on its roster. “In my opinion, there are way too many festivals, and they are taking enormous amounts of money out of the market, making it difficult for touring acts,” (Pakinkis, 2014)

Primary Talent founding agent Dave Chumbley and agent Matt Bates comments refer to the dominance of “*Heritage Acts*” within the major festival circuit:

More acts are able to forge a live career (with or without commercial success) but less are able to reach ‘stadium’ like levels. There have been very few acts from the last ten years or so that are able to headline major festivals for instance. Heritage acts still seem to dominate the upper reaches of most festival bills and trying to get an act over this final hurdle and into the pinnacle stages of the concert circuit is an evolution we are dealing with as agents. It can however be achieved with the right foundation, plot and patience. (Pakinkis, 2014)

This comment draws the attention to a key aspect of the following research. Both agents agree that today more acts are able to forge a live career regardless of the commercial success, but after analyzing some of the literature available, apparently a large amount of those careers are not reaching a commercial success great enough to procure a professional activity within a time frame suitable to keep doing music. This is the paradox will be analyzed later on during the discussion.

As Chumbey and Bates define the “*Heritage Acts*”, there are also concerns about how the distribution of the budgets are affecting the festivals that hosts such acts, as well as how affects smaller and emerging acts that make part of the line-up of the festivals. Daniel Nordgård (2013), analyses the present state of the Norwegian festivals and discusses how the fees required by the “*Heritage Acts*”, particularly David Bowie and other international acts for the Quart Festival in Kristiansand in 2002, put at risk the festival and started a broad discussion about the artists fees in Norway. This of course rises the question if the fees for the “*superstars*” and “*Heritage Acts*” is taking the budget for the smaller acts and newcomers in festivals all around Europe. Nordgård reviews Will Page analysis in Music Ally’s ”The Report” (2009) where states that in the UK’s live music market the more established artists takes great fees forcing the smaller artists to return to the “pay to play” era. It is then relevant to ask how important are festivals for artist development. In his discussion, Nordgård finally states that in the long term, festivals have a big responsibility in building the careers of artists.

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## Booking Agencies & Tour Promoters

There are several types of booking agencies. It is said that there are independent booking agencies and major booking agencies or agencies owned by larger corporations. It is no secret that smaller independent booking agencies that do “*boutique talent operations*” as Ray Waddell calls it, are being absorbed by major booking agencies (Waddell, 2014), in a similar way as major record labels did acquired independent record labels in the past century.

Apart from being important as a revenue source, live performing is also important to establish the band career. In the article from Music Week (2014), Pakinkis cites Primary Talent founding agent Dave Chumbley and agent Matt Bates to describe the role and influence of live agencies in an artist career in 2014.

“Live continues to grow in importance for any artist’s career,” they suggest. “Not just as a financial revenue stream but as a way of ensuring profile and growth. “Throughout the history of music, live performance has been one of the few places where an artist can relate closely to their fans. With the world becoming an ever smaller place, a live agency ensures its artists have a chance to play to their fans in almost every country in the world. “It has become increasingly important to try and preserve the longevity of a live career,” they add. “With some revenue streams no longer as strong in the long term for an artist, thinking of how to maintain a long and healthy live career is more vital than ever. Avoiding overkill and thinking several steps further down the career path is vital on being a good and successful agent to your acts.” (Pakinkis, 2014)

Chumbley and Bates also discuss about how do booking agents measure the worth of its artists in the present time. In the past, record sales were the agreed measurement standard to value the worth of an artist, today, YouTube statistics and other social media data allow booking agents to take better decisions based on the audience demand. In the same article, Alex Bruford of ATC Live sates that the internet and the available music creation technology is making it possible for many talented artists to present themselves to the world, meaning that booking agents now have more talent to discover (Pakinkis, 2014). But at the same time the vast amount of artists that are available and asking for a booking deal recreates the Schwartz’s paradigm of choice. Neil Warnock, founder of The Agency Group, states the following regarding that matter:

“We keep hearing all the time that it’s harder to get a good agent working for you now than it is to get a label and it’s absolutely true because [agents] are just overloaded with talent coming to us every day. We have to be very careful because in the end we’ve got 12 hours in a day to actually sell and develop talent and if we take on too much then we’re not going to do the job right. We are all about artist development but you need time to do that.” (Pakinkis, 2014).

Concert and Tour Promoters like Live Nation and AEG grew to be large corporations that have a place in the live music industry similar as the one major record labels had in the past. In their study, (Black et al., 2007) conclude that a significant development of the present live music industry in North America is the corporate consolidation. Fusion of the largest Tour

Promoters and Ticketing companies, as well as media corporations, such as Clear Channel Entertainment, that received the necessary means to be able to own venues and other related entertainment assets. Due to territorial division and policies, in Europe such practices are not as strong as in North America but raises the question if such practices are suitable for the European live music market, moreover, would it affect negatively the independent and niche genres music scenes? As discussed earlier, in the case of King Tut venue being owned by a larger company has proven good results for niche genres and emerging artists. It is then relevant to ask if the presence of major promoting agencies and ticket companies like Live Nation and Ticket Master put in risk the smaller acts, as these companies are overtaking the market share of once dominated by the major record labels.

The growing importance of the live music business is reflected in both corporate and state activity. UK venues and promotions are increasingly controlled by a small number of international operators: Live Nation (the live music business of the US-based Clear Channel); Dennis Desmond's Irish-based MCD; the US company AEG (owner of the Millennium Dome, which is being reopened as a live venue in 2007); Simon Moran's SJM group. (Frith, 2007)

Jeff Dorenfeld, Associate Professor of Music Business/Management at Berklee College of Music explains in an interview for Artists House Music (2011), that companies such as Live Nation promote all different sizes of shows, from the 600 capacity club show to the stadium concerts. Dorenfeld states is to their benefit to develop new artists because as they own venues and concert facilities in all the capacity ranges, they need to continue filling them throughout time, as they are aware that artists like The Rolling Stones eventually will retire. So you have companies like Golden Voice, owned by AEG, who owns many small sized clubs where they do artist development, Dorenfeld explains.

Although artists and people who attend to concerts have raised the alarm about monopoly practices of large corporations such as Clear Channel (Howard, 2007, pp. 535-536), It is not well documented how these corporations affect the HR/HM live music market.

## **2.10 Collective management organizations**

Collective management organizations (CMOs) are also part of the live performing activity of all European bands. Each country has its own CMO and different regulations apply

depending on the territory of collection. This is a very complex subject because a part of the income from touring comes from the collection of public performance royalties and since each CMO manages different collection and payment procedures, it is a very unpredictable source of income for many young bands. It also represents an issue for venues and festivals, in the UK there is a current project to revise the tariffs that PRS is collecting from venues and festivals for live performances, it has not been reviewed since its initial installation in 1988 in the UK Copyright Tribunal (Houghton, 2015). Songwriters support this project, but how will this affect the small venues and festivals? It is material for further research but, how is the collection of such royalties flowing back to the pocket of the smaller bands in Europe? Although live music has been regulated, at the same time it is the least regulated sector of the music industry (Cloonan, 2010). It is then relevant to raise the question on the reach of the CMOs around Europe when it comes to royalty collection in small clubs and venues where often a live performance license is not present or required. Cloonan speaks from the point of view of the UK where small club owners are not eager to sign the PRS form for public performance rights to be collected as it is not in their best interest. Another problem is that CMOs need proper reporting of works performed if they are able to distribute revenues correctly to writers. This is rarely a problem for the organisers of mega tours, but can be quite onerous for smaller operators. The result is that, even if these pay CMO fees, the cash might not return to the writers in a lesser-known band that writes its own songs.

Raising percentages in the tariffs charged by CMOs to festivals caused controversy in the past. In her report, Rebecca Smithers (2010) quotes Melvin Ben of Festival Republic in the UK concerns about the increments in the tariffs charged by PRS to small festivals, where he indicates that it would inevitably raise the ticket prices.

### **3. Theoretical Framework**

#### **3.1 The Bowie Theory**

In an article from The New York Times, Jon Pareles (2002) Interviews David Bowie and quotes him:

"I don't even know why I would want to be on a label in a few years, because I don't think it's going to work by labels and by distribution systems in the same way," he said. "The absolute transformation of everything that we ever thought about music will take place within 10 years, and nothing is going to be able to stop it. I see absolutely no point in pretending that it's not going to happen. I'm fully confident that copyright, for instance, will no longer exist in 10 years, and authorship and intellectual property is in for such a bashing."

"Music itself is going to become like running water or electricity," he added. "So it's like, just take advantage of these last few years because none of this is ever going to happen again. You'd better be prepared for doing a lot of touring because that's really the only unique situation that's going to be left. It's terribly exciting. But on the other hand it doesn't matter if you think it's exciting or not; it's what's going to happen."

More than 10 years have passed and Bowie's predictions have partly come true. Artists from all sorts of genres are still linked to record labels and receive revenue from copyright-based sources. At the same time, Bowie is very accurate when stating that music will become like running water and electricity, since platforms like Spotify act now a music "Service". But what is more relevant for this study is what exactly Bowie means when he states that artists should prepare for touring because that will be the only unique situation that will be left. That concept is the source of motivation to undergo this study, to provide a closer look at what is the common practice nowadays for emerging artists and how touring and live performing is determinant or not in those artist's career development.

Krueger first mentioned the Bowie theory in his study: *The Economics of the Real Superstars* (2005). The title was presumably based on the assumption that his model was anticipated to some extent by Bowie in the interview referred to above.

My argument is that the magnitude of the second term of the markup equation has declined because an increase in concert attendance—or popularity more generally—has a much weaker effect on record sales beginning in the late 1990s. Therefore, artists and their managers do not need to feel as constrained when they set concert prices.

This model, to some extent, was anticipated by the rock & roll singer David Bowie, who predicted that "music itself is going to become like running water or electricity," and he advised performers, "You'd better be prepared for doing a lot of touring because that's really the only unique situation that's going to be left" (quoted from Pareles 2002, sec. 2, 1). Hence, I call this hypothesis the Bowie theory. (Alan B. Krueger, 2005)

This argument is central to the study of Krueger and it is also supported by several other researchers in their work, e.g. (Nordgård, 2013) ; (Montoro-Pons & Cuadrado-García, 2011) ; (Frith, 2007). This theory will be used to measure to what extent emerging HR/HM bands consider touring and live performing their “*only unique situation*”. Also the theory carries within the concept of scarcity and value, meaning that music considered as a service is less scarce and so it can be attributed with a lower perceived value. Although Bowie and Krueger refer mainly to pre-recorded music, it is relevant to go a step further by proposing that if at present pre-recorded music is almost like running water or electricity, then live music will take the same direction. Which begs the question: to what extent is the live music market in Europe already at this point, as it is commonly agreed that it is characterized by a clear degree of saturation? How is this phenomenon affecting ticket pricing for smaller shows and tours as well as opportunities for emerging bands?

Today, ten years after Krueger first proposed this theory, it is possible to support the postulate that a large part of the younger generation of consumers of recorded and live music have never paid for recorded music. This means that at the beginning of the “concert ticket price raise” the industry didn't have to feel constrained to elevate the prices because the audience were no longer consuming the complementarities or records. But now that many young music consumers live in an era where recorded music is accessible everywhere and anytime without having to pay, high ticket prices are no longer considered as a way to balance the low purchasing of recorded music. And having in mind the saturation of the market and the number of times a band is performing on the same area during a year, the concept of scarcity might not be associated to live performances any longer. This means that music becoming like running water or electricity might be affecting the live music industry as well.

### **3.2 The Network Governance Theory**

The general theory of network governance proposed by Jones, Hesterly and Borgatti (1997) will be used to analyse how the different actors within the live music market for HR/HM music in Europe convey and seek to create an ecosystem where they address the problems of today's live music industry. As proposed by Jones, Hesterly and Borgatti, without entering

into formal agreements, actors within a same network of coordinated efforts can shape the direction of trends and new products.

Network governance involves a select, persistent, and structured set of autonomous firms (as well as nonprofit agencies) engaged in creating products or services based on implicit and open-ended contracts to adapt to environmental contingencies and to coordinate and safeguard exchanges. These contracts are socially-not legally-binding. (...) We use the term "select" to indicate that network members do not normally constitute an entire industry. Rather, they form a subset in which they exchange frequently with each other but relatively rarely with other members. For example, in human service agencies, Van de Ven, Walker, and Liston (1979) found three clusters of agencies having more connections within cluster than between, and they found that each cluster employed different patterns of coordination to achieve distinct goals. (Jones et al., 1997)

In their study, Gatekeeper search and selection strategies, Foster et al., (2011) analyze how gatekeepers in creative industries work in networks.

This is the first study we know of that looks directly at how gatekeepers in creative industries use their social networks to manage complex search and decision making processes. We demonstrate that gatekeepers manage this process through complex networks of information sharing and exchange. This article joins recent work arguing that the benefits of social networks are contingent on organizational and historical contexts (Mizruchi et al., 2006; Rowley et al., 2000). We extend this work by linking cultural, economic and cognitive perspectives on markets and comparing perceived similarities among nightclubs, the information sharing networks of talent buyers, and market level diversity and sharing of cultural producers resulting from their exchanges.

We also confirm a core prediction of network governance theory (Jones et al., 1997) by demonstrating that networks among buyers serve governance functions by disseminating tacit information about producers' performance and serve cultural functions by disseminating information about emerging artists, genres and trends. This has important implications for the embeddedness research program. Because this research typically looks at ties between buyers and sellers, it may overlook how information sharing among buyers can substitute for close ties between buyers and sellers in coordinating exchanges under conditions of uncertainty. It certainly suggests that future research should consider how information flows among members on the same side of a market (e.g., among buyers) can affect exchanges between buyers and sellers. (Foster et al., 2011)

The confirmation of the theory of Jones et al., in their study is central to the discussion of how the several actors of the live music market interact and shape the careers of emerging



artists throughout time. The authors discuss how buyers and sellers create a balance within a defined market place:

Multiple and overlapping strong ties among buyers prevent sellers from playing one buyer off against another. Perhaps most importantly, these cooperative information sharing networks help to identify and diffuse emerging cultural trends—thereby simultaneously serving cognitive, cultural and governance functions. Network governance theory (Jones et al., 1997) helps explain this pattern because of its prediction that ties among buyers can reduce uncertainty by spreading information about opportunistic actors and producer quality while also diffusing cultural norms and practices. (Foster et al., 2011)

This concept will be addressed during the discussion of the project after analysing how articulated are booking agents and artists with festivals, local promoters, record labels, and the media towards the development of cultural currents for the future.

### **3.3 Consumer Culture Theory**

At the same time, the Consumer Culture Theory presented by Arnould and Thompson (2005) will be used to understand how the consumers, in this case the audience, relates and shapes the development of a certain product.

In a conference held by the Javeriana Pontifical University in Bogota, Colombia in August 22, 2013<sup>9</sup>, Arnould defined the Consumer Culture Theory as follows:

Consumer Culture Theory is a Social Arrangement in which the relation between lived experience and social resources between meaningful ways of life and the symbolic and material resources on which they depend, is mediated through markets.

At the same time Arnould presented a description of the Theory:

Consumer Culture Theory describes interconnected systems of commercially produced or influenced images, texts and objects, specially brands and the particular individuals and groups that use them in creating, overlapping and sometimes conflicting meanings, identities, groupings and routines to make collective sense of their social environments and to orient their experiences and lives.

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<sup>9</sup> Available in Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nxpMGaxWjLs>

As explained at this conference, the theory describes an ecosystem in which consumers and brands that offer products or services coexist and shape each other. This means that the audience in the live music market also contribute to the development of the products, in this case artists and their music, through their consumption behaviour and habits.

This theory helps us understand up to which extent the audience limits or promotes the entrance of emerging acts into the marketplace through its consumption behaviour and how the gatekeepers use this information to bring new alternatives based on consumer preferences. At the same time, the participation of the audience and identification processes with a certain product or artist, can help shape the product itself, so the theory is relevant for the analysis of how consumption itself acts as a gatekeeper for the market.

## **4. Research Methodology)**

The project will be based on the testimonies from several interviews that will be carried out with HR/HM live music industry-men and women, established bands as well as medium sized and emerging bands which are currently building their careers through performing live in Europe. It will analyze concrete cases based on experiences and ongoing “live oriented” strategies and it will draw conclusions about how are these bands approaching the current industry.

### **4.1 Data collection and approach**

For the data collection, a qualitative perspective was used as the framework for analysis. It served the project because its intention is to interpret points of view and case studies (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 2). Since there are many different perceptions about the realities facing emerging artists and how the music industry behaves nowadays, a qualitative interpretation of the data was used to further our understanding (Colwell, 2006, p. 273).

It is necessary to review the case study approach, as the objective of the project does not include an *a priori* theoretical notion of the behavior of the research subject. It is indeed the

specific case several actors of the live music industry (Gillham, 2000, p. 2). Although the study is not a concrete case study, the case study theory is relevant for the approach.

The data collection method chosen is the interview. The normal mindset will be a non-prejudice one. As Gillham recommends, it is necessary to approach the data recollection and analysis without expecting to find a certain pattern expected on the behalf of the researcher.

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## Qualitative data

A semi-structured interview procedure was used. Two types: (Gillham, 2000, p. 60)

- Natural conversation to ask research questions
- Open-Ended interview

This type of interview allows the subject to explain details that the interviewer is not asking but still appropriate for the study. Open and closed questions can be used at the same time (Gillham, 2000, p. 60). This is the reason why structured interviewing is not considered.

The seven stages of an interview investigation suggested by Kvale, were taken under consideration: (Kvale, 1996, p. 88)

1. Thematizing (*Why* and *What* of the investigation should be clarified before the *How*)
2. Designing (Design of the study)
3. Interviewing
4. Transcribing (Transcription of the oral interviews)
5. Analyzing (Selecting methods of analysis)
6. Verifying (Reliability and validity of the interview findings)
7. Reporting (Product Creation)

It is necessary to lead the subjects to describe their “lived world” during the interview (Kvale, 1996, p. 189) and be open to receive new information discovered by the subject due to the interview action. Some times the reflection over a past experience can lead to alternative conclusions, which are valuable as well. As the interview goes on, the interviewee can interpret information stated and send the meaning back so that the subject can go deep or further explain.

A filter was applied to the transcription process to eliminate non-necessary material (Kvale, 1996, p. 190). And if necessary a *re-interview* will be made to clarify or to make self-corrections by the subject if for example, meaningful data for the research is misleading or erroneous. This was the case with the interview of Merle Doering.

An interview guide was prepared for each type of stakeholder. This guide was used during the interview to cover all the important subjects for each interview. At the same time it allowed the interviewer to go deeper when the information provided by the interviewee required in-depth explanation or another question emerged from it.

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### Criteria for qualitative data evaluation

The data obtained through the interviews was analyzed based on the criteria presented by Guba & Lincoln, (2001) and (1989). Instead of reliability and validity, criteria often used to assess quantitative data, this study will use “Trustworthiness” or “Foundational” criteria and “Authenticity” criteria for data evaluation.

The principles of trustworthiness will be used as follows:

Credibility: Several industry men and women from the live music industry were interviewed. Their experience and trajectory reinforces the credibility of their statements.

Transferability: Although external evaluators will not be used during this study, the supervisor’s role within the music industry ensures the transferability of the findings to other fields of the live music industry. Transferability is parallel to external validity.

Dependability: In order to ensure dependability, an external audit must be made. For that reason all the interviews have been recorded in audio, and even though the material is so large, it is available for external audit. Unfortunately because of the amount of data collected it has been impossible to find an audit that can go through the data.

Confirmability: To ensure confirmability, an external auditor must be able to trace the information back to the interviewees and ensure that the information is truthful and that the methods for data collection are objective. Although the study does not include an external auditor, the author designed the questions and questionnaires so that his personal view don't

interfere with the interviewees answers. And in the case of further research based on these findings, the recordings are available to be reviewed.

The principles of authenticity will be used as follows:

The Fairness principle will be used to expose the views and opinions of the interviewees as objective as possible providing an evaluation of the data that confronts the several viewpoints in a discussion. At the same time the study procures to provide a more informed construction and discussion in an Ontological authenticity.

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## Secondary data

Unfortunately secondary data concrete to the performance of emerging HR/HM bands in Europe has not been found. Not a qualitative or quantitative approach to the subject has been found during the research. This is why the data collected during this research cannot be confronted with previous data. Researchers or institutions that count with such data are encouraged to contact the author.

## 4.2 Data analysis

As Kvale explains, to analyze the data gathered, several methods were applied to the transcription of recordings. (Kvale, 1996, pp. 192-193)

- *Meaning condensation*. To condense large statements into smaller and more manageable phrases.
- *Meaning categorization*. Applying categories was needed to interpret and analyze each interview. This was useful when speaking about concert booking with the different subjects, for example. This way keeping the subject of each conversation organized made it easy to filter.
- *Narrative structuring* was necessary to create a line and a structure of the plot of any story told by the different subjects, or to create a narrative line when a story was not told.
- *Meaning interpretation* was used to apply frames of reference into the analysis and understand the interview with a specific context or theory. This was used because two

artists can address the same issue but with a different point of view for example, so applying a context to it helped to interpret in a more effective way.

The number of subjects interviewed brought difficulties on the amount of work needed to analyze the data. And of course the findings will not represent the whole function of the subject of study. Kvale refers to this issue as follows:

A common critique of interview studies is that the findings are not generalizable because there are too few subjects. A paradoxical answer, from the history of physiology, is that if the aim of the study is to obtain general knowledge, then focus on a few intensive case studies. (Kvale, 1996, p. 102)

### **4.3 Alternative Methods not used**

A quantitative approach has not been applied. Although it is possible to analyze (in some extent) the data collected in a quantitative way, as a general approach it is not suitable for the project because the aim was not to conduct a research that concludes in statistical patterns. On the contrary, the empirical approach is what will lead the research so that the points of view of the stakeholders lead to conclusions.

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#### Experiment

Using experiments as part of the project could have been an alternative. For example to isolate one specific behavior of an artist when starting a tour planning, and test it under controlled practice to better understand an action pattern of the artist or the manager. This method will not be used because the circumstances of the study always change due to the nature of the market, and the many variables are a key factor of analysis. Denscombe refers to the experiment as a research strategy;

“The decision to use an experimental approach is a strategic one in which the researcher decides to investigate the topic under controlled conditions, paying careful attention to the meticulous measurement of what goes on.” (Denscombe, 2010, p. 66)

But the idea of investigating a certain topic under controlled conditions was not suitable for the research.

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## Sources of documentary data

Although it could have been useful to start the research by analyzing documentary material like films on touring insights of the artists, it is most likely to find that such material was not documented in an early stage of the career of the artist.

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## Survey

Since the survey is intended for mapping the data obtained, it was not suitable to use the survey method. The *how* of the answer is the aim of the question, expecting an answer that explains a process or a past experience.

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## Questionnaire

Because the questionnaire is a good method for gathering *factual information* and *opinions* from the responders, it is possible to use it to read the general characteristics of the second group (music businessmen) and to do the selection of the interviewees based on that information, if sent to a large number of potential personnel. But is more likely to find the adequate candidates by doing a research and by speaking with one person first and then ask for referrals, as this is a professional group that works hand by hand.

## **5. Interviews**

The following section of the thesis will cover the interviews conducted with the stakeholders that represent the different players of the HR/HM live music scene in Europe. A total of 10 interviews were conducted within 6 stakeholder groups. A description of the stakeholders group will be provided as well as a description of how the interviews were conducted. The findings will be assessed during the discussion section of the thesis.

### **5.1 The Process**

The research has been intended as an exploratory work due to the lack of precise data collected throughout a prolonged period of time about the economical performance of emerging HR/HM bands in the European region. Since precise bibliography regarding these artists and this genre was not found; the first challenge was defining the research approach.

Interviews that collected lived experiences were chosen as the main source of information, but the depth of each interview had to be considered as well. At the same time it was necessary to formulate the questions in a manner that did not affect the direction of the answers. As discussion was involved in most of the interviews, the quality of the answers, and the interest to develop the ideas brought up in said answers, it was challenging as an interviewer and author to this thesis not to hint personal opinion. For the author it was also challenging to maintain objectivity and not change the direction of the questions asked after each interview, this because within each stakeholder group several opinions came across and in some cases very different from each other, so when approaching another subject of the same group it was necessary to avoid the questions to be formulated in a manner that reflected other interviewee's personal opinion.

Another challenge faced during the initial stage of the project was the selection process of the subjects. Fortunately work colleagues of the author helped greatly to get in contact with many of the subjects that were relevant for the study. During conversations Daniel Nordgård, one of the thesis supervisors, the stakeholders groups were arranged in a way that it was relevant for this particular live music market and its members were discussed and identified.

Another challenge was to determine which questions to ask each stakeholder group. The questions derived from the research background phase, during the literature review. Many of the readings gave ideas about what was important to find out according to each group of stakeholders. For example the David Bowie interview presented in the theoretical framework; If artists toured today as much as suggested by Bowie, then how much financial growth are they expecting from that?

## **5.2 The stakeholders**

Freeman et al., (2010) definition of Stakeholder reads as follows: "*A Stakeholder in an organization is by (definition) any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization's objectives*". The HR/HM live music scene in Europe will be considered as a set-up of organizations that hold and promote an industry as a whole. This is why it was necessary to gather the following groups.



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## Bands / Performing Artists

The study is centered on the bands current state within the live music industry and they are the main stakeholders. As they produce the product or performance that is commercialized, it is fundamental to gather a wide range of opinions from artists at several stages of their careers. A total of 3 actively touring musicians were interviewed. This group could be divided in 2; one for the “established” bands that have seen the changes in the industry and another for the emerging bands which are facing the current changes in the market as they make their way through it. The questions asked to these two types of artists varied slightly to adapt to their lived experiences. Since each artist is at a different point of their careers, it will be better to analyze and discuss their answers as a whole.

### *FERNANDO RIBEIRO / MOONSPELL (PORTUGAL)*

Moonspell is a very important name in the European HR/HM scene. The Gothic Metal band started in 1989 under the name of Morbid God and later in 1992 the band changed the name to Moonspell. With 10 albums and performances in all the main stages and festivals around the world, they have endured the changes of the music industry and today they have received a lot of attention for their latest release “Extinct”.

### *PÄR SUNDSTRÖM / SABATON (SWEDEN)*

Sabaton was founded in Falun in 1999. With 7 releases and 2 festivals that carry their own name; Sabaton has a prestige like no other in the European music scene. The band is currently acting as headliner in most of the European Heavy Metal festivals.

### *BRITTA GÖRTZ, / CRIPPER (GERMANY)*

Founded in Hannover in 2005, the band has released 5 albums and is one of the most energetic emerging bands in Europe. The band has toured with Overkill and have appeared in: Metaldays Festival, Slovenia: Wacken Open Air, which is probably the biggest Heavy Metal festival in the world: and 70.000 Tons of Metal, the most important cruise ship festivals in the world.

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## Festivals

Festivals are central to the European live music market. They are an important place where audiences meet up and coming artists and where these artists have a strong growth potential if they are showcased at the certain festivals. Two types of festivals were chosen to represent the opinion of different types of festivals that operate all over Europe and confront their vision and postures towards the artist development.

*MARTIN FORSSMAN, VICE PRESIDENT / HEAD OF BOOKING FOR SWEDEN ROCK FESTIVAL*

Considered one of the biggest festivals in Europe. The festival takes place in Sölvesborg in June every year and it has been active since 1992. Some notable appearances in the past have been: Black Sabbath, Volbeat, Aerosmith, Judas Priest, Mötley Crüe, Dio, Bruce Dickinson, Yngwie Malmsteen, Twisted Sister, Whitesnake, Uriah Heep, Europe, Deep Purple, Accept, Motörhead, Saxon, Nazareth, Poison, Status Quo, Lynyrd Skynyrd, Scorpions, Porcupine Tree, Kamelot, Def Leppard, Alice Cooper, Testament, W.A.S.P, ZZ Top, The Orchestra, Thin Lizzy and Guns N' Roses.

*BIRTE GANSER, CHAIRWOMAN AND BOARD MEMBER OF ACKERFESTIVAL*

Ackerfestival is an independent and non-profit oriented festival: founded in 2006 in Kummerfeld, Germany. Some notable appearances in the past have been: Kadavar, Egotronic, Turbostaat, We Butter The Bread The With Butter, and Casper, Supershirt.

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## Booking Agents

Booking agents and agencies are dedicated to developing the career of a band through live performance. They are key to this study as they are the sellers. Their insight on the current state of the European HR/HM music market is vital for this study. Their opinion on the future of the market can contribute greatly to a prediction of the industry's future.

*JÖRG DÜSEDAU, MANAGING DIRECTOR, FOUNDER AND BOOKING AGENT OF DRAGON PRODUCTIONS GMBH*

In the past he has worked with bands like Destruction and Volbeat. Now he handles the booking for acts like Anneke van Giersbergen, Sonat Arctica, D-A-D, Dark Funeral, Metal Church, Michael Schenker, Pain of Salvation, Primordial among others. Dragon Productions

is a booking agency founded in 2003 in Hamburg, Germany. The agency works with 42 artists in their roster.

*MERLE DOERING, BOOKING AGENT AND CO-OWNER OF DRAGON PRODUCTIONS GMBH*

Merle has been involved in the music industry since 2009 as booking agent and tour manager. She has developed a successful career representing artists like Finntroll, Gloryhammer, We Butter The Bread With Butter, Crucified Barbara, Skálmöld and Hackneyed.

*MICHAEL BISPING, MANAGING DIRECTOR AND FOUNDER OF A.S.S. CONCERTS & PROMOTION GMBH*

A.S.S. Concerts & Promotion was founded in 1979 in Hamburg, Germany. For 20 years he has been a board member of the federal association of the performance industry (BDV). Michael Bisping has also been involved with the IMMF (International Music Management Forum) and he supports the IMUC, the association of German music managers and consultants. In addition to his long time job as a board member of the federal association of the performance industry (IDKV), he was one of the founding members and president of the German Music Management Forum (MMF). Michael became part of the advisory board of the German Popkomm in 2004, and he was a counsellor to the German music export office “German Sounds”.

### **5.3 The questions**

A wide variety of questions resulted from the background research. The reading and assessing process of the available literature inspired most of the questions asked during the interview phase. These questions were designed to approach the main research question of the study. It was first necessary to classify the different questions under four categories that will be presented in this section. The formulation of each question changed according to each group, so they could be answered in a more comprehensive way by each subject depending on their field of expertise. There is a set of general questions developed for all the groups, and also a set of independent questions formulated to each group. Some questions that were not originally in the questionnaire rose from the answers given by each subject to go deeper into one or several subjects. During all of the interviews, the subjects provided

additional information in many of their answers; such information in many cases was not connected to the original questions, but almost in all cases contributed to a better understanding of the point of view of each subject. Resulting from this, many unexpected insights and discoveries were obtained.

The following categories were used to group all the questions:

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### Past and present conditions involving the development of emerging bands

The questions under this category were designed to understand the changes experienced from the point of view each group. At the same time, they were intended to provide a general description of the HR/HM music industry of the 90's to understand how emerging bands in the HR/HM genre were developing their careers during that period. This was necessary for the study because much of the literature reviewed contemplates niche genres but not the particular case of HR/HM music in Europe. To establish a point of comparison, a subsequent set of questions related to the present situation of these bands were formulated.

Under this category the following questions were asked:

- 1. What changes in the European live music industry have an impact, both positively and negatively in the present HR/HM live music market?*
- 2. How did European emerging HR/HM bands developed their careers during the 90's and how are those same bands developing their careers today? What role did live performing have in both cases?*
- 3. How important are festivals and club shows for the development emerging bands today?*
- 4. How involved are record labels with the touring activity of both emerging and established bands in the present time compared ten to twenty years ago?*

5. *What is the role of the new online media platforms in the development of emerging bands' careers from the live performing point of view?*
- 

## Penetration of emerging bands in the live music market

The following set of questions was designed to understand how emerging bands access the European live music market. Since the reviewed literature during the research background is not very specific about the HR/HM scene it was necessary to present the point of view of the different groups involved.

1. *Do emerging artists have more, less or the same space today in European festivals and venues compared to previous years?*
  2. *How does the current density of acts affect the market? Is there more competition than in previous years?*
  3. *Is the festival audience in search for emerging bands?*
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## The present financial situation and revenue streams

The set of questions classified under this category is directly related to the hypothesis of the research. They were designed to understand if, in fact, live performing is the main source of revenue for such bands; now that it has been accepted as the main source of income in the mainstream side of the music industry. The questions intend to present the ways in which such bands recoup their investments. To come to a better understanding of the financial situation of these bands, it was necessary to ask the different stakeholder groups about how the fees that are offered to these bands in club shows and festivals increase, decrease or stay stable throughout time. This is a first glance of a research matter that can follow during the next decade in Europe; the analysis of underground or niche music scenes with a quantitative approach based on statistics and factual figures.

1. *How do emerging bands finance their live performing activity?*

2. *Do you think bands today have to tour more than in previous decades to reach their live performing financial expectations and to recoup their investments?*
3. *Are unsigned and emerging bands improving their economies at the same rate they grow as performing acts in Europe?*
4. *What is the present situation of the offers made by promoters and festivals to emerging bands?*
5. *Have the costs related with live performing increased throughout time? How does this affect emerging artists?*
6. *From a live performing point of view, is the present time easier or harder for emerging artists to reach self-sustainability or even a professional level compared to how it was ten or twenty years ago?*

Although the terms “*easier*” or “*harder*” are subjective and open, they were used instead of choosing a time measure scale because they proved to be clearer and easier to understand. This question is intended to approach one of the possible reasons proposed to validate the hypothesis of the project.

A special set of questions asked to promoters was developed to better understand how the offering system works.

1. *How are the fees offered to small and emerging bands calculated?*
2. *How are new talents spotted? Are festivals in search for emerging artists?*
3. *What is the present economic situation of the festival industry in Europe and what developments can be expected in the future?*

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## Predictions for the future development of the live market and emerging bands

The questions under this category attempt to provide an initial prediction of the advantages and challenges that the future will bring for the emerging artists during the next decade in terms of their development through live performing.

- 1. Based on the current situation of the market, can you try to predict how will the future (next decade), develop for European HR/HM emerging bands in terms of the time and challenges for them to reach a self sustainable, semi-professional or professional career?*

## 6. Findings and Discussion

In this section, the findings will be presented divided into the same categories offered for the questions. The number of in-depth interviews resulted in a large amount of data; both in audio recordings and in transcription text files. This material has been of great value for the present study and can possibly contribute to a subsequent study. In this paper, only the answers that provide value and insight to the research objectives will be presented. The findings will be presented as discussions and quotes from each subject for each question. During this section other questions related to the specific activity of each subject will be presented as well as the questions that rose during each interview to deepen in one or more aspects exposed by the subjects.

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## Past and present conditions involving the development of emerging bands

- 1. What changes in the European live music industry have an impact, both positively and negatively in the present HR/HM live music market?*

Fernando Ribeiro from the band Moonspell states that the main difference with the past is that there are a lot more players in the HR/HM scene today and more people that filter the income that a band receives. But at the same time there is more structure in the live music

industry; meaning that an infrastructure has been established in Europe. This, in the end, means that for a self-managed band as Moonspell, there is more contact with every aspect of the industry. Today, every stakeholder manages several tasks and has a lot more responsibilities than before. There is more interaction, more investment and more communication between all the stakeholders in the industry. In the specific case of Moonspell; the band has been able to gain more control over the management aspect. Fernando Ribeiro explains that being in a band in 2015 takes a toll in the band that is able to cope with all the different non-musical related tasks that need to be covered.

For Britta Görtz the most noticeable changes occurred in the digital music industry. Over the last 10 years, people have gained access to all the music in the world online. Illegal downloads are not necessary anymore due to streaming services and mobile devices. For her, the industry [recorded music industry] has been in an everlasting sleep, but emerging bands have started to adapt and, in her opinion, it will be them who will come up with new business models based on the available technologies.

How music is being consumed has already changed a lot, it's not always the album surrounding a song, but the single song has more impact than it used to have, you don't have to put out singles any more, you can just release every single song you record in your home studio. *Britta Görtz*

In her opinion this gives more artistic freedom for bands. She describes how in the 80's the only way to get into people's houses was if you had a record label. Now there are many ways to make your music available to the public and even more ways to consume it. Today, superstars are being made through online channels like YouTube, she concludes.

When asked about how emerging artists developed their careers during the nineties in Europe, Fernando Ribeiro explains that in the beginning of the nineties, emerging bands like Moonspell (An emerging band at that time), did not make profit from the tours in which they had a supporting role. Instead the promoters, usually in Germany, provided a "support fee" to cover for gas and other costs. It was supposed not to be negotiated with the headliner bands, but sometimes the headliner band took that fee. Today the promoters expect that in the offer



they make, the headliner band brings all the production including the special guests (supporting act).

According to Michael Bisping, form A.S.S. Concerts & Promotion, 20 years ago in the USA, large companies started to buy venues, promotion agencies and radio stations to build massive conglomerates; those companies started to run all the different areas of the live music market. These changes started around the same time when many record labels and publishers collapsed due to the physical record sales decline. This formula spread over the world, this was how AEG, SFX, Live Nation came to existence. In Germany the same idea developed with the creation of Eventim Group, and DEAG. The amount of independent promoters decreased and the newly formed conglomerates started running the industry. At the same time the competition grew because the conglomerates had access to nearly unlimited sources.

Michael Bisping explains that right now, in Germany, the Live music industry is the most important of the 3 old pillars of the music industry. According to him, the live music industry has a turnover nearly double as big as the record industry, while two decades ago it was the other way around. Today, the touring companies like DEAG in Germany or Live Nation on a global scale, run their own labels, have 360 degree deals with artists and control huge parts of the industry. While in the past the promoters were depending on record labels to receive tour support; today the promoters are in a position of control.

Jörg Düsedau, from Dragon Productions, explains that the one of the most notable changes that the European HR/HM scene has experienced is the media influence supported by large corporations where musical formulas are introduced in the new music products. Acts that are heavily promoted and sponsored by major record labels, backed by "Hit Producers" and booked by major touring and booking agencies along with major festivals are a sign of the influence that casting TV shows are having in the HR/HM and can be perceived as pre-made or plastic music.

Apart from that, breaking a band is much more difficult without lots of money; because touring is more expensive; clubs are more careful booking bands and investing money. I mean, when I was

young, the bands could call the Knust, or any other club and say: Can we play a show? And they would say: “Yeah OK, just come and play”. But know you have to do this and that, if you don't get the costs, they then you maybe have to cover them yourself. *Jörg Düsedau.*

According to Birte Ganser from Ackerfestival, the live music industry, from the point of view of the European festivals, has changed in the way that today promoters and festivals are receiving, literally, hundreds of requests form smaller bands that want a slot in festivals lineups. Promoters, nowadays, don't have the chance to go through all the requests or listen to all the music being sent. It is now a common practice for festival promoters to handle artist offerings and search for bands directly with booking agencies. This is how promoters filter the vast amount of band requests.

One aspect is common to all the testimonies when it comes to the changes of the live music market for HR/HM music; the professionalization and the rise of businesses and business models that provide services to this industry. The technological advances of today give more freedom to artists when it comes handling the access to their music. At the same time it allows them to manage the commercial aspect of their work in a more efficient way; giving them the opportunity to have a wide view of the transactions and deals that are made through their business team. This also means that, since the revenue of emerging and medium sized bands is now much more fragmented than 20 years ago; these bands have to self manage their careers today more than they did in the past. The DIY (Do It Yourself) proceeding is now common for most artists, it represents a major difference compared to the period of history when the bands who secured a contract with a record label were not required such involvement in the administration of all the business related matters. For many emerging bands this represents a challenge, because it requires time and a certain type of managing skills that not necessarily all of them can develop.

From the very beginning of the interviewing process, it was clear that today, with a more complex live music market, HR/HM music has also undergone a filtering process. The network governance theory presented earlier applies here. There are now more gatekeepers than in the past and they have developed new ways to communicate amongst each other. This means that emerging artists now have to learn how to interact with them to develop their careers.

2. *How did European emerging HR/HM bands develop their careers during the 90's and how are those same bands developing their careers today? What role did live performing have in both cases?*

This question is closely related to the first question of the category, it aims to provide a better understanding on how the changes of the live music market affected the strategies used by bands to develop their careers.

Jörg Düsedau explains the way in which the major European festivals impact the live music scene of today. In his opinion they are killing the live shows. He states that when someone has the opportunity to attend a festival with a lineup of 10 bands for €80, if that person want to see those same bands in a club show, it would probably cost €300. At the same time, for bands which draw 300 people in a club-show, the possibility to play in front of a larger crowd drives them to accept offers that, in a lot of cases, will force them to cover parts of the costs on their own, instead of growing gradually with club-shows and tours. He thinks that touring was more important back in the nineties, because there weren't so many festivals.

15 years ago, there was a moment where every weekend had a 3000 audience festival with important bands in Germany. Eventually, many of these festivals died and the bands that remained started growing. From 1990 to 1998 touring was more important because the situation was different. *Jörg Düsedau*

He explains that the festivals are "killing the live scene". He was always afraid of that, although part of his business depends on booking bands at the festivals.

Merle Doering adds further insight to this matter. She explains that emerging and middle sized bands are having a difficult time because the audience has received festival lineups that gather many of the present "legacy" or "iconic" bands all at once. Festivals like Hellfest in 2014 (Clisson, France) gathered Iron Maiden, Aerosmith and Black Sabbath. The audience is paying to see these type of packages, which are the ones selling the tickets, and so, a big portion of the yearly budget is destined to pay for those massive acts. This leaves a reduced budget for the smaller bands, which are now invited to perform at the festival to fill the rest

of the lineup for really low offers. Bands that are selling out venues (600 - 1200 capacity) across Europe, are receiving very small offers in relation with their worth for stand-alone concerts.

The bands are worth tickets, Michael Schenker is selling out Boerderij and Zoetermeer, and Primordial sold out Knust last year, but the festival offers do not reflect that, because the festivals are going to be sold out anyway. And it's a little bit the same with club shows; more and more booking agencies tend to just book a tour with a headliner, get their budget in and they have 2 slots left or whatever. Whatever bands they want to add, and they just ask: "So who wants to come, you are not getting any fee, you are not getting any travel; you get the playing time and catering, and we can maybe share backline". But they are not offering money, sometimes they are asking for a buy-on or something, because they know they got their routing, they got it covered already. And more and more self-respecting bands, I think that even more bands in the medium league should do it and also the smaller ones; they should jump on that train, they should decline those offers. Like for example, we had this offer from a fairly big Canadian band, they were looking for supports and they actually had prepared a sheet with the information where it said that the nightliner cost this and that much and you will have to pay 50% of that. They were pretending that it was one third of the nightliner cost, so that all three bands share and everybody pays it's third, but I believe that if you send it to a newcomer band they are like: "Oh yeah, of course, I mean bus is expensive". But we saw the number and you can do the math, and you know they had the support bands pay the nightliner for them. So we were discussing with one of my bands if they would join the tour, and they were like: "Well we are actually considering it". And it would have been a fairly big five-digit number for the bus. And we knew exactly it would be half the tour bus but what do you say, I mean, we then pointed out to that band, the one who offered it to us, the bigger one: "This is kind of, you know, between me and you, this is the whole bus that you are asking for". And they said: "Take it or leave it". They actually said: "We got 14 bands and they already confirmed that they would do it". Maybe there should be a union or something (Laughter).

*Merle Doering*

When discussing the situation that Doering described, she seemed worried about the fact that quality (of the music) might be no longer involved. Agencies gathering young bands to finance headlining tours might be making choices only considering who is the higher bidder. She states that at the same time, they are being short sighted; instead of focusing on how to get the most money on the short term, they should consider including supporting bands in tours that have enough quality to draw 100 people per night. This would present the headliner band to new fans and, with such collaborations, everyone could benefit from the tour.

Doering further discusses that the smaller bands who make bad decisions by lowering their fee or accepting offers that only benefit other parties, are ruining the present and future business for themselves, and for other bands in their same range. She really considers that creating a union where these matters are addressed would be positive for such bands. Although musician unions are present in many European countries, perhaps Pan-European unions of niche genres have not been developed or do not have a wide reach.

When asked how doing tour support for established acts contributes to the development of an emerging band career, Doering explains that it depends on the motives for going on tour with an established act. Sometimes smaller bands do it just because they have always wanted to tour with that specific band, or because they have always wanted to go on tour. In her opinion it can be useful to a certain degree. She explains the specific case of Skálmöld; the band has supported tours in three occasions where they had to cover for their expenses but they are currently set to go on a tour where their expenses are being covered. This means that it is starting to pay off.

As a general rule, Merle thinks that young bands should always get something for their time. A bus-share is fair, but she is not keen to buy-on's.

A bus-share means to split the bus costs evenly between the bands that are travelling and being accommodated in the Nightliner bus. Supporting bands contribute to the tour by paying for a part of the tour-bus costs in exchange for the exposure in front of a new audience. A Buy-on means that the support band has to pay for the time they are given on stage. Travel and accommodation is on its own. Additional to that, they have to pay for each show they are playing. Sometimes the Buy-on includes something, like Backline share. Many times the Buy-on is offered to a local band where the show is being held. *Merle Doering*

When asked how important is for emerging bands to support bigger bands on tour, Jörg Düsedau states that it is very important. According to him, only few bands “break through” without ever supporting other bands on tour. He gives an example with his work with the Danish band Volbeat, as a very exceptional case, where the band only supported Nightwish in Italy and performed alongside Metallica in Denmark before they were a success. Düsedau says that this was one in a million cases. In general, it is extremely important (Supporting

established bands on tour) because emerging bands would not be able to draw so many people to a show on their own, specially in unexplored territories as they do when supporting a bigger band. Later on, he explains how some of these bands finance such tours.

For Britta Görtz, emerging bands need to consider doing tour support for bigger bands as an investment. For her, a positive mindset for emerging bands, when doing tour support, is to assume that there are chances that the investment made will not return.

Let's say you want to go on a 3 week tour. If you share your buss with 2 other bands, only for the bus you might pay like 7,8 or 9 thousand Euro. And you need to produce your merchandise, to have your CDs there. So the numbers go up high very quickly. But of course, when you come back from an European tour, you come back and then you fees will slowly start rising and you need to be your own business person and teach yourself a little bit. When you go on tour and your fee is 300 and you come back from a European tour you need to raise your prices, you need to talk to the promoters and say: "Hey, see? We just played with -I don't know- we played an opening spot for Slayer on their European tour, we are worth more money now, we are the band who played with Slayer". And you need to make the promoter understand that he needs to put that into the announcement of the show. So I would see that as an investment. It's a very important step to tour with bigger bands when you want to climb up the ladder step by step. *Britta Görtz*

Fernando Ribeiro also agrees on how important it has been since the nineties for emerging bands to perform as support bands for established bands. According to him, their first tour during the nineties supporting Morbid Angel had a positive impact in their record sales for the first album of the band.

I remember very well, the first tour we did was in a van. Morbid Angel's management took all our support fees, so we had no money (laughter). We had a per diem of 10 German Marks, so it was hard. But when we came back to Dortmund, Robert Kampf, the Century Media's boss, opened the door and he welcomed us. He said: "Congratulations, you just sold in little over a month 15,000 copies of Wolfheart (first release of the band in 1995)". *Fernando Ribeiro*

Touring with an established band as a support band is, consistently throughout the interviews, a key strategy used to develop the career of an emerging artist since the eighties and nineties in Europe. During the literature review in the research background, this was not found to be such an important aspect in order to push forward the career of a new artist. As a finding, it represents a very interesting subject of study due to its complexity. It is a major

part of the activity of HR/HM booking agents and bands, and it represents a very important step forward for such bands. It is often considered as an investment to reach different and bigger audiences, but as explained by Merle Doering; established bands, who have a strong bargaining power, are taking advantage of it, so a lot of emerging bands are having difficulties to join. Although it has never been easy for bands to join these tours due to the high costs involved, the number of bands interested in joining these tours today is much higher, and so the increased competition in this area of the live market impacts negatively the activity of a high amount of emerging bands.

Performing in festivals is another way in which emerging bands are investing to develop their careers. This is significantly different from how bands were developing their careers during the eighties and nineties, because back then there were not so many festivals available across Europe as today. As reviewed in the research background, the festivals started to grow in number after the physical record sales collapse at the beginning of the century. Now, it is clear that they control a big part of the live music industry in Europe and the major festivals appear to have a dominant position in the market share. In the next question, the festival activity will be discussed in detail.

### *3. How important are festivals and club shows for the development of emerging bands today?*

For Britta Görtz, performing at the European festival circuit is vital for emerging bands to be able to expose their music in front of the audience that goes to see other bands, specially the headliners.

For example Summer Breeze. When we played the first year in Summer Breeze Festival, everyone was walking by that big tent; we played in the big tent the first time we played there, and it was about 5,000 people standing in the tent when we were playing. There was no way that in 2011 there would be 5,000 people coming to one of our shows. We made so many fans there; our merch sales went up through the roof. To get some exposure to people who don't know you it's very important [To perform in the festival circuit as an emerging band]. *Britta Görtz*

Jörg Düsedau explains that bands like Freedom Call, who did not perform in any of the festivals during the early stages of their career, have to focus on touring; so the fans had to go and see their shows at the clubs. Now that they started playing in festivals it is yet to be seen if the ticket sales at clubs increase or decrease.

I think that festivals in general and the overkill in the large amount of festivals is not good for the live business. Of course it's good for the fans, because if they go to Wacken or other festivals, they see a lot of bands for an OK amount of money if you compare the amount of shows that you can see. *Jörg Düsedau*

He explains that the audience might not buy tickets for club shows for certain bands because they know that they can see that band at any given festival. If it is a smaller or young band it is a good idea to perform in as many festivals as possible. Düsedau states that 15 festivals in Germany could be good if it is a growing band. But if it is one of the bands that perform in the middle of the bill, at 18:00 or later, the audience will not buy the tickets to see their shows at a club because they have good slots in the festivals.

To go deeper in this subject, the following question was added: *How do you plan ahead to not over-expose a band in the festivals so that they can also sell tickets at the clubs or other venues?*

Düsedau explains that once he had to face that situation with the band The New Black, with their first album. They performed almost in all of the main festivals in Europe. Wacken, Summer Breeze, Rock Am Ring, Rock Am Park, supported Volbeat and played with AC/DC. (It turned out to be a misstep)

They played every festival, it was a really good start, and played until the second album was out and it came the new festival season and the festivals said: "No, they just played here, they played there, they played everywhere". So that was basically a strategy mistake. *Jörg Düsedau*

To this question, Martin Forssman explains that getting a few good festival slots could really help promote a band:



From a band's point of view I think it's definitely important and a good opportunity. From the festivals point of view... I think there are different types of festivals. But festivals like Sweden Rock, Wacken or Grasspop, that are basically private owned, share holding companies or limited liability companies. The first interest [of this kind of festival] has to be to selling tickets. So I really think that [it] is up to managements, record labels and agents to try to work bands, to break bands. *Martin Forssman*

Birte Ganser, from Ackerfestival, thinks that festivals are extremely important for artist development in Europe, specially at the small independent festivals. The audience already knows that a lot of new bands are being showcased every year. In her opinion, the audience that attends this type of festivals is open to listening to new bands and music. Contrary to what happens at venues or club shows where the audience is paying to see a particular artist and already knows their music. "On a festival, the audience has a platform to receive new bands. It is a showcase." She concludes.

The balance between the festivals and the tours or venue shows at a smaller level appears to be affecting bands in the mid-range, which at the same time could affect the smaller bands that do the support for them. Further research is needed to be able to determine if the amount of festivals might be affecting small venues and clubs in major cities and smaller towns across Europe, as the audience might find it more valuable to pay for a major festival ticket than to attend to local shows in their cities. As stated by Britta Görtz, it is very important for bands who aspire to reach a self-sustainable point in their careers to perform at the right festivals in Europe every year. But as bands pursue the festivals slots, the competition gives the festivals a dominant position, and a lot of young bands lower their fee expectation because they assume they are investing in the promotion of the band. Britta Görtz and Fernando Ribeiro agree that it is a matter of making smart decisions. Too many of these investments in the wrong festivals, venues or audiences can lead a band to a point of no return when their debt is too high or when their investors are no longer interested in injecting capital in the project.

It is possible now to conclude that performing at the European HR/HM festival circuit is extremely important for the career of any emerging band. Nonetheless, a very interesting approach that Jörg Düsedau took with Freedom Call, when the band was not present in the

festival circuit at the beginning of their career, might be resulting in the strengthening of their fan base. This particular audience might be inclined to continue paying to see the band at standalone club-shows meaning that the value of the band could be growing at a faster pace. It will be necessary to revise the results of this approach in the future.

4. *How involved are record labels with the touring activity of both emerging and established bands in the present time compared to the past?*

Michael Bisping, from A.S.S. Concerts & Promotions, already mentioned that one of the major changes that the music industry has seen is the change of roles within its players. Twenty years ago the promoters were depending on record labels to receive financing in the form of tour support. Today this situation has changed; touring companies like DEAG, in Germany, or Live Nation run their own labels. As he explains, these companies are still financing touring, but they are only signing “the super stars”; mostly in genres like Pop or Pop-Rock. On this Jörg Düsedau, from Dragon Productions, added that there are acts that are heavily promoted and sponsored by major record labels but as he sees these efforts, they are not aiming at developing a sustained long lasting career.

Martin Forssman, from Sweden Rock Festival, also states that 15 years ago the record labels were providing financial tour support but today such support almost doesn't exist any more. Today it is up to the bands to put up the money that they need, if the fees cannot cover the costs. According to him, record labels in the HR/HM scene are also struggling.

It is not really the job of the record label to help bands play live; that is the job of the agent or the manager. Although it is in their best interest to have their bands performing live as much as possible, because this also helps with record sales. For the record company to put up financial tour support it does not add up anymore. They won't get the return on their investment for doing that by selling records. If it would be still profitable to do that, then record companies would. (...) I feel sorry for the record companies, because it is such a tough market, that they just don't have the money for it. People are not buying enough records anymore. I think that they did what they could for as long as they could, but now it just doesn't make sense to give bands tour support any more from the record company point of view. *Martin Forssman*

In her experience, Britta Görtz, from Crippler, explains that with Metal Blade Records it would be possible to receive records for the tour and merchandise and the exposure through the communication channels of the company, but of course the booking and production is not part of the record label responsibility. When bands need to finance tours or live performances with the involvement of the record label it will be, of course, a situation where the record label will expect to have a return on their investment. Görtz also explains that record sales are very important at this point. In her career with Crippler; if the band doesn't sell records both physically and digitally, this might put at risk their relationship with the record label. As she explained it, if a band is dropped from a record label due to low sales; it is a bad sign for the outside part of the industry. *“Fees will drop and other partners can drop the band and less shows will be booked. It is a domino effect.”*

On the other hand, Fernando Ribeiro, from Moonspell, says that the record labels are the big investors in the music industry. Record labels like Napalm Records or Metal Blade have developed very interesting business models throughout time and their strategy is extremely efficient. According to him the record labels are still the ones who invest in artists.

Even though the record labels in the HR/HM scene are apparently not investing directly into the live performance activity of bands, they are still major investors in the music of a band. Record labels still have a strong relationship with the media all over Europe. The communication and promotion that these companies do for their records is definitely something a band should take into account when it comes to receiving fee offers and slots at festivals. The reviews and record sales impact directly on the sizes of the offers. Later on, this specific aspect will be analyzed when the selection process of the festivals is presented.

5. *What is the role of the new online media platforms in the development of emerging bands' careers from the live performing point of view?*

Regarding the technological advances, Fernando Ribeiro explains that he sees the social networks as a source of communication with the fans, but he does not rely on them to run his band. He thinks that many young bands are giving too much importance to social networking and, in the process, they are losing track of the real world. In his opinion, these two separate

worlds have distracted the music industry. Nowadays, some companies have created music products with the sole intention of producing a media buzz around them. According to Ribeiro, that behavior has failed. This is why he still believes in the underground old style of operating.

On the other hand, Britta Görtz states that she would like to make her music available for free to the consumer through the online platforms available. In her opinion the music is made as a product by the industry, but not by the bands. For artists, music is a way of living; so if the bands can survive or at least get a return on the investment made to produce that recorded material then she would embrace it.

How music is being consumed has already changed a lot, it's not always the album surrounding a song, but the single song. But the single song has more impact than it used to have. You don't have to put out singles anymore, you can just release every single song you recorder at your home studio. This gives more artistic freedom for bands. (...) Now there are many ways to make your music available to the public and even more ways to consume it. Today superstars are being made through online channels like YouTube. *Britta Görtz*

Görtz says that due to the increased accessibility to the recorded music distribution channels like YouTube, iTunes or Spotify and distribution services like Tunecore or CD Baby, more bands have the possibility of entering in the audience scope compared to how it was 15 or 20 years ago.

Merle Doering comments on this subject, mentioning the ways in which bands and their fans connect and how the fans are now starting to be part of the production process. Platforms for crowd funding are helping bands not only to finance records but also to finance complete tours. Britta Görtz argues that today the super stars are being forged through the online media platforms and, although not comparable with iconic bands like The Rolling Stones, this new way of establishing bands is real and serves as promotion for bands.

Even though the online platforms are more associated with recorded music consumption; today the promotion of events, live concerts and festivals takes place within these platforms. Many promoters, festivals and touring companies are currently advertising through online

platforms like Facebook and YouTube, and the audience is now growing more dependent on these sources to be informed about the live activity of their preferred artists. At the same time, tickets pre-sales in mainland Europe are now mostly done through online purchasing platforms. This provides access to detailed information about the market based on territories to promoters and artists and their agencies, and in the end this results in a better product placement.

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## Penetration of emerging bands in the live music market

### *1. Do emerging artists have more, less or the same space today in European festivals and venues compared to previous years?*

Britta Görtz explains that it is harder every year. According to her, in 2008 and 2009 the amount of HR/HM festivals in Europe reached their peak. *“There were too many festivals, most of them small.”* At that time it was fairly easy for smaller bands to perform at these festivals but the ticket sales plummet. Then in 2010 around one-third of them disappeared and since then it has been increasingly difficult for bands to book their own shows at the festivals to a point where it is almost impossible. This statement is in accordance with the statement by Birte Ganser about how festivals work almost exclusively with booking agencies. Görtz states that it is necessary to work with a booking agency and it is also very difficult to get one. She explains that it is necessary for these bands to work to raise their fees to a level where they are interesting for booking agencies. She explains that when their fee was about €350 it was impossible for them to get the attention of a booking agency because 20% of €350 is not worth for an agency due to the amount of work that a single booking needs. There is a "gap" in the band's value that needs to be crossed. During the interview she suggested a model in which booking agencies work for a monthly set fee instead of charging for commission, so bands who have an inferior live performance value can afford having a booking agency.

In Jörg Düsedau's opinion, the spaces for such bands are decreasing. It takes what he refers to as “Vitamin B” (for Beziehung) -or in English, “Vitamin C” (for Connections). Düsedau

explains that for a band without an agency or anyone behind them, it is pretty much impossible to get in the festivals. Some will manage, but in general it is necessary to have connections or an organization that takes care of the booking.

Merle Doering also agrees with this statement. According to her, there are now more bands competing for space. There are comparatively less slots for them, as festival budgets are increasingly being destined for the "Legacy acts" which, according to Martin Forssman, from Sweden Rock Festival, are increasing their prices as they cut down the number of yearly performances due to their age and proximity to the end of their live performing career. This creates a paradox where an increased number of amateur, young and emerging bands compete for a reduced number of slots in festivals; which are believed to be very important for any band aspiring to become professional. Merle Doering also agrees with the research background that states that today the once "Arena Acts" are now also participating of the club shows leaving a reduced space for emerging acts and new bands, which increased substantially since the beginning of the century.

Birte Ganser explains that in the case of Ackerfestival, they started with the idea of supporting these smaller bands. At the beginning of their work as a festival, back in 2006, they were receiving requests directly from the bands, most of them without a booking agency. They collected all the requests, between 300 - 600 bands, did listening sessions to select the top 100 bands and from there they decided for 15 to play in the festival as the newcomers. This was 10 years ago, but eventually they realized that for people to buy tickets they needed to have headliners and more recognized bands. So they started directly asking booking agencies for those headliners and added "smaller bands".

Not fifteen places were left. Some places for the smaller bands were left. And now after years we more and more get the feeling that... we really decided to have bigger bands and maybe there are now only four to six places left for the smaller bands. *Birte Ganser*

Ganser states that she is not sure if the slots for smaller bands are growing smaller or bigger in the festivals across Europe, but the insight she provided from the festival that she runs

provides sufficient evidence that due to the large amount of performing requests, a filter was needed and the smaller bands have now a reduced space.

According to Martin Forssman, for those bands that are relatively new but have a record and possibly a booking agency or a record label, there are now more opportunities to perform in festivals compared to 10 or 15 years ago since there are more festivals in Europe today. He states that for bands at this level it is very difficult to sell records and reach out to a bigger audience because it is now very hard for them to get suitable tours.

Britta Görtz mentions the necessity that bands have for a booking agency in order to have access to festivals and promoters across Europe. It is likely that the future will bring new business models for booking shows based on new technologies. Platforms like Gigmit.com offer the possibility to connect promoters and artists with "gig" listings where they can apply with an Electronic Press Kit (EPK). But at the same time, if all the amateur, young and emerging bands have a booking agency or run their band through a platform designed for it; the gatekeeping would lose their purpose. According to the Network Governance Theory of Jones, Hesterly and Borgatti, there is a number of gatekeepers that ensure that there is a selection and so an artistic value can be provided to the audience. A curation process is necessary so that the audience is not forever lingering within the Paradox of Choice.

All of the group members interviewed agree that there is now a reduction in the spaces provided by festivals, tours and venues destined to emerging bands. One possible reason for this is the vast amount of bands in this range that approach all the different promoters. This might have created a reduction effect inducing the decrease of slots or spaces for such bands. Another reason, stated by Birte Ganser and Martin Forssman, is that festivals need to focus more on the headliners who will intensify the ticket sales. An increased budget destined to pay for those bands, which become expensive at a much higher rate than the smaller bands; reduce the fees and the spaces or slots for smaller bands. The fact that the audience is every day more in search for even stronger lineups in the festivals, forces them to focus on the headliners booking, creating a spinning effect that increases, year after year, the gap between the headliners and the emerging bands at the bottom of the bill. This subject will be further analyzed in the next section.

2. *How does the current density of acts affect the market? Is there more competition than in previous years?*

After having said that it has never been easy for young and emerging bands to break through; when asked if it is now increasingly more difficult to penetrate the live music market for these bands, Merle Doering is very clear to state that she believes that, in fact, the situation today is complicated.

I, of course, don't have that many years to compare to, since I'm only in the business for six years or something, but I think that it is getting worse and worse because of technology, increasing costs and the greediness of bigger bands, actually. If you look at the competition, that's what I mean with technology. (...) So, anybody can record a pretty decent demo nowadays, some bands release their own albums with home-recordings. The competition is much bigger, there are so many bands out there. I think back in the days it wasn't different, (...) of course it was expensive to go on tour, and I'm pretty sure that some of the bands have already seen the potential of getting money out of support [Smaller bands doing show support for bigger bands], but I think it's getting worse because there's more and more [smaller] bands who are willing to do it. If there were, back in the days, three [supporting] bands that would want to go on a tour, maybe one of them was willing to pay. Now it's thirty bands, and ten are willing to pay, and also able to pay, of course, that's also a factor. So I think the competition just got much, much bigger, because of technology. Because it's much easier to be a musician, to connect with people, to communicate. Then of course touring has got more expensive. I think it's simple costs, simple factors like gas costs for example. If you compare bus offers from back in the days and nowadays, of course the buses have gotten fancier, but I could imagine that, this is just speculation, but maybe with the fanciness the buses get heavier, they use more petrol, petrol gets more expensive, or the bus going over to the UK, they have to use a ferry or the bus driving through France, they have to pay tolls. So it's gotten much, much more expensive. (...) I think this is thin ice I'm walking right now, but I think older bands or bigger bands nowadays are very aware of: *Are we going to stay this big? Or, what's going to be next year? Is one of us going to die? Is any of us is going to quit? Are we actually going to keep making money?* I could imagine that when there's bands where the band members are in their fifties or in their sixties, I'm talking about medium headliner bands like Annihilator, or Sodom, or Saxon or Accept. Those bands, (...) I think that they get more and more short sighted because they don't know what's going to happen next year: *Can we still tour next year? Will people still want to see us? Is there still going to be enough kids around, new fans that are willing to buy our tickets.* So they are more short sighted and want to make money now. (...) So they have to worry about: *Are we still going to have the 500 people that we are having in Hamburg tonight, are they still going to come back in a year?* Merle Doering



The Older bands are aware that they are getting old and they might not want to tour next year so they want more money now. They don't want to live on the bus any more. Before they were charging €4.000, now they need €8,000. *Merle Doering*

Merle Doering explains that today the albums are being released to be able to tour, contrary to how it was until early 2000s. Promoters and festivals expect new releases from the bands to be able to present active bands to the audience. As Birte Ganser from Ackerfestival said, they would not consider a band who does not have a recent release. With this in mind, Merle Doering states that the "Big Medium bands" that now are in their fifties or sixties, are aware of the fact that their "hardcore fans" have also grown and now they have families and other responsibilities. Those fans are more keen to the band's classic songs, so when these bands release a new album and make a tour, these fans might not be so interested in attending these concerts as the band will mostly play songs from the newest album. *"With each new album the old fans are scared away; they are very suspicious (...) People don't want to pay 35€ to see 5 songs they like and the rest from the new album."* This is how she explains that the "Big Medium" bands are getting a little bit smaller. This, ultimately, means that as these bands reduce their size, they will compete with the emerging bands for the 300 to 500 capacity venues.

Another component of the discussion is the musical variety within the genre, which only increases the competition. Merle Doering refers to it as follows:

You still have Pop music. Pop will always be Pop, and you have different streams, but it's not as diverse as in Metal. Back in the days, when Black Sabbath started, that was something new, that was something monumental, it was crazy, everybody who was into heavy music was into Black Sabbath, or Judas Priest. There is a reason why you call it Heavy Metal and why Heavy Metal is basically the topic of this genre. But it's not all Heavy Metal any more. (...) Back in the days, when Judas Priest was performing, a thousand fucking Metal fans would go to the show because they were all Heavy Metal fans. But now, you have Speed Metal, Black Metal, Death Metal, Power Metal, Metal Core, etc... And they are also very specific. So when you go into town, you see a thousand Metalheads but maybe 150 of them are Black Metal fans and 350 are Power Metal fans, maybe 400 of them are Glam Rock fans... So if Satyricon comes to town, for example, even though there is a thousand Metalheads in that town, they will not have a thousand people at their show because there is only 150 Black Metal fans and maybe 50 of those 150 don't like Satyricon, and maybe 20 of those 100 people don't have time that day. So it's getting more and more split up because music gets much, much more diverse. Back in the days you had Heavy Metal. That was

those guys that liked heavy music and nowadays it is so much more diverse and people have to split their money and their time and even their taste. (...) The crowd is split, not only time-wise and money-wise but also taste-wise. *Merle Doering*

Birte Ganser explains that today, the festival has an online application form but every year there are more than 1,000 bands applying through the form, so they cannot listen to all of them. If they happen to have places left for smaller bands they would look into the year's data base and select a band based on location and music genre.

If we have the situation that we still have places for smaller bands, we look into this template and maybe say Ok we need something nearby Hamburg with classic rock and then we can just look into our template and see only the classic rock bands from Hamburg and then we have maybe only 10 and then we listen to these 10 and choose one. But I'm sure that most of the festivals are not able to do this at all, because we are an association, we are doing this in our free time, this is non-commercial, a non-profit organization. And we think it's a good idea to support these bands and, of course, the big festivals maybe think this as well, but they are simply thinking about profit and then you are not thinking about the smaller bands because nobody will buy a ticket for the... not only the small, but the unknown bands. *Birte Ganser*

According to Birte Ganser, this situation is present in the smaller festivals, where small and unknown bands are being reduced in their lineups. These festivals have difficulties with their budget for the bands and with the production costs almost every year; this is how in the small range and non-profit oriented festivals, new and emerging bands are reduced year after year. Ganser also explains that for bands it is very hard to get in contact with booking representatives of the festivals across Europe. *"When bands are researching for festivals they can never find the contact for the right person. Most of the times, bands find notifications in the websites of festivals saying: "Do not send any request, we find you if we want you to play on our festival, don't ask us."* Britta Görtz adds that when her band didn't have a booking agency, she was in charge of applying to the festivals and it was very difficult to get a reply from most of the festivals, or to even find the contact details, only small range festivals would reply to their requests.

There is no evidence to confirm that the number of HR/HM bands existing today in Europe is higher than it was ten, fifteen or twenty years ago. But there is a clear difference in the visibility and access that these bands have to the market. In the past, they were out of the

radar because they were not part of the distribution system that filtered the music offer. Today, any band who is aspiring to develop a career, can easily enter in the distribution system powered by ISPs (Internet Service Providers) such as Google and Apple. At the same time, the technological tools for music production and distribution continue to lower the prices and distribution costs as they expand their reach across the world.

Throughout the interviews, the fact that more bands have entered in the competition for places in tours as support bands and for slots in the festivals has been confirmed as a problem that the HR/HM live music market is facing today. If this is correlated with the advances and access to technology, and the continued growth of the live music market; it is likely to expect an increase in the competition during the next decade.

At the same time, the fact that there is a number of bands that are growing scarce and a large number of bands that are able to finance acting as support bands in tours across Europe, a gap will probably increase between the smaller range bands that can afford it and the ones that cannot. Since there is a number of artists or “Legacy Acts” that are becoming scarce, the budget in tours and festivals is mainly focused on their fees. Some questions that arise from this: What will happen when the “Legacy Acts” stop performing? Will the festivals be able to draw the same volume of audience? Will the bands that are in the middle range be able to fill the headlining slots in the future? This will be discussed further on.

Festivals like Ackerfestival expect that bands have new releases, but now everyone can make a self-financed release and promotion. In the past this was, of course, a filter for festivals. Today this filter is more complex to manage due to the fact that reviews, sales and charts are more spread as the online media channels are more diverse.

Merle Doering stated that medium-sized bands are getting smaller. This ultimately means that, as these bands reduce their size, they will compete with the emerging bands for the 300 to 500 capacity venues. Additionally, the musical diversity within the HR/HM genre is something that will probably continue to grow, therefore the consumers and fans will be even more segmented.

### 3. *Is the festival audience in search for emerging bands?*

According to Birte Ganser, there is an increasing interest for new bands in her festival.

Our crowd is very open to this, because they already know that this is not a festival where you have the big names. They just buy the tickets in the beginning when there is nothing announced, so they really think: *I will go there and I maybe know some more bands I really like after the weekend*, so yeah, they like to see new stuff *Birte Ganser*

When asked if there is a growing audience looking for new bands and sounds, Martin Forssman stated that there are certainly people with this interest. Today it is easier for these people to discover such bands with online platforms like Spotify and YouTube and they now have the opportunity to listen to the bands in advance, before they go to the festival. But in terms of selling tickets, that is very marginal. The real driving force for selling tickets are the bands that people really know. When asked if festivals are interested in helping bands to promote their careers from an early stage as an investment in that band, Forssman states that it is very rare. Sweden Rock Festival does that perhaps with 1 or 2 artists every year but in general, the main focus of the festivals is to sell tickets, not to promote or break the bands. Forssman says that it is the booking agency, record labels or the management job to do this.

Merle Doering thinks that there is a growing amount of people interested in the medium and small-sized festivals where there are more opportunities for emerging bands to perform.

I think that there is a counter movement at the moment, and I think it is a very good thing (...) I feel like these festivals are separating into those "Mega Festivals" like Rockavaria, Rock 'n' Heim, Download. They have Muse, Prodigy, Metallica, Korn, Slipknot... with massive lineups. And those [bands] that are under there, you are like: Huh? What? I don't even know those bands. And then you have those medium-sized festivals where you barely have any alteration between the size of a band. 200 to 500 people sized bands, and probably some locals [Bands] before that. So those medium-sized bands are gathering in their own festivals. And I like those festivals, I don't like the trend that is separating [bands in the lineup of the major festivals] so much because I don't know, I think it's wrong. *Merle Doering*

Although there is a growing interest in music discovery in the festival scene in Europe, still the "Massive Lineups", as Doering calls them, are the driving force for ticket sales. And

even if a counter-movement is being developed across Europe, it will still take a long time for it to take off and establish itself as a window for emerging bands to showcase. Showcase festivals like By:Larm in Oslo or the Reeperbahn Festival in Hamburg, which are not focused in only one music genre, are a good examples of how could the HR/HM festivals take different directions in the future.

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## The present financial situation and revenue streams

### *1. How do emerging bands finance their live performing activity?*

Merle Doering explains that some bands are able to cover the costs of performing as support bands in tours, when their members have day-jobs or other financing means. But in the case of young bands, it is possible that they cannot afford participating in these tours as the costs can go from €9.000 to 25.000. After that first major investment, many of them would end up in debt or without the possibility to participate in a second tour.

Jörg Düsedau explains that some bands finance doing tour support when they have someone investing on them, or when the band members are young enough not to have obligations and can spend their own funds and vacation days in going on tour and paying for expenses such as bus-share. But as band members grow older, the amount of freedom and available budget decreases.

For Fernando Ribeiro, touring or live performing is not the only source of revenue to finance the activity of a band; it is balanced between all income streams. The public thinks that the main sources of income for bands are ticket sales and merchandise sales, but relying on solely these two sources, in his belief, is dangerous. He thinks that selling records is very important today in the metal scene. *“Selling records is not a romantic thing, it is important, charts positions help bands to get attention from all the different companies in the music industry.”* Fernando believes that there is a growing niche of people that is interested in the physical product. He thinks that bands who approach music as a form of art, are not going to be relying only in digital sales, but instead they will be presenting their music both physically and digitally. In the case of Moonspell, the band does not only experience good

physical sales while touring, but also with online the pre-sale and mail order. Ribeiro considers that a good record sales influences positively in the ticket sales for touring.

Following the idea that Britta Görtz exposed on how she felt about giving away her music for free as long as there is a possibility to recoup that investment; she explains that in the case of Crippler, the records alone have never payed for themselves, but through other sources of income they have managed to recoup their investment on these records. The first time they “evened-out” or breakeven was in 2009; and since then it's zero in the end of the year. Sometimes it takes up to 2 years to recoup everything, depending on the earnings from performing and selling merchandise. In her opinion the merchandise sales are an important source of revenue for heavy metal bands of all sizes. *“The heavy metal fan has a deep connection with the heavy metal T-shirts and iconography. It is a style element that people can never get enough of, and for other styles of music, like R&B or Pop music, maybe this does not apply.”*

In the specific case of Crippler, when they did a European 3 week tour with Overkill in 2010, the band had recently released their second album, and since the band did not have available funds due to the costs of the latest release, each member contributed with personal funds. Additionally, the band had a publishing deal at the moment, and received an advance that would be recouped through GEMA royalties for public performance. Together with a touring grant from the Wacken Foundation, which supports emerging bands in Germany; it took the band 5 years to repay the advance.

On the merchandise sales, Birte Ganser thinks that it is a problem when bigger festivals charge commissions over the merchandise sales because this is an important source of financing their live activity.

We also sell our own festival merchandise and I know that there is not a big profit at all, so if they deduct 20% of this profit, so the bigger festivals do this, then there is nothing left, not really. (...) I think they [Festivals who charge increased commissions for merchandise sales] are not really fair (...) I think a lot of festivals of our size do the same: We don't ask for commissions, we just let them [The bands] sell and they do it by themselves. We give them space and that's it. Because I know these bands need this to just have something in the end in their pockets, but this is still the

non-profit thinking. (...) Of course when you play at 2pm there are only some hundred people in front of the stage, I don't know maybe you sell 20 CDs, this is of course not a really big profit but at least is something. *Birte Ganser*

Martin Forssman explains:

Most of the times band members just finance it [Their costs] themselves just to get out and play, because they think it's fun, or because they think that could give them something or help them promote their band, so that they can get something for it in the long run. And of course, there are always funds [grants] that bands can apply for; like government cultural funds. But I think that, in most cases, probably they get some money from the festival or the promoters, but maybe it does not cover everything. So the band members need to invest a little bit themselves. *Martin Forssman*

2. *Do you think bands today have to tour more than in previous decades to reach their live performing financial expectations and to recoup their investments?*

According to Fernando Ribeiro of Moonspell, this not only applies for this particular genre but to the entire music business, in general. Bands today have to work harder in every aspect of their activity, not just touring. In the past, people thought that bands were exclusively dedicated to writing music and performing; having professionals taking care of the business side.

Britta Görtz states that for emerging bands, going on tour mostly as supporting band for a bigger band is an investment. She describes how being part of these tours increases the value of the band. Promoters and festivals, slowly, start increasing their fee offers according to the credentials of a band. From this, it is possible to conclude that emerging bands today need to go on tour as support bands to expect a return on their investment.

On the other hand, Jörg Düsedau explains that live performing is not the unique source or revenue. But if a band is not good enough at their live performance; they probably won't be successful. He explains that those bands don't necessarily have to tour more; but tour smarter.

It must be a good combination of playing media cities and play outside, on the country side, because you have to have the media shows to get the press and the country side where you get the fans to buy your tickets and your albums. I don't think touring more is really necessary. It should be regular, it shouldn't be off for too long, there's always exceptions of course, but you have to go there where the fans are. *Jörg Düsedau*

Merle Doering complements this point of view, when asked to describe the way in which an unsigned band can approach the live music market. She emphasized that there is no formula; but she considers that the best way to grow as a band is to perform as much as possible, to expose as much people to the music of a band. Of course, with a strategic approach, based on location and frequency.

There is a fine line between playing just enough, and playing too much. And then there is also a fine line between making yourself a little bit scarce and being extinct. (...) You cannot make yourself scarce if nobody knows about you. So you got to make everybody know about you and then you can decide if you want to play, play, play, or if you want to make yourself scarce. *Merle Doering*

The following discussion is key to be able to confirm or deny the hypothesis of the research. As stated before, the hypothesis is that, in the European HR/HM scene, emerging artists are having to tour now more than ever to meet their financial expectations when compared to the decades of the 90's and first decade of the XXI century. According to the statements retrieved from the interviews, it is debatable if these bands have to, in fact, tour more today than they did in the past. What can be confirmed is that, according to this group of people, the reasons presented to back the hypothesis are true. The reduced space for these emerging bands in the current European HR/HM live music market, the reduced amount of slots at the festivals and the situation that small-range festivals face budget wise is leading to reduced fee offers. This situation can be translated in a reduction of the total space that these bands have today compared to ten years ago. In fact, the current situation shows a heavily filtered access to a market, guarded by several gatekeepers who are restricting the entry more everyday compared to how it was twenty, fifteen or ten years ago. Not only the access is more limited, but there is also an increasing number of emerging bands, that are now present in the music distribution channels, who want to go through the filter. Further on, when the



fees offered to these bands, sustainability and professional expectations are discussed, there will be more elements to analyze this situation.

3. *Are unsigned and emerging bands improving their economies at the same rate they grow as performing acts in Europe?*

Jörg Düsedau mentions Freedom Call as a good example of how a good strategy combined with a good attitude towards working for the success of the band can lead to an economic growth, parallel to the band's growth. The band is not exactly a “new-comer” because it has been active for a long period of time (since 1998), but the offers made to them are growing steadily mostly in Germany, their home country, because they have performed live so much. Although it has not been easy for the band, their fee is growing higher. The band is still ready to take a step back in new markets like the UK and Italy, where they probably have to lower their fee and drive 800 kms in a van to lower the costs. But as Jörg explains: *“That's how to make it happen. Play, play, play with a strategy and then the fees will grow. Being a good live band, of course.”*

Britta Görtz and Birte Ganser agree that when looking at certain bands, if they increase their popularity and their credentials, the fees offered will naturally grow on a yearly basis.

I think at the beginning [of the band's career], it grows and grows bigger [the offered fees], but maybe at one point it just stops. This is my feeling, that some bands are not able to play in the biggest possible range, because some bands go up from 1,000 to 10.000 [Euro] but they will never get 100.000 or 1,000,000 like, I don't know, The Stones get, because this is just another range. But yeah, of course, if the bands get good reviews... And also, if a band does not have a new album out, then there is no chance at all to come to the festivals. This is also what we look for. When we decide to book a band, we look at when was the last album released and, of course, it would be best when it comes out some months before the festival, they need new stuff and they need a reason for people to buy tickets to see them. *Birte Ganser*

On the other hand, as mentioned before, according to Merle Doering, in some cases the festival fee offers do not reflect the growth of established bands that sell out 600 - 1200 capacity venues. These bands are starting to move over to smaller festivals in which they can be the headliners and not the bands in the middle.

From these statements it is possible to conclude that emerging bands offered fees grow exponentially as they grow as a band but when they reach a certain level, it is possible that the growth is not reflected in the offers. This is of course only analyzing revenue from live performing. It is also necessary to mention other sources of income not contemplated in this study such as record sales, publishing, public performance royalties and others.

4. *What is the present situation of the offers made by promoters and festivals to emerging bands?*

Although Britta Görtz explains that in the case of Crippler, the fees have grown exponentially since they started. Her answer relates with the opinion provided by Birte Ganser, stating that for emerging bands, offers grow continuously until they finally stabilize. Ganser also explains that in general offers are stable, and that they have not changed significantly throughout the years.

Jörg Düsedau thinks that the offers have not really changed throughout time. Martin Forssman also said that those offers have been stable for a relatively long period of time. In Düsedau's opinion, this is probably not good because the live performance related costs are higher today in comparison with ten to fifteen years in the past. He explains that the smaller fees have gone lower and the fairly small have stayed the same. The levels are 500 euro, as the lowest offer going to 1.000 and 1.500. Above 1.500 Euro it starts to become a fee offered to a bigger band, depending on the size of the festival.

Martin Forssman states that the bands that are in the lower range of the bill don't have any actual monetary value for the promoter and the fee reflects that.

I think offers in general have gone up quite a lot, but that's mainly for the headliners and the bigger acts. Those fees have increased a lot the last few years, because they are the ones that, at they end of the day, are selling tickets. I think that the fees for smaller bands have been pretty much on the same level for a long time. *Martin Forssman*

On the other hand, when asked if the offers that artists receive are increasing, decreasing or stable when looked as a trend throughout a period of several years, Merle Doering stated that looking at the bands in her roster, with the medium and the bigger ones, it goes "Up and down", but generally it is going down because the promoters know that the bands want to play.

Last week I had an offer for a band. Their general fee is €4.000 for a show, and the promoter said: 2.000. I said: "Well, I can go down to 3.000 but not further", and he said: "I can give you 2.250". I said: "I'm not doing it for 2.250". He said: "OK, let's do 2.750". I said: "Really? 250 Euro? What is the problem with this?" He said: "Take it or leave it. We are sold out anyway. I have no pressure." (...) Promoters are more and more aware of the fact that they have this power when they have a brand established." *Merle Doering*

Merle explains how festivals like Wacken and 70.000 Tons of Metal sell out the festivals without even announcing the lineup. Festivals have discovered that they are selling more than just plain concerts; they sell a social experience, a place for self-identification, a life style, and even a holiday attraction. This realization has put them in a position where they have a stronger bargaining power against artists and booking agencies.

As explained by Merle, this situation is also self-destructive. The ones that are suffering more are the musicians on a financial basis and the audience is suffering on a quality basis. Today the festivals do not select the smaller artists with a strict selection standard. The audience purchases the tickets without knowing who is going to perform and, yet, they expect the best possible festival lineup. This gives the festivals the advantage of just focusing on the "big names" and filling the rest of the slots with bands that are willing to play for whatever the festival decides is a fair price.

A year or two ago, I spoke to a festival promoter from Belgium and he told me that he does not do those smaller-medium shows anymore because people expect huge bills. They expect huge lineups, so they don't go to those smaller shows anymore. At least not in Western Europe; there is a different trend in Eastern Europe. *Merle Doering*

She explains that in Eastern Europe, promoters started recently booking international shows. Shows with tickets for 2 to 6 Euro are drawing more audience than larger shows with big

lineups. On the contrary, in Western or Mainland Europe, the audience is willing to pay high ticket prices for impressive lineups. She gave the example of a package tour with Behemoth and Cradle of Filth on a European tour in February 2014. The price was around 40 Euro. She explains that, in those type of tours, it is common to find that the two or three support acts end up covering the tour bus costs for the 2 headliners and leave without seeing much of the tour revenues. *“There is less money for the bands in the middle.”*

It is possible to conclude that the offers for mid-sized bands that fill 600 to 1.200 capacity venues across Europe are stable and offers from festivals for emerging bands and bands that are on a lower range, in some cases, are declining. This analysis contributes to the assessment of the hypothesis; confirming the validity of yet another reasons as to why the hypothesis was stated. This being that a decrease in the fee offers made to emerging bands could contribute to the fact that bands need to tour more today to meet their financial expectations in comparison to one or two decades ago.

5. *Have the costs related with live performing increased throughout time? How does this affect emerging artists?*

According to Fernando Ribeiro, throughout his experience along the years, the location of a band in Europe also affects the profit. The festivals and promoters offer what is possible for them, but if the band is located in Portugal, as Moonspell is, the transportation costs will be higher than for bands in Germany, for example, and this could stop a band from performing in several shows around Europe. Fernando Says: *“We can't play in many festivals, not because (...) the fee is bad, but because it won't make sense with the flights.”* This means that of course the costs are relative to each case. Jörg Düsedau states that, in fact, the costs related to touring are higher but he also adds the following when asked if the costs are higher than they were fifteen years ago:

Yes. And many bands are not willing to go in a van and sleep at friends or maybe under the stage or whatever any more. They are just expecting to tour in a Nightliner." *Jörg Düsedau*

Düsedau explains that some bands have realized the fact that they have to work really hard. Bands who gained special attention at the beginning of their careers, expecting fees of, at least €1.200, receiving offers of €500 demands a special mindset to continue with a fully devoted and progress oriented attitude. He explains that some bands have realized these changes but many bands still expect to have a Nightliner tour.

The costs are being perceived as higher nowadays, but this is a very relative matter. Nonetheless Martin Forssman stated that for many of the smaller bands, in the case of the bigger festivals, the fees are not enough to cover the costs.

6. *From a live performing point of view, is the present time easier or harder for emerging artists to reach self-sustainability or even a professional level compared to how it was ten or twenty years ago?*

Britta Görtz, provides a very interesting concept. According to her, it is possible that the big dream of having a record contract and be living from music making is not present any more as it was present in the past among musicians and bands.

It's not as attractive anymore, because you give up control. Since you are under your own control when you want to put out your music and release it on iTunes or whatever, it's not a big deal. Every one can release music on the Internet; you have a phone, you scream into it and you put it on YouTube. It might not be a big hit but you are able to do that. And you weren't years back. So I think that this wish of becoming a rockstar for emerging bands might not be there any more. I hear that from many bands; they say: "Well this is something that I want to keep for my real life balance, I want to keep this, I want to keep my aggression until I'm 50 and when I don't have my regular job, believe me, I won't", and stuff like that. They want to have a family and kids, and they want to be in one spot. (...) Easier or harder: I don't know, I think it's easier to put out your music, but it might be harder to get attention for the released music that you have because everyone gets attention, all the attention in the world is now spread over more bands that are putting stuff out. (...) In some parts is easier, in some parts is harder, and when no one knows your music, no one's going to come to your show. Britta Görtz

In her opinion, it also depends on how smart the bands are right now. The decisions made by a band might affect the whole scene of a city, for example. When bands agree to play for nothing, or pay to play in their eagerness to play as much as possible because the general

belief is that one must play as much as possible to be successful in the end they start to destroy the market. For her, getting good offers for live performing today is very difficult.

Pär Sundström, from Sabaton, comments on the ability of emerging bands to reach self-sustainable and professional levels:

Yes, it is possible [To see professional bands] and we will see a few ones. But I do not believe that there will be many. Since back in the days, when you could sell albums, all you needed to be was an artist and the label took care of the work for you. Today its much more work for the artists, as well as the economic side. Now the artist actually has to work (tour) to make an income. And it won't be as quick rise. For example, nobody can build a lifetime career out of 1 album or 1 hit song. It will require, I think, a minimum of four to five albums and ten years of active touring to reach to that point. This is where a lot of bands won't be able to stay friends; they will split up. They will disagree during the road. They will not be willing to sacrifice and so on. *Pär Sundström*

According to Jörg Düsedau, the scene or sub-genre in which a band performs has an influence on the result. Bands that play sub-genres of HR/HM, which are more underground, in his example Ocul-Vintage-Rock style, might have more chances to break-through in comparison to sub-genres like Modern Melodic Death Metal bands. From his perspective, that [Modern Melodic Death Metal] is a scene where there are thousands of bands to compete with.

Merle Doering explains the following regarding to reaching a fully professional level:

If you look at most of the bands that we work with (they) have day jobs. But some times their day jobs are being a musician and they play in several bands or do studio recording. But I don't think that you will find anybody who has a reasonable life standard who lives off music in this range. *Merle Doering*

Regarding reaching a self-sustainable point, on the contrary, Doering thinks that it is a very realistic thing due to crowd-funding and other means of self-promotion.

The self-sustainability is something that I think most of the bands nowadays reach. It's going to be like "Weekend Bands". Most of our bands have this "I need to check with my day job if we can have the time off". For them it's like a paid hobby, it's like a hobby that carries it self, and I think that's where it's going to go: A hobby that pays for itself. *Merle Doering*

When asked if emerging bands that are building their careers will come to the point where they can be professionals, Martin Forssman is clear to say that most of them will not be able to.

There are very few bands that actually make it to that level where they can be completely professional and live from the music. (...) There is a saying that twenty years ago there were ten bands that sold a thousand records each, and today there are a thousand bands that sell ten records each. Which is not actually true because they'll probably sell like two. But I mean, there are so many bands out there... and fifteen, twenty, twenty-five years ago you had these big record labels who basically dictated what people would listen to. There were only so many releases every month, so you had to, as a listener, make it with what came out. Now there are so many different genres and so many different bands that you can find something that fits exactly to your specific taste (...) everybody doesn't have to listen to the new Metallica record the new Iron Maiden record. You find your own doom metal-jazz fusion-prog thing, that is very obscure but you really like it. (...) Yeah, there's just so much around that I think it's really, really difficult for bands to break-through to that higher level. There have been a few, I think, in the last few years; like Sabaton and Volbeat are pretty big, and there are some other examples. But I think it is increasingly difficult for bands to break through on a higher level. Obviously there are bands going fairly big all the time; like Rival Sounds or Blues Pills for instance, who are doing 1500 capacity clubs throughout Europe, which is good. But to see them selling out arenas, I don't think we will see that any time soon to be honest. *Martin Forssman*

Along all the interviews, one fact that has been mentioned is that the vast amount of bands starting to put out their music has many different implications on the market. HR/HM music is not scarce any more. Twenty years ago the audience would wait for years to be able to purchase records from their favorite bands, or to attend to their shows. Today recorded music is everywhere and live music is also reaching that point. Here is where the Bowie theory is needed to analyze the situation, as live shows can reach the point of not providing a sense of scarcity for the emerging band range. Further research will be necessary to understand the HR/HM consumer patterns, both with recorded and live music. It will be necessary to understand the impact of the saturation of the market with an elevated HR/HM music offer in the consumption patterns, to predict how emerging and established bands' economies will develop in the future. This subject is very subjective, but, based on the interviews, it is possible to conclude that reaching a professional level depends on several variables. It has never been easy to reach this [professional] level. Perhaps, as Britta Görtz explained, emerging bands today are not in search of living the "Rockstar Life style" and are rather

aiming at reaching a self-sustainable career; which according to Merle Doering, is possible to reach making the right decisions.

A special set of questions asked to promoters was developed to better understand how the offering system works.

1. *How are the fees offered to small and emerging bands calculated?*

Birte Ganser explains that with the original budget, Ackerfestival divides this budget with a bigger amount destined for the headliners and a smaller budget for the less-known bands. At the beginning they focus on the headliners fees and then they use the remaining budget is destined for the bands that go bellow in the bill.

Martin Forssman states that there is not a fixed system to calculate how the offers are made. It is basically according to the feeling of the promoter or booker, according to how many people they think a certain band can draw to the festival and what other options they can have for the same amount. *"Since there are so many bands at the smaller level, there is fierce competition. There are a lot of bands who are willing to cut their fees just to be able to play."* This puts the festival on a power level against all these bands mentioned before. And since the offer and competition is so big, this might be resulting in the same bands making sure to keep down the fees as they accept to perform for ever decreasing amounts.

Forssman explains that when contemplating the possibility of booking an American band that is willing to give up their fee, if they consider the flights and all other expenses involved with their location; they have to consider options in Europe that are more cost effective. In the end, festivals like Sweden Rock want to have bands in the two lower sections of the bill (divided in three), that at least have some fans that will be standing in front of them when they perform, knowing that it is really the first third part of the bill which is selling the tickets.

When asked if the two lower parts of the bill affect on the ticket sales, Forssman explained that it does have some importance. If the two lower parts of the bill are completely unknown



to people, the audience will not receive it well. But if the audience can find a few personal favorites, or a few bands that they want to see from the lower part of the poster; that would definitely add to the willingness to buy the festival ticket.

## 2. *How are new talents spotted? Are festivals in search for emerging artists?*

Birte Ganser explains that Ackerfestival has a team of five to ten people assigned for the booking. That team is very involved with the music scene; they review what happened the previous year and the previous month, to select the most suitable bands for the festival.

As a small festival, we always need to book bands which are going to be big next year, because we don't have the money to book them when they are on the top of the bill, so of course we go to many concerts and look for what we like and what we have enough money (for). This is also a big reason, because we always have problems with the budget. *Birte Ganser*

When asked how Sweden Rock is selecting the bands that go in the two lower thirds of the bill, Forssman states that they are always on the search for new bands. But at the same time it is a balance. They have an application form and also a discussion board for the audience to suggest bands. At the same time, the booking team is always going to festivals to see what is happening in the scene. Forssman gives the example of how he, as a booker, might introduce a new act in the next edition of the festival: If he sees people wearing a T-shirt of a new band, then reads a positive review, then reads interesting comments on the festival's message board; then he would have a closer look at that band and suggest it to the booking team. If there is a certain "buzz" around about that band, then it could possibly be selected to perform the next year.

In the long run, I think it's in our interest to have new bands coming up and becoming bigger. It is in our interest of course. But on the other hand, that's going to happen without us picking what band that is. I think others can do that and we just try to figure out what our audience wants and we book that. (...) If you look at the headliners now, not only in rock and metal but also in most genres; headliners are bands that came up during the golden years of the record industry. And a lot of them are getting older and there are not coming up any new headliners that get to that level. So they are also becoming more expensive since they know their value and they are getting scarce. They are getting older and fewer and more expensive, so for the festival business, as a whole, it's

really important. I think, that there are new bands coming up that get to the next level. *Martin Forssman*

3. *What is the present economic situation of the festival industry in Europe and what developments can be expected in the future?*

When asked how the current state of the market for the large European Festivals is and how their economies will develop during the next ten years, Forssman states that during the last ten to fifteen years the market for festivals has grown a lot with an increasing amount of people attending festivals year after year. This does not mean that all festivals will continue to have a good economy, as there is now increasing competition.

As a market, the festival business is very healthy. That doesn't necessarily mean that it's going to be a profitable business for everybody in the business, because there is also a stiff competition. So not all festivals will be able to make it, of course. But I think as a market in whole it's very healthy, and I don't think the market is driven by what headliners are available, necessarily. I think that the market is, first and foremost, driven by public interest in going to festivals. If there are no big headliners available, it's up to festival promoters to come up with other ideas to make people want to continue to come to festivals. At the moment, I think that people really seem to like going to festivals year after year; so I think there is a good chance that people will keep doing that for a long time to come. *Martin Forssman*

Birte Ganser, believes that both major and smaller festivals stand in different sides of the market. In her opinion, major festivals do not represent a threat to festivals like Ackerfestival, due to the fact that, today, there is a growing amount of people that are loosing interest in the bigger festivals and who enjoy attending to smaller festivals of 2000 - 5000 guests, who are interested in listening to bands.

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Predictions for the future development of the live market and emerging bands

1. *Based on the current situation of the market, can you try to predict how the future (next decade) will develop for European emerging bands of HR/HM, in terms of the time and*

*challenges for them to reach a self-sustainable, semi-professional or professional career?*

Britta Görtz provides a very interesting analysis of the financial development for emerging bands, where they take advantage of the tools that are available.

I don't think there will be a collapse, (...) I would say that albums might disappear and then you are constantly releasing stuff, not just once a year or once every 2 years. (...) I think there will be a lot going on in the industry and I think the industry will be the big loser here, but I don't think that for the bands it will change. Maybe there will be less money made in the whole music industry, but since the bands are already making so little money; they will have more than the others. I don't think they will have less than right now; I think it will even out. It will become harder in some points but easier in others. And I think it will be more international, more global. Because you can't think in countries when you put out your record digitally. How (do) you want to do that? It doesn't make any sense. *Britta Görtz*

Jörg Düsedau thinks that emerging bands today have real chances of becoming fully professional, but it is getting harder every day to reach that level.

The band has to have the absolute will to make it. Still, I believe what many think: "Oh, it would be nice to become a rockstar". Of course it is, if you are a rockstar, then you are a rockstar. It could be nice, but they don't understand how painful the way is to get there. And that they will maybe let their family suffer, they will lose friends, lose band members on the way, because they find out it's a way that is too hard and that's why you find certain bands that after a while you see there's only one guy in the band from the original lineup. *Jörg Düsedau*

For him, it all depends on how much a band can sacrifice. It depends on the ability for bands to invest resources and effort into this goal. Bands that can take the step of making space in their lives to tour for 3 months straight; have chances of becoming fully professional. It depends on the amount of risk that a band can and is willing to take at a certain point in their lives.

Many bands will realize they have not really tried it; they didn't make that step. But there's a few who really tried it and lost, and some who just made it. I think to be there constantly is very important for bands. *Jörg Düsedau*

Düsedau continues by stating that there will always be live shows and that the business will not dry out. For him, the experience of a live show is “*unbeatable*”. Fernando Ribeiro provides a similar opinion, stating that emerging bands today have to understand the hard work that it is required be able to break-through and not to give up when facing difficulties.

When it comes to the more established bands, there is also a challenge for the future: We, as older musicians, that come from a more old school magazine media oriented, tape trading oriented... have the challenge of having to adapt to the new technologies and the new spirit of things. It's the same challenge that the younger bands have; to adapt to the old school things that still make sense (...) To jump from that virtual place into a more real environment, is a big challenge for the new bands and for the new fans (...) I always make sure that Moonspell is choosing well its partners and not to work with people that on the first meeting they have a totally negative approach towards the music industry. When they tell me: “All right, we are not going to sell records”, I'm out of the table. (...) It's very important not to start off with a negative approach; many people are very negative about their music, about their place in music. *Fernando Ribeiro*

Merle Doering explains that the bands have to become aware of what is actually happening in the market. Today there are agents, bands and promoters who understand that good packages (band lineups) and strategies, aimed at the long term, provide better results. Regarding the future for emerging bands, which aim to become fully professional, she thinks that this era is already coming to an end. But for the future she expects further development with crowd-funding as an important financing method for the various projects related to music making and performing.

I think that Metal is a very good example because the fans like to be involved. And I think this will be a major stream in the future [Crowd funding]. The costs of producing albums are going down because of technology development and the ways of promoting it, (...) so more and more will happen in this self-promoted and self-produced section. But I think that it will also make it much more difficult to calculate for bands: How much will I actually earn? Can I support myself with this? So I think that the medium to bigger sized bands that can't live off this, I think they are basically dead already. *Merle Doering*

Who are the people investing in emerging artist's careers? According to Michael Bisping, that is the biggest question in the new generation of the live music industry in Europe. Twenty years ago, the labels and publishing companies were investing in career development, but today this is no longer happening. Promoters have not yet reached the

point of being able to invest in such artists. Bisping states that the only exceptions are the conglomerates that run their own labels, but they only sign super stars.

I'm sure it will be up to a pretty high level to the promoters, sooner or later, that will come to the point where they say: "Look, I believe in this fucking band, so we will have to do something similar, like a 360 deal" (Doesn't have to be a 360). Or we have to have different income streams. And I'm sure it will happen sooner or later. I mean, we already do things like that on a smaller scale (with A.S.S. Concerts & Promotion), we say: "The band needs investment, otherwise they will not be able to tour, otherwise they will not be able to promote themselves the way they want to. What do they need? Twenty grand? All right let's put twenty grand on the table and make a deal with them on how we make it back. There you go". We've done that a couple of times already. And a lot of promoters are doing it by now. It's still small touring money in comparison to what the labels did invest in the so-called "good old days", but it happens more and more. David Garret, the violinist, was made by DEAG. They put a lot of money on the table to say: "We are going to break him big time". And they broke him big time. (...) It worked completely well, record-wise, live-wise, publishing-wise, in all aspects; they made a lot of money with the guy. *Michael Bisping*

According to Michael Bisping, this will be a development that will take place in Europe during the next decade. Today, promoters are still finding their place in the industry, but possibly in the near future they will be able to invest in an artist career in exchange of a certain income from the publishing, merchandise or from the label income.

When asked if in the next ten to twenty years there will be acts filling the headliner slots, Martin Forssman states that there will always be acts headlining, although he thinks that those bands will not be as big or well known as AC/DC or Metallica. They could be slightly smaller bands that are still fairly big, for example Sabaton, or Nightwish or Volbeat. He can imagine bands like these headlining in the future, more mid-level bands. Forssman thinks that another development for the future is the tribute shows covering music of the "Legacy Acts". He mentions the successful cases of the We Will Rock You musical, American Idiot (based on the album from Green Day) and The Rock of Ages musical in Sweden. Since the music of bands like Queen, AC/CD or Iron Maiden is part of history and will not disappear, even after those bands have stopped performing; an opportunity for tribute shows will arise.

The future will bring many more challenges, not only for the emerging bands but for the established medium-sized bands that will have to find their role when the "Legacy Acts" stop

performing live. Possibly the medium-sized type of festival will gain more strength giving more options to the audience, as well as thematic festivals that bring new audiences, that at the moment are not regular customers of the live music market. Thematic tours and festivals that tour across Europe will probably gain strength in the future. This is something that has already started to happen, but in the future it will be likely to see festivals that work like Cirque du Soleil; where probably a lineup of bands will perform in their self produced stage, that allows a limited amount of guests giving the possibility to perform for more than one night at the same city.

On the other hand, emerging bands will probably continue to develop strategies based on the close connection that they have with their fans and will probably find partners with the promoters; these being the ones to invest in the live music market. In the future it will be likely to find new investors, such as YouTube, who, instead of distributing income from advertisements, will invest directly in the production of audiovisual content. Product brands might also invest in the live music market in the future.

## **7. Conclusions**

The findings of the research provided a different scenario concerning the hypothesis of the project; which states that in the European HR/HM scene, emerging artists have to tour now more to meet their financial expectations when compared to the decades of the 90's and first decade of the 21st century. According to the statements gathered during the interviews, these bands don't, necessarily, have to tour more today to meet their financial expectations compared to the past; but they need to have a more strategic approach when going on tour and performing live. In fact, touring and live performing represent a long-term investment for this cluster of bands, and the period expected to recoup their investments has been increasing since the beginning of the present decade. The Bowie theory was central for the discussion and analysis of the research, and as an important component of the hypothesis; lead the research in the direction of finding out how these bands finance their live performing activity and from which sources of revenue they depend on to expect a return on their investments. Finally, the theory was proven not completely accurate in the particular case of HR/HM in Europe, leading to an important discovery; touring is not the only option

for the economies of these bands and, in general, for all artists in the European HR/HM genre; although live performance is the basis of their activity.

The research problem was found to be more complex than having to tour more to meet financial expectations. According to many of the statements from the interviews, emerging bands should play shows strategically and as much as possible; but the capability of these bands to access the market has been increasingly limited with every passing year since the downfall of the recorded music industry in the early 2000's. This situation represents a paradox involving two inversely proportional effects; as the number of bands that gain access to the recorded music distribution and promotion channels increases, the amount of bands that gain access to the live music market decreases due to the complexity of its filtering process. Such filtering increases proportionally to the number of bands attempting to gain access.

Although the hypothesis was not proven totally correct, the reasons leading to that hypothesis were found to be so. The lower fees for performances that such bands are receiving, the reduced space in clubs and venues and the reduced slots at festivals all over Europe are directly connected to the premise. It was stated that if the situation presented in the hypothesis was confirmed, a musical stagnation could be expected in the future. According to Merle Doering, this situation might be already happening due to the fact that festivals and headlining touring bands are not doing a strict curation and selection process based on artistic quality, but instead, driven by financial reasons taking advantage of their bargaining power.

A number of interesting discoveries were reached when analyzing and discussing the data. The fact that the fees offered to emerging bands grow naturally according to the artistic development up to a certain point, but when the bands are able fill venues of 600 to 1.200 capacity those offered fees stop and become stable for a prolonged period of time. In some cases said fees don't represent the growth and sustained value of such live acts. This has a negative effect on the bands' economies, as the costs related to touring and live performing keep increasing in time.

Not only the saturation of the market with new bands has generated a bottleneck effect, but also the increasing diversity of the genre increases the competition. At the same time, the dominant position that some major festivals now have is being translated into lower fee offers to the mid-range and emerging bands.

Festivals are having a negative impact in the tours and club shows, in Jörg Düsedau's words: "Festivals are killing the live shows." Another startling finding is that the chances of becoming a fully professional band within the HR/HM European market, in the present time, are extremely low, but surprisingly, as stated by Britta Görtz, it is possible that these bands are no longer interested in the idea of becoming "Rock Stars" or make a living out of music.

Based upon the findings of the research, one prediction for the future development of the market and this particular set of artists can be drawn:

Festivals are interested in having new bands who fill the headlining spots of the future, as they are aware that the "Legacy Acts" will eventually stop performing. But according to the data collected in the research, the efforts to develop new talent to fill those places are not sufficient. As Michael Bisping predicts, a new set of investors will come into play during the next decade. According to him, it will be the independent promoters and tour promoters who will start investing in new talent. As the market for the festivals in Europe continue to grow, the possibility for them to invest in artist development can supply the acts that will headline the festivals in the future.

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## Limitations

The present study does not consider quantitative data. This represents a limitation in terms of reach; since it only takes into account the lived experiences of a selected group of current players of the HR/HM live music market in Europe. Of course, the points of view presented in this text cannot be accounted as a total representation of the situation that emerging bands are facing in this market, yet are absolutely relevant since the interviewees are an active part of the equation. Without quantitative data it is not possible to represent a full panorama of



the current situation of this population. Therefore the author encourages other researchers to undergo studies based on quantitative data that analyze the turnover of this group of artists across Europe, to be able to complement the initial approach of this particular study.

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