



Traditional project management vs project management in the music industry

Research to identify whether project management within the music industry is similar than in other industries.

AMAL LECHHEB

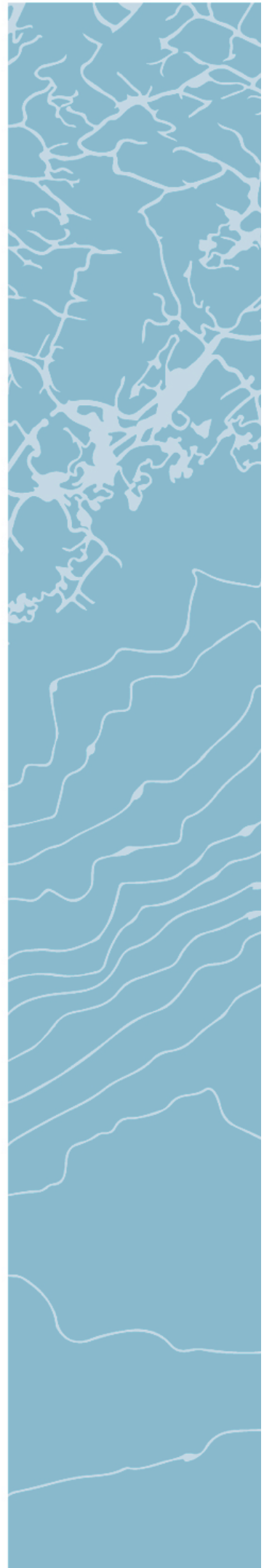
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Abstract

This research paper is addressing the topic of project management within the music industry. The background of this thesis is based on the author's personal interest in project management and the music business. The objective of this paper is to find out whether project management in the music business is any different than the traditional project management applied in today's businesses. A few research questions arise from this interest and are treated throughout this essay: *Is a project elaborated within the music industry different than any other project? Is taking a normal project management set-up into the music industry working?*

A qualitative approach through three semi-structured interviews has been used to address these questions and collect the data needed for the completion of this thesis.

Acknowledgements

I would like to start thanking the interviewees Anna Willrodt, Andy Inglis and Grete Bjelde for taking their time to answer my questions and giving me some insight on how project management really is, within the music industry.

I also would like to thank Daniel Nordgård for his guidance and help with this thesis.

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List of abbreviations

PMI Project Management Institute

WBS Work Breakdown Structure

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1. Introduction

1.1 Topic and Motivations

It is my experience working with festivals and other music related projects that has driven this research. Coming from a management and project management background, it only made sense to me to write about project management within the music business. This idea flourished after a personal interest regarding music festivals. I have worked closely with festivals for many years and have since had interest in creating my own festival, combining project (the festival) management and music (my passion).

1.2 Research questions and objectives

This study aimed to address the following research questions:

- Is a project elaborated within the music industry different than any other project?
- Is taking a normal project management set-up into the music industry working?

1.3 Delimitations

This thesis is exploring the premises of project management within the music industry. Due to a lack of time, a small sample of participants has been interviewed. The findings are then based upon small-scale qualitative data. Further research on the field of project management in the music industry would improve the validity of the findings, along with a higher sample of participants.

1.4 Structure of the study

The overall structure of the study takes the form of six chapters, including this introductory chapter, where the research questions are addressed. The second chapter focuses on pertinent theories and literature review related to the topic. The third chapter is concerned with the methodology used for this study

and the data collected. The fourth section presents the findings of the research. Finally, the fifth chapter discusses the results and is followed by a conclusion chapter which gives a brief summary and critique of the findings.

2. Theoretical background and literature

For this topic, it is important to make a critical literature and background research of relevant literature. This is because it provides a context and framework to our current research about whether a traditional project management can be applied to the music industry or not. The field of study for this background research will be divided into two sections: an attempt in describing what the music industry is, and a general presentation on project management and its different techniques. In order to reflect on the difference between a traditional project management and project management within the music industry, an introduction to project management must first be established. This definition was conducted using a preliminary approach in understanding how project management is applied within our selected industry. In this research study, our current knowledge of project management within the music industry is largely based upon the works of a few academics such as Jonathan Feist, Wikström and Negus. These scholars' works will help us in comprehending the premises of the music industry.

2.1 The music industry

In this section, there is an attempt to describe what an industry is in order to determine what the music industry is in accordance to different studies. The music industry is used here as an umbrella term combining the recording, publishing and live performance industries.

Currently, an industry is defined as “the production, marketing and distribution of most commodities, including services and immaterial goods” (Wikström, 2009, p. 46). Commodities are known to be tangible goods.

To understand what the music industry's components are, it is important to enumerate its different approaches. Throughout the years, scholars have given the music industry several appellations. Wikström (2009, p. 12) points out the different labels the music industry is given from distinct scholars.

The ensuing sections are describing the shifting of the music business as an industry. The music industry is thereby defined to grasp how project management could be used within such industry. This raises the concern on whether traditional project management techniques are adopted or not. It is then important to see this chronological change of the music industry to understand how project management techniques might be applied.

2.1.1 The music industry as cultural industries

Quickly, the concept of cultural industry has derived from being a singular culture industry to a plural definition: cultural industries, implying that there is a distinction between the different cultural industries as they are not meant to be a unified industry.

In 1944, the concept of a culture industry has been introduced by Horkheimer & Adorno where they state that new technologies (communication and media) are helping the commodification of culture (Wikström, 2009, p. 13). In this case, there is a transformation of economically valued goods (e.g. services, ideas, etc.) into commodities.

In his work, Hesmondhalgh (2007, p.16) showcases french sociologist Miège (1979) and policy maker Girard (1981) who introduced the concept of cultural industries. They rejected the singular concept of a cultural industry established by Horkheimer and Adorno in 1944. Instead, they both supported the theory that the emergence of industrialisation and new technologies within cultural production resulted into a rise of commodification and innovation (Hesmondhalgh, 2007, p. 17). These new technologies have made innovation blossom possible, which facilitated the commodification of culture (Wikström, 2009, p. 13).

Cultural products are defined by Hirsh (1972, p. 641, 642) as being “nonmaterial goods directed at a public of consumers, for whom they generally serve an esthetic or expressive, rather than a clearly utilitarian function”. This definition suggests that there is a cultural function to cultural products, rather than an utilitarian function (Hirsh, 1972, p. 642).

According to Negus (1999, p. 14), cultural production is defined when an industry produces culture. He states that commercial and organisational standards and restrictions are influencing the content and practices of popular music (1999, p. 14, 15). He builds his argument on the works of Chapple & Garofalo (1977), where they argue that a few major entertainment corporations (major labels) are controlling the cultural production in order to increase their profit. By controlling the creative work and cultural production of their artists, these corporations are thereby influencing the cultural product, being the customer's choice of music they would want to listen to. All of this is the result of the commodification of the music and the control of its production (Negus, 1999, p.15). This supports the argument mentioned earlier, where the industry produces culture. It could be interesting to see how these major labels use project management techniques to influence the creative work and cultural production of their artist roster.

However, Negus adds another factor to the cultural production. He points out that not only can an industry produce culture, but the culture itself can produce an industry (1999, p. 1). Having previously defined an industry, it is important to define what culture is, to understand what he implies by "culture produces industry". This expression suggests that there is not only a cultural production assimilated with an industry producing culture, but that culture can also produce an industry.

While a variety of definitions of the term culture have been suggested in prior cultural studies, this section will be using three definitions suggested by Williams (1983 p. 90). He starts by describing culture as a "general process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development". With this definition, he provides a broad outline of what culture development is and how it is linked to intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic actions that are followed as a means to reach a particular goal. He also suggests that culture is a "particular way of life". It is seen here as a way of explaining societal norms and values that are visible and known by all, within a "particular" institution. In his third definition, Williams defines culture as "the works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity". Examples of these works and practices can be music, films, theatre, etc. (Williams, 1983, p. 90).

Negus (1999, p. 20) uses these definitions of culture to give an explanation on how culture can produce an industry. He claims that activities that occur within record companies should be thought of a way of life, rather than being confined in a rigid corporate structure. By thinking this way, culture is seen as the practices that occur outside of the corporate environment.

The next section showcases how the music industry shifted into being a creative industry.

2.1.2 The music industry as a creative industry

Over the past decades, the term cultural industries has shifted to creative industries, including the music industry. The creative factor of the music industry needs to be taken into consideration because it is different than the other industries. Negus (1999, p. 24), draws on two approaches to define the term 'creativity' based on Williams' work (1983, p. 83, 84). The first approach is exclusive because creativity is linked to the human ability of being original and innovative. He tries to explain this first exclusivist perspective by using an example within the music industry. He states that creativity is found within the record labels' stakeholders, such as musicians, songwriters and more, which are found outside of the corporate environment. His second approach is more inclusive, as Williams (1983, p. 84) points out. It is not only limited to one industry in particular, but is a more conventional and traditional approach extended to thoughts and creative works in general. He argues that the inclusivist approach to creativity is referring to "routine activities such as creative writing or creative accounting". Based on these different approaches of creativity, an overview of the music industry as a creative industry is seen.

After establishing that the music business is a creative industry, it is important to highlight that it is also an experience industry. The following sections will draw attention to a more current state of the industry, represented as an experience industry but also as a copyright industry.

2.1.3 The music industry as an experience industry

The term “experience industry” is seen by many scholars as a synonym of a creative industry. However, these two industries are different as the creative industry is focused on the input needed for the execution of an activity rather than on the outcome of such activity (Wikström, 2009, p. 16).

The concept of an experience industry is originated from the works of Pine & Gilmore (1998) where they discuss what an experience economy is, and how an experience is different from a service but staged through the latter. According to their definition (1998, p. 98), an experience is unique and personal and is translated into a memorable event. In this case, the service is used as the stage and the goods are used as props. This allows the customer to engage with them and in return, receive a memorable event. Walt Disney, the pioneer of the experience economy, created the Disney theme parks which serve as a perfect example of what a memorable experience is (Pine & Gilmore, 1998, p. 99).

The experience economy is thereby highlighting the execution of an activity, rather than describing what it involves (Wikström, 2009, p. 15).

In the case of the music industry being an experience industry, it is more important to see how a concert is performed, as an example, rather than what it involves. This implies that a well performed concert with light effects, for instance, gives a better experience to the audience than a poorly performed concert with perfect light effects.

2.1.4 The music industry as a copyright industry

As mentioned in 2.1.1 The music industry as cultural industries, major entertainment corporations such as major labels are controlling the production of music, hence its commodification. Wikström (2009, p. 17), introduces the concept of the copyright industry as he claims that copyright legislation is what allows the commodification of a musical work. Through licenses, this legislation protects musical content (songs, recordings, etc.) and personalities.

2.2 Introduction to project management

In order to understand what project management is, it is crucial to highlight the differentiation between a project and project management. While a variety of studies have been conducted about these two concepts, our main focus here is on the Project Management Institute.

The Project Management Institute (PMI) was created in 1969 to answer a worldwide need for project managers around the world to “associate, share information and discuss common problems” (Institute, p. M., 2017). This platform has since been the main source and reference for project management. It will be used in this literature review to define and differentiate what a project and project management are. After defining each one of these concepts, the distinct characteristics of each are developed into separate sections.

2.2.1 Project definition

From a scholar to another, a project is defined differently, although they are all mainly based on the PMI’s official definition.

According to the PMI, a project is a “temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product, service or result” (Institute, p. M., 2017). A number of scholars and academics have sought to elaborate and detail this definition. Literature has emerged with several, but complementary definitions of what a project is.

As reported by Munns & Bjeirmi (1986, p. 81, 82), a project is also defined as the realization of a precise goal, where the start and end dates are fixed and its focus is on the long-term. The benefit of the company for whom the project is realized for is then translated into a financial, marketing or technical form. In the figure below¹, the main aspects of a project are listed:

¹ Taken from Biafore & Stover (2012, p. 4)

² Cf. 2.3.1 Theoretical frameworks: essential tools in project management.

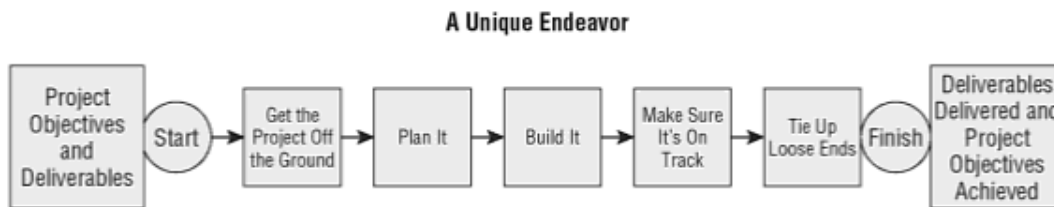


Figure 1: Elements of a project

A project, being defined as a unique attempt in achieving a specific goal, it is then important to divide its process into several parts.

First and foremost, the project objectives and deliverables are a part of the definition of a project. Each project has goals and a vision. In this case, the vision of a project is a peek into the future achievement and success of the project in question (Feist, 2013, p. 64). It is usually defined using three characteristics: a project title, a short description of the project, and its objectives (Feist, 2013, p. 72). These three elements are commonly combined in a document called the project scope statement², where deliverables of the project are also listed (Feist, 2013, p. 76). According to Biafore & Stover (2012, p. 57), a project deliverable is defined as a tangible (product) or intangible (service) result that is delivered to the client once the project ends. The project objectives and deliverables are formulated as the project starts. Its success is reached when the objectives are achieved and the deliverables are delivered to the client.

The second segment of the figure above is commonly known as the project life cycle. The structure and definition of a project life cycle varies from one scholar to another. The life cycle of a project is composed of several phases of development (Kerzner, 2013, p. 78). The work that needs to be done and the stakeholders involved within each phase are what characterizes a project life cycle (PMBOK® Guide, 2000, p. 12).

The figure below demonstrates the different stages in the project life cycle, based on the works of Adams & Barndt (1983) and King & Cleland (1983).

² Cf. 2.3.1 Theoretical frameworks: essential tools in project management.

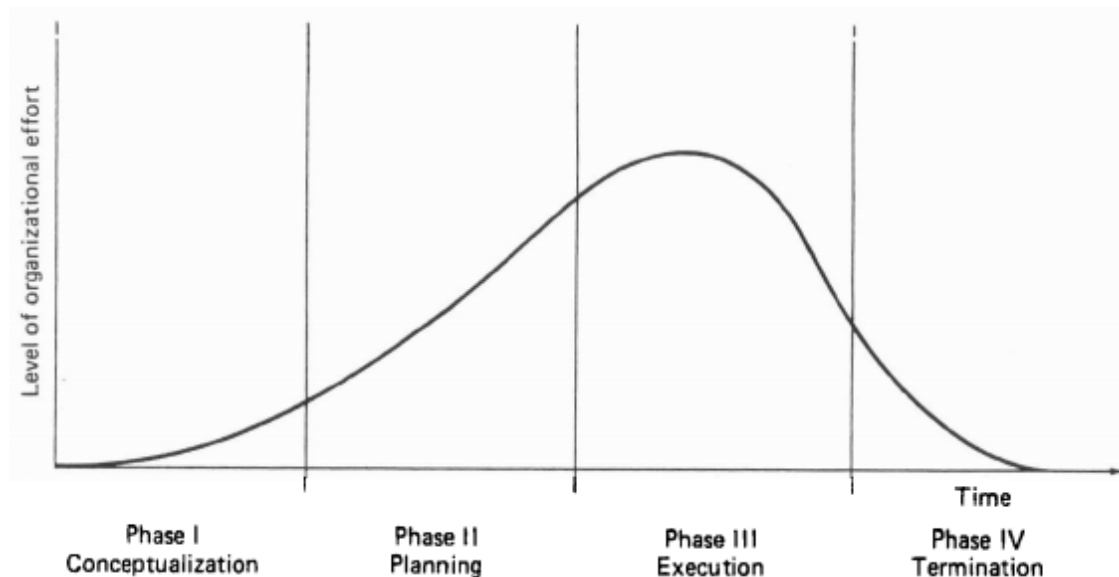


Figure 2: Stages in the Project Life Cycle³

Each one of these phases is defined in the part 2.3.1 Theoretical frameworks: essential tools in project management.

The project life cycle goes hand-in-hand with the role of the project manager, as the different phases require actions from the latter. To understand what a project life cycle is, different tools and techniques are used within its distinct stages. These tools are allowing the project manager and his team to implement strategies in the purpose of achieving the project's objectives. These tools and techniques are defined in more details in the section 2.3.2 The project management team.

After having defined what a project is, and in order to grasp the meaning of project management as a discipline, the notion of management is described below illustrating its chronological arrival in the organisational way of working.

2.2.2 Management definition

To understand what project management is, it is important to talk about the array of scholars and thinkers that came prior to this research paper,

³ Taken from Pinto & Prescott (1988).

debating on what the meaning of management is and how it came into being an important part of an organisation.

Taylor and Gantt are two pioneers and practitioners that stand out when it comes to understanding how management came to be fundamental in today's organisations. Known for being the father of scientific management and his one best way, Taylor (1911), states that management is the art of knowing what needs to be done and doing it in the best and cheapest way. He also points out that the principle of scientific management is that the employer and employee have a common benefit. The former having low labor costs and the latter high wages (1911, p. 8).

Considered as Taylor's disciple, Gantt introduces the gantt chart a few decades later, which is a tool used for time estimation that completes Taylor's view on management. It is defined in more details in the section 2.3.1 Theoretical frameworks: essential tools in project management.

Long after Taylor and Gantt, a few management practitioners started reflecting on the dual aspect of management as not only being a science, but also an art. Pearce & Robinson (1989, p. 4) believe that management is a combination of science and art within a field of work. They claim that management is a process of organisational resource optimization. In this case, the organisational resources are human, material and financial contributions (Pearce & Robinson, 1989). That said, this definition does not entitle that there is a contribution between all the resources having a unique purpose: reaching the organisation's goals and objectives.

Koontz & Weihrich (1990, p. 4) define management without taking into account the external environment of the organisation and its stakeholders. However, they complete the previous definition. They claim that management is a process of creating and preserving an environment where groups of people work together in a well-organised and competent way, in the interest of reaching a common goal.

This understanding of the fundamentals of management will help us define what project management is and what it does entitle.

2.2.3 Project management definition

After defining what a project and management are in the previous sections, there is an effort in this section to give an understanding on what project management is as a discipline.

As mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, The Project Management Institute is the main platform for resources regarding project management. The PMI gives a standard definition of project management as being “the application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to project activities to meet the project requirements” (Institute, p. M., 2017). This definition is elaborated in the section 2.3 The context of project management.

For the past decades, project management has been in a constant change and under different appellations such as applied systems management or even matrix management (Kerzner, 2013, p. 48).

Project management is also considered a modern and efficient method of management, mostly used in organisations where the management team handles a cluster of one-time and uniquely defined projects (Avots, 1969, p. 77). According to Avots (1969, p. 77), the goals of project management are related to controlling the time, costs and progress of the current project. Avots, Duncan and Gorsha (1983, p. 3701) state in their study that there are also several objectives to reach in order for project management to be successful. These goals depend on the timeliness of the project, if the project is within the established budget (estimated by the project manager) and on the satisfaction of the customer. Following prior studies, Kerzner (2013) suggests that a successful implementation of project management is only possible if the client (end user) is included as a project stakeholder.

However, as noted by the PMBOK® Guide (2000, p. 11), project management requires to be put in context, where its environment is broader than the project itself.

In the following section, the context of project management is showcased, highlighting the different parties involved within this environment. It

also gives an insight on the different tools and techniques that the management team adopts.

2.3 The context of project management

The purpose of this section is to review literature on project management, particularly on its context to the environment in which projects operate. Project management is not only about the organisation it takes place in, but also about the team behind it and the tools that they use to achieve the project's goals.

2.3.1 Theoretical frameworks: essential tools in project management

In the upcoming part of this research study, the role of the project manager is highlighted. To succeed, a project manager needs to focus on several essential documents useful for the achievement of the project's objectives. These tools are used throughout the project life cycle within its different phases⁴. These instruments will be featured throughout this section.

As seen on figure 2 (Stages in the Project Life Cycle) in 2.2.1 Project definition, the project life cycle is divided into several stages of development. These phases are considered by the project manager and his team.

The first phase of the project life cycle is the initiation (conceptualization) of a project, where the mission, vision and objectives of the project are defined, along with its deliverables (Pinto & Prescott, 1988). They also add that during this phase, the project manager needs to consult with the client of the project.

As mentioned beforehand, these factors are important to be defined prior to the start of a project. They can be found in the project scope statement previously defined as a main document for the realization of this phase.

Biafore & Stover (2012) and Feist (2016), have complementary definitions of what a project scope statement is and what it contains. As stated

⁴ Cf. 2.2.1 Project definition for the different phases

in their works, the document contains a certain amount of information required for the comprehension of the project. A regular project scope statement includes the following:

- **Scope definition** itemizers what needs to be done and what is included in the project's process.
- **Project deliverables** (cf. 2.2.1 Project definition)
- **Acceptance criteria**, also called success criteria, indicates the level of quality the project is aiming towards.
- **Project exclusions**, as the name suggests, are the specifications of what is not included in the project.
- **Project constraints** specifies the limits of the project through mostly time and budget restrictions.
- **Project assumptions** outlining the specifics that are unknown.

Feist (2016) adds two other elements: dependencies and stakeholders. The dependencies are related to whether there are other projects depending on the current project or not. It is also important to find out who the stakeholders related to the project in question are.

Nonetheless, the PMBOK® Guide (2000, p. 56), defines the project scope statement with only four factors: the project justification, the project's product, its deliverables and objectives. It is a concise definition, but a reliable one.

The following stage of the project life cycle is the planning phase, where the project manager identifies the organisational resources needed, such as financial and human resources. These resources are usually found within the organisation and are required from the top management (Pinto & Prescott, 1988, p. 9). Kerzner (2013, p. 78), adds a triple constraint factor to this phase, where the cost, quality and time spent on the project are key parameters to the success of the project and to its planning. These parameters usually constitute a framework managed by the project team (PMBOK® Guide, 2000, p. 29). According to Feist (2013, p. 30), if one of the three elements rises or drops, the other two remaining factors need to change in order to keep a balance between the parameters. A balance between these three factors is important for the

reason that if one side of the triangle is changed, it has a major impact on the two remaining sides of the triangle.

But, as mentioned in the beginning of this section, important tools and documents are prepared in order to implement strategies for a successful project during the planning phase. In the ensuing part, each one of them is relevant to be defined and introduced.

After the project scope statement, the work breakdown structure (WBS) is the natural tool to use as a means to detail the workload necessary for the successful realization of the project. According to Lackman (1987), a project manager has several tools available to achieve success. His main tool is the work breakdown structure, where the work needed to be done is divided into several tasks and subtasks. He defines it as a functional breakdown of the project's tasks, from broad tasks to detailed ones. A project being a unique endeavor, using previous WBS templates is not ideal, but a good start for inspiration. The project manager can rely on these prior WBS templates, to create a suitable one for the project he is currently working on. Chances are, this WBS will also be used as a template in future projects.

The PMBOK® Guide (2000, p. 57), suggests that during the decomposition of the workload, the main project deliverables are subdivided into smaller ones. By doing so, the project manager defines these deliverables into more detailed and manageable elements that are enough to support the development of the different stages of the project life cycle. There are four stages of the development that the project manager needs to follow in order to complete the WBS:

- **Identification of the key project deliverables** listed beforehand in a document called the project scope statement.
- **Estimation of the cost and duration** of each deliverable.
- **Identification of deliverables components** that will help measuring their performance. The previous step needs to be executed once the identification is completed.
- **Verifying** whether the decomposition of the work is correct or not. At this stage, several questions need to be answered such as: Is the

decomposition of the workload detailed enough? Does it have the appropriate schedule and budget?

The next phase of development of the project life cycle combines the execution, monitoring and controlling phase.

During the execution phase, the project manager uses the tools implemented in the previous phase (the planning stage of the project) such as the project scope statement and the WBS. The work that has been itemized in those documents is finally executed and completed by the project manager with the help of his team.

The PMBOK® Guide (2000, p. 35), highlights the major actions that occur during an execution process:

- **Tasks are delegated by the project manager** to his team members. They are assigned according to the individual's competencies and skills. This is more efficiently done when face-to-face meetings are held.
- **The project manager monitors on a day-to-day basis**, the performance of the project in order to deliver a project that is in a position to fulfill the quality requirements set at the beginning of the project.
- **Stakeholders receive information** regarding the progression of the project. The information is shared by the project manager through detailed reports.

While the project workload is being executed by the project management team, the project manager monitors and controls their progress. He thereby wishes to measure the productivity of his team by controlling whether the milestones set beforehand are being met or not (Feist, 2013, p. 330).

A few tools such as gantt charts and milestone charts are used to monitor the execution process. They are usually conceived during the beginning of the execution phase, where the project manager and his team get an overview of the work that needs to be done.

In the PMBOK® Guide (2000, p. 78), the gantt chart, also called a bar chart is referred as a display of the beginning and ending dates of the different

activities of a project that are required to be achieved within the estimated time limits. The expected durations of each task are also shown in this chart. The bar chart is therein helping the project manager to see the progress of the project.

Figure 3 showcased below, is an example of a simple gantt chart made in a project management software called Smartsheet. Each one of these horizontal bars represents the scheduled duration of each activity. The connecting lines and arrows are the dependencies (Richman, 2002, p. 117). For example in the chart below, the booklet content, cannot be started on, until the songwriting process is finished.

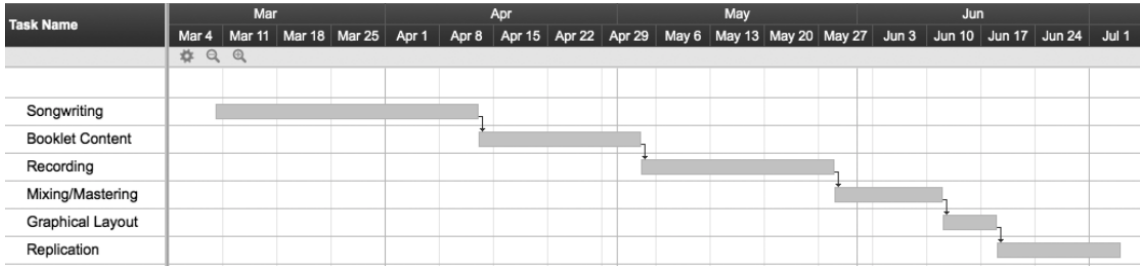


Figure 3: An example of a Gantt chart used within a music related project⁵

The milestone charts are also a tool used in project management. They identify the expected start or achievement of the major deliverables, already listed during the planning phase, in the project scope statement (PMBOK® Guide, 2000, p. 78).

Last but not least, is the termination/closing phase, described in figure 1 (elements of a project) as the action of “tying up the loose ends”, where the project is closing. According to the PMBOK® Guide (2000, p. 37), the termination process goes as follow:

- **Contract closeout:** the project manager makes sure that all the work has been done properly and that all the terms of the contract have been met.

⁵ Gantt chart taken from Feist (2013, p. 179)

- **Administrative closure:** the customer formally accepts the product delivered to them at the end of the project. The formal acceptance ensues when the project results are gathered and documented by the project manager (PMBOK® Guide, 2000, p. 125).

After listing and explaining what each one of these essential tools are, it is important to see who uses them and how they make use of them. The following section illustrates the different parties involved in a project and its management.

2.3.2 The project management team

This section delineate the different parties of the project management team and their respective roles in making a project successful.

2.3.2.1 The project stakeholders

In prior literature, several researches regarding the role of the project manager have been completed. They all mostly agree on the project manager being the person having authority and responsibility over the project in question. A project manager is usually accompanied with a project team that constitutes the stakeholders of the project. Different scholars argue on the distinct parties involved in the process of managing the project.

Conforming to the PMBOK® Guide (2000, p. 16), there are specific key stakeholders within a project:

- **The project manager**, being the person in charge of managing the project (cf. 2.3.2.2 The project manager). He also is the one implementing strategies (cf. 2.3.1 Theoretical frameworks: essential tools in project management).
- **The project sponsor**, being the person controlling the project's funding and thereby the person approving the project. The sponsor can also be the one choosing the project manager.
- **The customer** also known as the client or the end-user, is the entity to whom the project is dedicated.

- **The performing organisation**, being the company for which its employees are working on the project.
- **The project team members** are the employees mentioned above (the core people working with the project manager).

2.3.2.2 The project manager

Most of the studies conducted on the success factors of a project rely on the qualities required from a project manager and his team. Communication, commitment and technical background are recurring skills required from the project management's team.

Hyvari (2006) argues on the critical factors related to the project manager that are his ability to coordinate, his effective leadership and his commitment to the project's success. Regarding the leadership aspects of a project manager, Hyvari's study emphasizes on his good communication and motivational abilities as well as on his ability on being decisive. The study showcases also the ability for the project manager of seeing ahead in the future in order to cope with unforeseen changes that may occur during the project life cycle. He is thereby required to be a quick-thinker and goal-oriented.

Similar qualities have been revealed in prior studies. According to Kumar (1989), a qualified project manager is confident, persuasive and is not scared of making decisions. He is also able to cooperate with others, which allows him to delegate the work. Eventually, the project manager is responsible for the well-being of the project and is therefore in charge of planning and controlling the project in every aspects, while adjusting strategies when needed.

All of the characteristics mentioned above are critical for a project to be successful. If a project manager possesses the qualities previously mentioned, there are higher chances for the project to be successfully completed.

In the ensuing part, there is an effort in understanding the premises of the music industry in order for us to see how project management techniques might be applied within such industry.

2.4 Delimitations

So far this chapter has been focused on the traditional project management and its techniques, rather than on project management within the music industry. The theoretical part of this thesis has been however focalized on the different appellations and meaning of the music industry. The following section will attempt on giving answers on the practices of project management by individuals working in the music industry.

3. Research methodology

3.1 Literature research methodology

Being placed at the beginning of a research paper, the literature review is a basis for research in most scholarly fields. This section enables a description of how the research process was conducted for this study. The research process helps provide an understanding of how other relevant scholarly works are linked with our academical field: music management. We have seen in the previous chapter that several studies have been conducted in the field of project management, along with the techniques and tools used within that discipline.

For this thesis, the literature research involved several academic databases and websites. Oria, which is a portal that provides a digital access of databases of all university libraries located in Norway, has been the first database that I have used. It allowed me to find scientific literature that is related to my topic. The research progressed as I started my search with broad terms, expressions and keywords that gradually became more detailed and tailored to my topic.

I have also used google scholar and several management journal archives, where I would proceed with a similar research process. Additionally, I benefited from researchgate: an online networking platform where researchers and scientifics collaborate and share their work.

The knowledge that I have acquired throughout the pursuit of my bachelor degree in Business Administration and Management, as well as the skills obtained while working in the music industry, has aided me in writing this thesis.

3.2 Choice of Methodology

This chapter will showcase the methodological approach used to answer the thesis' research questions. The research questions and gap can be found in the introduction chapter, however I would like to reiterate them in order to justify

the choice of methodology of this study. The research questions consist of the following:

- Is a project elaborated within the music industry different than any other project?
- Is taking a normal project management set up into the music industry working?

The research gap is also important to recapitulate, in the sole purpose of giving an overview of the missing aspect in the existing research literature related to project management in the music industry.

Other questions emerged from this research gap: Should the traditional project management techniques be applied to the music industry? Why should it be done?

The research question and gap raise important questions that will be answered once the data is collected and analysed. This thesis aims in answering whether different people in the music industry are using similar or different techniques in order to manage their project, whether it is an artist, a festival or even a concert.

For the purpose of this thesis, I chose to use two different approaches: a literature review (cf. previous chapter: 2. Theoretical background and literature) and interviews: both qualitative methods. I have chosen to use a qualitative approach as it is the best methodology to answer the research questions that emerged with this thesis (cf. 3.4 Data collection and qualitative analysis). Nonetheless, the methodology I chose has been based on Denscombe's (2010, p.4) three indispensable elements that facilitate the selection of my research strategy. These three elements can be displayed in the form of questions:

- Is the strategy chosen suitable* for my research?
- Is it feasible?
- Is it ethical?

**Suitable is used here to explain that the research strategy needs to be applicable to the research questions mentioned in the beginning of this section.*

It also has to be achievable within the scope of a master's thesis, where a time constraint is set with a deadline that has to be met (Denscombe, 2010, p. 6).

Last but not least, the research strategy should also consider the ethical rules regarding the participants. Their consent to participating in the research is primordial, along with the researcher respecting and refraining from invading their privacy (Denscombe, 2010, p. 7).

The next section will focus on the nature of the research, aiming in finding the right research techniques to use for this thesis.

3.3 Choice of Method

In social research, there are different types of tools used in order to collect data. The following sections each describe a technique used that is relevant to the previously chosen methodology.

3.3.1 Research questionnaire

According to Denscombe (2010, p. 156, 157), a research questionnaire possesses specific characteristics that will help collect information, useful for the analysis of data. The information is gathered by asking people directly either through an online or offline method (via email or postal service), without having any intermediary in between. The nature of the information is thereby either factual or opinional (Denscombe, 2010, p. 157). Additionally, the set of questions sent to the participants are all the same. No participant has a different list of questions.

Research questionnaires require background information about the study and directives that are given to the participants in order to help them fill out the questionnaire (Denscombe, 2010, p. 160). Bailey (2008, p. 138), identifies this as the introductory statement. Denscombe (2010) and Bailey (2008) both agree that the following information is mandatory to share with the participants, allowing their work to be more structured and clear:

- Name of the person or organisation that is in charge of the study.
- Clear and concise objectives of the questionnaire.

- Set time frame: deadline information about when the participant needs to return a completed questionnaire to the researcher's contact address, provided with the primary information, regarding the questionnaire.
- Information given by the respondent is confidential.
- Participants are voluntarily taking part of this research by completing the questionnaire.

Bailey (2008, p. 109, 110) suggests another important constituent of the questionnaire: its relevance. A research questionnaire needs to answer to three factors that will determine the reason why it is relevant to conduct. The three elements are:

- **The objectives of the study.** They must be relevant to the respondent as it will determine their willingness in helping out the researcher by filling out the questionnaire (Bailey, 2008, p. 109).
- **The questions posed in the questionnaire must be relevant to the stated objectives of the study.** The researcher only asks questions that are possible to analyse and to get data from (Bailey, 2008, p. 109).
- **The questions posed in the questionnaire must be relevant to the individual respondent.** The latter must feel an achievement, once the questionnaire is completed. A feeling of satisfaction and contribution to the research is the goal here (Bailey, 2008, p. 110).

As mentioned in the beginning of this section, there are offline and online ways to send out a questionnaire. The postal questionnaire is a paper version of the questionnaire that the respondent needs to send back to the researcher once completed. The other type of questionnaire is an online version called an internet questionnaire. Denscombe (2010, p. 159), showcases three different ways a researcher can conduct a questionnaire online:

- **Email questionnaire:** This is very limited when it comes to its structure as the body of the email is the questionnaire. However, the participant answers to the email questionnaire, by responding to the questions in the same email and sending it back.

- **Questionnaire enclosed to an email sent to the participants:** This form is less convenient than an email questionnaire, as it is required from the participants to open the attached questionnaire, complete it, save the document and finally send it back. There are many steps that could discourage the respondents from filling out the questionnaire.
- **Web-based questionnaire:** This gives more options when it comes to the type of questions available for the researcher. He can decide on the nature of the questions, whether they are open, closed or pre-determined questions, as well as the format of the answers (Denscombe, 2010, p. 166).

The different types of questions

Bailey (2008, p. 122), claims that there are closed-ended questions, also called fixed-alternative questions, and open-ended questions. This section is going to differentiate them by highlighting the importance of each one of them and weighing their pros and cons.

Close-ended questions

The closed-ended questions are used when the researcher is aiming for nominal, ordinal or interval variables. Nominal variables, also called categorical variables, are non-numerical elements that can be, for example, related to the gender, or even the occupation of the respondent. A few categories of answers are available to choose from, but they do not have an order of appearance and importance within the questionnaire (Bailey, 2008, p. 63).

Ordinal variables are different than nominal ones, as their order of appearance is clearly important for the formulation of the questionnaire. An example of an ordinal variable is the educational experience, where the respondent must choose between different gradually provided answers, such as elementary level, high school level, etc.

Intervally measured questions are defined when the interval between each variable is equally dispersed (Bailey, 2008, p. 123). The annual income of the respondents of a questionnaire can be an example of such variable. For

instance, out of three participants, the first one is earning 100 000 kr, the second one 150 000 kr and the third participant is earning 200 000 kr per year. We can clearly see that the variables are equally spaced by 50 000 kr of difference between the second and the first participant and also between the second and third participant.

The fixed-alternative questions have several advantages. The answers to these questions are standardized, which is easier and more convenient for the respondent to select the answer that is better suited to them. Additionally, the answers are easier to analyse and compare from a respondent to another (Bailey, 2008, p. 119).

Bailey (2008, p. 119), points out also the disadvantages of the closed-ended questions. One of the cons is that the respondent can select an answer that does not define them by simply guessing what answer is expected to be chosen by them. Unlike an open-ended question, closed-ended questions can produce misunderstandings which are not known to the researcher.

Open-ended questions

According to Bailey (2008, p. 122), open-ended questions are usually used when the answer involves discussion and details from the respondent. They are mostly situated at the end of the questionnaire as they require more time and reflection from the respondent (Bailey, 2008, p. 128). This type of question has its advantages as the answers provide findings that the researcher may have not foreseen. Also, this is due to the self-expression and creativity that such question enables.

When answers are non standard (such as closed-ended questions), the collected data may be difficult to analyse by the researcher. The answers provided by the respondent can also be off topic or irrelevant to the study. Additionally, open-ended questions can be time and effort consuming (Bailey, 2008, p. 121).

When it comes to the advantages and the disadvantages of a research questionnaire, academics list a few. The research questionnaire has several advantages that Denscombe (2010, p. 169) identified as follow:

- **Economical** due to the high return in research data combined with less time and money spent.
- **Easy to organise** compared to interviews for instance.
- **Easier to send out** and a quicker way to collect data.

Denscombe (2010, p. 170) also mentions one of the disadvantages of a research questionnaire being the veracity of the answers that cannot be verified.

3.3.2 Research interview

Denscombe (2010, p. 173) suggests that the research interview is a research process where the data collection gives the researcher insight on the interviewees' opinions, experiences, etc.

According to Bailey (2008, p. 187), there is a similarity between the questionnaire and the interview when it comes to their early stages. Before the interview starts, the interviewer needs to inform the interviewee with his name, occupation, and the goals of the research study. Denscombe (2010, p. 173), adds up other elements that are as important as the ones mentioned above:

- Conforming to the research ethics mentioned earlier in the section, the interviewee gives their consent, in order for the researcher to interview them.
- The interview is being conducted "on the record". However, if the interviewee decides to share some information that they do not want to be used in the research, they need to inform the interviewer instantly that they are speaking "off of the record".
- The researcher is the one guiding the interview and ensuring that the agenda for the discussion is followed as agreed upon with the interviewee.

The type of interview is mainly selected in regards to the type of data the researcher is aiming to collect, but also to the goal of the study (Darlington & Scott, 2002, p. 56).

Types of research interviews

According to Denscombe (2010), there are several types of interviews as shown below:

- Structured interviews
- Semi-structured interviews
- Unstructured interviews
- One-to-one interviews
- Group interviews
- Focus groups
- Internet interviews

Additionally, Darlington & Scott (2008, p. 48), argue that these different types of interviews can be categorized as in-depth interviews. These are thereby the qualitative approaches that are mostly used by researchers.

Structured interviews

This type of interview is similar to a questionnaire as it has a preset list of questions, restricting the respondent to give limited answers. This allows the researcher to have easier data to analyse. The only difference with a research questionnaire is that the structured interview is carried out face-to-face, rather than by email or postal means. This type of interview is also referred to as standardized interview (Denscombe, 2010, p. 175).

Semi-structured interviews

During a semi-structured interview, also mentioned as a semi-standardized interview, the interviewee has more freedom in developing their answers, as they are open-ended answers. However, the interviewer still has control over the points that need to be discussed (Denscombe, 2010, p. 175).

Unstructured interviews

Denscombe (2010, p. 176), defines the unstructured interview as a continuity of the semi-structured interview, as it keeps some of the elements that define the latter. In an unstructured type of interview, the interviewer aims

to discover and have insights on the interviewee's thoughts and experiences regarding the issues encountered in the formulation of the research questions.

One-to-one interviews

Being the most commonly used type of interview, the one-to-one interview involves only two people: the interviewer and the informant. It has also additional advantages as it is the easiest type of interview to transcribe. Having only one informant to interview, the researcher has only one person's specific opinion and ideas, which is easier to control and analyse (Denscombe, 2010, p. 176).

Group interviews

Group interviews are practically the opposite of one-to-one interviews as the interviewer must overcome different views, experiences and opinions in relation with the interview's topic (Denscombe, 2010, p. 176). Denscombe (2010), adds that there is a qualitative motive in interviewing individuals as a group, as the researcher is aiming to challenge their views, and thereby making them interact between themselves. The researcher then collects divergent responses relevant to the fruitfulness of the interview.

Focus groups

As their name highlights it, focus groups are focus sessions of groups varying from six to nine individuals gathered in the same room (offline or online, via Skype for example) for about an hour and a half to two hours. The researcher is the "moderator" during these sessions and his role is to ease the group's interactions (Denscombe, 2010, p. 177). The objective for these focus sessions are to observe and analyse certain views, feelings and attitudes of a group towards a specific topic that would not for example be possible during a one-to-one interview (Darlington & Scott, 2008, p. 62). From these sessions, it is expected to identify the interactions occurring within the group in order to draw the information needed.

Internet interviews

Internet interviews allow the researcher to interview anyone around the world, as long as they have access to a computer with internet access, a

communication software such as Skype, and a webcam (Denscombe, 2010, p. 190).

The interview process has several advantages and disadvantages. Denscombe (2010, p. 192), showcases a few of the advantages of the research interview:

- By choosing their informants wisely, the researcher can gain valuable information for the research.
- The research interview has a higher response rate than a research questionnaire as the interviews are planned around both the interviewer and the informant' schedule and availability.

Denscombe (2010, p. 193), points out an important inconvenience of the research interviews:

- The data collected from the interviews is time consuming and more difficult to analyse, especially when the interview is semi-structured or even unstructured, as the answers are not predefined or standardized by the researcher, unlike in the questionnaire.

Finally, Darlington & Scott (2002, p. 76), claim that the observation (depending on when it is used during the study) can be combined with an interview in order to have more detailed results. If it is employed in the beginning of a study, it can help the researcher to understand the context of his study and thereby formulate relevant questions that will be used during interviews conducted later on.

The following section discusses the nature of observations and their role.

3.3.3 Observational research

The observational research is a non-survey data collection technique that is different from the interview research which is a survey data collection method (Darlington & Scott, 2002, p. 75). Darlington & Scott (2002, p. 76), present the observational research as a more objective type of research compared to the research interview. During an observation, the observer obtains a clear

overview of the interactions happening within the context he chose to base his research on.

Denscombe (2010, p. 196) adds that the observational research is different than the questionnaire research and interviews research, as it acts as a means for the researcher to look directly at what is happening. He also highlights that there are two types of observational research: systematic and participant observation. The former produces quantitative data and the latter, qualitative data. Denscombe points out that the systematic observation is a quantitative approach that studies the interactions of a group within a specific context. On the other hand, during the participant observation, the researcher accesses the situation observed to get insight on the culture and actions of the group he is investigating.

Also, Denscombe (2010, p. 197), argues that these two methods have common aspects:

- **Direct observation:** The research is actively observing the situation.
- **Fieldwork:** The researcher is going in the field to observe and collect qualitative or quantitative data from real-life situations. Fieldwork observation enables the researcher to collect empirical data which is based on evidences he sees in the field.
- **Natural settings:** It is important for the researcher to view and examine things happening in their natural setting, without the pressure of the researcher.
- **Perception issues:** The researcher needs to be alert and aware of his perception of the situation that can be biased by his personal experience.

Additionally, Spradley (2016, p. 58) shows that there are several roles the observant can take on, while conducting an observational research:

- non-participation
- passive participation
- moderate participation

- active participation
- complete participation

Non-participation

The observer does not participate in the activities studied, but only observes their progress and collects data from there (Spradley, 2016, p. 59).

Passive participation

The observer is present within the situation studied, but does not interact with people nor does he participate in the activities they are engaged in. Denscombe (2010, p. 207), adds that the researcher is observing the situation he is in, without disturbing the usual settings.

Moderate participation

In this type of participation, the researcher is balancing his role of observer and participant, as he does both (Spradley, 2016, p. 60).

Active participation

The researcher acts as an active participant as he aims to do the same things that the other people do in order to understand their behavior towards the activities they have to achieve. The researcher then collects the data by participating (Spradley, 2016, p. 60).

Complete participation

This is the highest level of participation for a researcher, as he is an active participant in the study in which he is aiming to gather data from. Denscombe (2010, p. 207) claims that in this situation, the role of the researcher is to be kept secret.

The observational research has several advantages and disadvantages regarding its type of observation: systematic or participant. When it comes to the systematic observation, Denscombe (2010, p. 204), states that one of its key advantage is its efficiency that allows a direct collection of a considerable

amount of data in a short amount of time. However the main disadvantage of a systematic type of observation is the distortion of the naturalness of the settings. This means that the researcher might be unable to fade into the background of the settings the research is taking place in (Denscombe, 2010, p. 205).

The main advantage in doing a participant observation is that the researcher himself, whether he is participating or not, acts as his key tool for research (Denscombe, 2010, p. 213). However, the major disadvantage to a participation observation is ethical, as the people being observed did not give their consent for it. Also, the commitment of the researcher taking most of his time is another disadvantage, along with the representativeness of the data he gathers from his observation that is not archetypical (Denscombe, 2010, p. 214).

3.3.4 Documentary research

In social research, documents can be written sources (texts, magazines, etc.), visual sources (pictures, etc.) or even sounds such as recordings (Denscombe, 2010, p. 216). Scott (2014, p. 1), adds that documents are artifacts that take the form of texts, diaries, governmental documents, etc. Also according to Flick (2009, p. 255), documental sources can be used as a distinct tool for research but also, along with their analysis, documents are sometimes used for support to interviews.

However, before using any type of (offline) documental source, the researcher needs to evaluate the quality of the documents that will be used. Scott (2014, p. 6), argues that there are four criteria to follow, in order to validate the reliability of a document:

1. **Authenticity:** Is the documentation genuine? Is the origin of the evidence legitimate?
2. **Credibility:** Is the evidence unbiased and faultless? Denscombe (2010, p. 222) identifies several factors that help consider the accuracy of the documents:
 - What is the purpose of the document?

- Who was the author of the document?
 - Where and when was the document created?
- 3. Representativeness:** Is the document archetypical? Is the evidence complete? If not, is it considered within its context?
- 4. Meaning:** Is the document clear and accessible?

The same criteria can apply to the online documental sources, but they also have specific criteria to them. Denscombe (2010, p. 223, 224), identifies the major elements below that help the researcher evaluate the quality of online sources, such as web pages:

- **Authoritativeness:** How credible is the website? Denscombe uses governmental and universities' websites as good examples of credible websites.
- **Trustworthiness:** Is the website's purpose believable and legitimate?
- **Up-to-date:** Is the website up-to-date? Is it updated frequently? How recent is the latest update?
- **Popularity:** How popular is the website? Analytical tools such as Alexa can be used in order to get insights on a website's traffic and statistics which will determine its popularity.

Denscombe (2010, p. 232, 233), highlights the advantages and disadvantages of this research method. Pursuing a documentary research is a cost-effective way of getting permanent data, as it is usually accessible to anyone possessing an internet connection. However, sometimes the researcher encounters issues of authenticity and accuracy of the data he has access to online.

In the following section, the method used for the data collection and its analysis is the research interview. The semi-structured interview is the specific type of research interview that has been used.

3.4 Data collection and qualitative analysis

The aim of this section is to acquire a better understanding of the project management's role within the music industry. The qualitative perspective is used in order to discover and give new insight on the problem posed in this thesis, through the research questions. As mentioned in 3.2 Choice of methodology, the approach that suits the research questions best is the qualitative methodology. In social research, the researcher uses the qualitative approach to get insight on thoughts, views and experiences of people that are taking part of the study. Denscombe (2010, p. 237), highlights that the qualitative analysis is connected to words, rather than numbers. The researcher is involved in the research he conducts and words are the data he collects, measures and analyses. This also means that the researcher can only conduct a small-scale study as he is the only person able to analyse the data he gathered through the interviews he conducted (Denscombe, 2010, p. 238).

One specific technique imposed by the research questions of this thesis was used to answer and analyse these questions. In this case, the research interview method has been employed as a tool to gather the data needed for the analysis of the research questions.

As mentioned in 3.3.2 Research interview, there are several distinct types of interviews a researcher can decide to conduct. The nature of the research interview chosen to be used in this thesis is a semi-structured interview. In fact, I wanted to collect information from various interviewees working in the music industry about their use of project management techniques. The semi-structured interview is thereby the most relevant method for my research, because I was able to gather data needed for the analysis of my research questions. This type of interview is relevant because it gives more perspective and insight on whether each one of the participants is or is not using project management within their organisation.

As my research mainly regards inquiring about the 'what' and the 'how', the semi-structured interview is helpful in allowing people to share and describe their experiences with project management within the music industry.

The semi-structured interviews are realized following an interview guide consisting of questions highlighting the problem that my research questions are raising. The interviews are structured and carried out by following Kvale & Brinkmann's (2009, p. 102) "seven step of an interview inquiry":

1. **Thematizing:** formulation of the study by defining its why and what.
2. **Designing:** design of the study.
3. **Interviewing:** interviews are conducted by using the interview guide previously created.
4. **Transcribing:** transcription of the oral interview into a written one, to help the data analysis.
5. **Analyzing:** the interview material previously transcribed is analysed.
6. **Verifying:** verifying the reliability and authenticity of the information given during the interview.
7. **Reporting:** reporting the findings of each interview.

Qualitative approaches that have not been used

There are four qualitative approaches that have been described in 3.3 Choice of method and only one has been used as a tool of data collection for this thesis. In fact, the three others have not been used as they were less relevant than the research interview: the research questionnaire, the observational research and the documentary research are the three remaining qualitative approaches that have not been used.

Research questionnaire

The main reason for not using the research questionnaire is that it provides a rigid structure with standardized answers. It is also not possible to verify the veracity of the answers given by the participants. Also the same set of questions is sent to all participants, which does not allow us, in the case of this thesis, to answer to the research questions asked in the introduction of this paper.

Observational research

The observational research is a type of qualitative research that requires time that I do not have as a part-time working master student. In fact, time is a key factor required for an observational research. Also my geographic situation did not allow me to observe any specific situation.

Documentary research

The documentary research could have been a method to collect data, but not in the case of this thesis, as I have encountered (during the 2. Theoretical background and literature part) little literature regarding project management within the music industry.

3.4.1 The interview guide

The interview guide presented below has been created for the purpose of this research paper. The questions are divided into two main parts: general questions and questions related to project management. The guide is composed of open-ended questions, allowing the interviewees to share details about their experiences. The first set of questions is important, as they help the participants get more comfortable with being interviewed and slowly transition to the second set of questions that are related to project management: the focal point of this thesis.

Interview guide

I) General

- 1) What is your current position and what responsibilities do you have?
- 2) How did you end up in the music industry?
- 3) What type of project are you currently working on?
- 4) How do you handle managing several artists at the same time?⁶

II) Project management

- 1) Do you use any particular tools/techniques to carry out your project? If so, does it work?
- 2) Are these tools/techniques useful when managing your project?
- 3) How do you plan a project?
- 4) Do you have a written schedule for the project? If so, do you use any tools for that?
- 5) How do you control the efficiency of your project?
- 6) Do you encounter any problems while planning a project? If so, what are the problems and how do you solve them?
- 7) What are the advantages of using management within your company?

Figure 4: Interview guide tailored to this research paper

⁶ This question varies depending on the interviewee's position. This particular one has been posed to Grete. The questions asked to Anna and Andy were tailored to their positions. Anna's question was: do you think managing a festival is similar than managing an artist? Andy's question was: Do you think that managing a festival is different than managing an artist or a venue?

3.4.2 Participants

For the purposes of this thesis, four interviews were scheduled to be conducted, but only three participants have answered and agreed to participate. The participants have been chosen according to the following criteria:

- The participants are working on projects within the music industry.
- They are from diverse backgrounds within the music industry.
- Originally an equal number of male and female participants were supposed to be interviewed, but the final number of participants happened to be two female participants and one male participant.
- They are all from different locations in Norway.

Below is a description of each participant.

Participant 1: Anna Willrodt

Current position: Head of festival at Sørveiv.

Date of interview: January 17th, 2018.

Anna is currently the festival manager at Sørveiv (a showcase festival in Kristiansand), a project leader and manager at Sørf (a non-profit organisation whose aim is to professionalize the music industry in southern Norway) and a lecturer at UiA within the Music Management program. She previously graduated with a bachelor degree in Culture and Business in Mannheim, Germany and a master degree in Music Management in Kristiansand.

Participant 2: Andy Inglis

Current position: Artist manager and tour manager

Date of interview: January 19th, 2018.

Andy is currently running his own company called 5000. He is an artist manager of five solo artists and one duo, but also a tour manager, a lecturer, mentor and a conference manager at Sørveiv. One of his important experiences within the music industry was also managing the venue The Luminaire that he co-founded in 2005.

Participant 3: Grete Bjelde

Current position: Tour Manager

Date of interview: January 20th, 2018.

Grete is currently tour managing⁷ Jenny Hval, Mykki Blanco, Chastity Brown and previously worked with the norwegian artist Aurora. She started a bachelor degree in performing arts and popular music in New Zealand and decided to complete it in London, where her career kick-started as a tour manager after working as an assistant in the venue The Luminaire.

The fourth participant did not respond to my request.

These participants have been selected in order to sort out whether project management within the music industry is different or not to the traditional project management.

3.4.2 Data analysis

Due to geographical constraints, the interviews have not been conducted in person, but through Skype calls. A total of three interviews have been carried on and each one of them has been recorded on my personal computer, using the software Quicktime. Afterwards, each interview has been transcribed by myself. The transcription has been concised as there were several repetitions and data that was not relevant to this research. It was however, kept close to the spoken words of each interviewee.

I have also only interviewed each person once, but talked extensively with Anna. This is due to the fact that she is the Head of festival at Sørveiv, a festival I have previously been working for, as a digital marketing manager. I have been involved with the festival during the years 2014-2015 and was responsible for the festival' social media accounts and implemented a marketing plan and strategies. This will be reflected in the Findings part of this thesis, as I

⁷ According to Grete, tour managing is “a job that consist of two parts: advancing (plan the tour and do logistics) and touring.”

have more personal insight on that particular project. The interviews have been based on the interview guide⁸, but some additional information has been added.

⁸ Cf. 3.4.1 The interview guide

4. Findings

The purpose behind these interviews is to have insight from people working with projects within the music industry. Our goal is to find out whether their way of managing projects is similar to traditional project management. The literature reviewed in the second chapter of this thesis was merely related to the music industry, hence the execution and importance of these interviews.

The interviews conducted with Anna, Andy and Grete show that there are similar ways of managing different types of projects within the music industry. This will be presented in the following part.

4.1 Project management tools and techniques used in the music industry

In this section, project management tools and techniques that are used by our interviewees are showcased below.

Having different positions within the music industry, two out of three participants are using a cloud-based and collaborative tool: Google's online office suite (including Docs and Sheets) as a project management tool. They both use the same tool as it is practical for them, but for different reasons, as their projects are different. Grete, tour manager, uses it for making itineraries for her artists. It is helping her manage and gather all of the information she needs for an artist during their tour. She also believes that this tool is critical for her job as she claims that: "it would be impossible to plan a tour without Google Docs". She also adds that she uses this software to help her: "in terms of booking, what flight remains, and travelers that can vary from each concert."

Anna who is the festival manager at Sørveiv, also uses Google Docs and Sheets for planning the festival as they are free and easy to use.

However Andy, manager of a few artists, shares another opinion on project management tools when asked if he uses any: "I'm not a great believer in strategic planning because everything changes and it's partly what I learned from being a tour manager." He uses mostly the artist's contact page on his

phone to add notes and a schedule for the year. This shows how Andy's way of managing his project is different than the two other participants. This will be highlighted further down in this part.

Some of the participants are using collaborative tools like the ones mentioned above, but there are also tools that are specific to the music industry. These softwares are tailored to particular jobs and projects within the industry. These tools come in the shape of applications. They are created and used to simplify the work of the project manager. In the case of our interviewees, Grete is using an application that is only relevant to her tour manager position. She uses the Master tour application which is a software for tour management and logistics. This application helps her gather and share (to a certain extent) all of the information she needs for a tour in one location:

“It has a calendar, so you choose a date and it says which city you are in and the capacity of the concert. I have the edit version where I have more info and can put notes for me, but there is a different version that I share with the artists.”

However, Andy is considering using this application that could be useful for him in the future, called ABOSS: “I am looking at a Dutch system at the moment, which is a project management and management tool all in one”. ABOSS is a collaborative application that has been created for artist managers, artists and booking agencies. It is a back office management suite designed to help them work together. He is nevertheless skeptical about using only one application as he states that:

“Maybe it's better to use the tools that we all use, Google Docs, Skype... and when one fails, your whole business isn't depending on that one application.”

He is thinking differently than Grete as he does not want to risk losing all of his information, in case the application he uses loses his data.

Two out of the three participants have artists as a project, which requires that the communication tools act as project management tools. The three interviewees are mostly using social media as a project/communication tool.

Social media has taken such an important role in everyday life, that it became the first tool that these interviewees turned to in order to communicate with their artists and team.

For Andy, the use of a specific social media as a communication tool depends on the relationship he has with his artists: “you just have to see with people how you want to talk and how they want to be managed. [...] I use communication tools that we all have”.

Grete mostly uses text messages to communicate with her artists as it is the easiest way for her to keep track of her conversations with each one of them.

The only participant that uses an established communication tool that is not a social media is Anna. She uses a cloud-based collaborative tool called Slack. It is a workspace where she can communicate with her team and share information regarding the festival. However, she admits that she has to turn to social media when using this tool, as not everyone in her team is able to use it:

“You know those tools can be magical, but if not everybody in your team is willing to use it, then it’s dysfunctional. [...] It really only works if everybody is on board with it. [...] With Slack for example, we have some people who use it really well, with whom communicating there worked really well and then there are one or two people who refuse to turn on the application and you know you have to force them to communicate there. They don’t check their messages for weeks and then it doesn’t work and you have to double communicate again and it becomes like emailing with some people, Facebook messenger with others and totally different tools of communication with other people. So I think it’s quite the underrated effort to get all of your team to join a project management tool or a communication tool in a professional context.”

This shows that even when the participants tried to use tools that are made to use within a professional context, they unfortunately had to redirect to social media as a last resort for communicating with their team members.

Additionally, the participants have been asked if they use any project management techniques or tools for the scheduling and accomplishment of their projects. Two of them gave a similar answer: they would use project management software if they were more affordable and within their budget.

When discussing about the ABOSS application, Andy mentions that:

“It is quite expensive so I’m debating. [...] it’s 1300 euros per year which could be cheap. Until I use it, I can’t tell. They don’t have a monthly trial system yet, but they are looking at it soon, so I’m waiting for that to see if it helps.”

Anna is also considering using a project management tool, but does not have any particular one in mind:

“I would like to use better and more advanced project management tools, but of course they are expensive and Sørveiv is on a low budget. [...] I guess it’s a question of priorities and it’s a non-easy thing to prioritize when money is tight.”

The participants have also been asked a question regarding the difference between the management of their respective projects and other projects within the music industry. They all agree that managing two different projects in the music business has its similarities as they are within the same industry.

Anna has been asked whether managing a festival is similar than managing an artist. Her answer was the following:

“It depends on the relationship between the manager and the artist. I guess the manager is involved in the creative part of music making in a different way, than a head of festival. But I really think that they might not be too different. In both fields, you have to work with artistic personalities that need different approaches to

be handled in a way: a close connection to an artistic output. I guess also in artist management, you have these periods that are super intense and then total off periods where they don't do as much."

According to her, managing a festival and an artist is not as different as we would like to think, as they both involve creativity and artistic personalities but also have periods of time where they both do not have anything happening. For a festival, there is a high peak season, which consists of the months right before the festival, and the period during the festival where everything is getting settled. For the artist, it is similar as there are off peak seasons where nothing is happening. For example, when they are not touring or not in the studio recording a new album, but instead, taking some time off.

Grete has been asked a similar question, but related to her tour manager position: Do you think being a tour manager is similar or different than managing a festival/venue? Her answer to the question was:

"It's not really that different. It's kind of the same job, they are all about communicating different things in terms of planning schedules and the needs of the artists. When do they arrive, and leave? We need to have artist liaison for that. We are all working with the same type of information."

She claims that managing a festival or a venue is similar to tour managing an artist as it is mainly about communication between different parties regarding the same project (the artist).

Andy has been asked the same question as Grete, as he has been working with all three types of projects. His answer was:

"I've done all three things, they are different but also the same. The answer would be, let me do it and I'll tell you how I did it (for the festival). We try to think of it as if it is one festival, one venue and I don't really know. I think it's definitely interesting to talk about it. There isn't any right way to do it, there are different wrong ways."

Andy's answer to the question was very straightforward as it shows that there is no right way to manage a festival, an artist or even a venue. It all depends on the type of festival and the people you work with. He bases his project management on the relationship he has with the project. In the case of the interview that I conducted with him, it was about him being an artist manager, where his artists are his projects. He then manages each artist accordingly to the relationship he has with them:

“There is no difference between being with an artist and a romantic partner. Even in my industry, people [...] always fall in this trap of talking about an artist like it is one person. How do you manage an artist? Who's the artist? I can't answer the question until I met the person and spent time with them. I work with six artists that want to be managed in different ways, be spoken to in different ways. We always presume like we always talk about one person. I manage people as they want to be managed and if I find a compatibility then we go ahead, just like in a romantic partner. After a while the relationship becomes physically, emotionally and financially intimate in different ways. [...] I only work with people who care about ethics and how they're treated. There are some people who manage artists that have a process where they would be settling more of a mechanical process of how to break an artist. Labels behave that way. [...] It's a constant negotiation like with any type of relationship. The label and artist define success differently.”

Finally, from the answers that we gathered from the participants, we can conclude that they all agree that managing different projects within the music industry has its similarities. Whether it is the management of a festival, an artist or a tour, the management process and the tools that are used are similar. However, the results show that the techniques and tools that they use are different than the ones that are used in traditional project management. None of the formal and structured project management tools are used, such as the ones reviewed in 2.3.1 Theoretical frameworks: essential tools in project management. The next chapter, therefore, moves on to discuss the benefits

and limitations of project management within the music industry alongside with my analyses of these results.

5. Discussion

In this section, we associate the results reviewed in the previous chapter, with the theory of this research paper presented in the second chapter called Theoretical background and literature. This will help us in addressing the research questions elaborated in the beginning of this thesis. Once the research questions are addressed, the findings are discussed in a broader aspect. An initial objective of the project was to identify whether a project elaborated within the music industry is different than any other project. The second question of this study sought to determine if taking a normal project management set-up into the music industry would work. These research questions are addressed and answered further down in 5.2 Limitation of project management within the music industry.

5.1 Benefits of project management techniques within the music industry

According to the data that has been collected through interviews, there are several benefits of project management within the music industry.

Not only are there project management tools that the participants use, but also techniques and skills that they acquired in order to ensure their projects' success.

Anna acknowledges that leadership is important, especially when she has a big group of people working in her team:

“I work a lot on mentoring them and following up. [...] what I work with is a part of the philosophy of Sørveiv, [...] to allow young talented and motivated people who want to work in the music industry to work at Sørveiv and do things they might not have done before, but that they are motivated to do.”

This particular quality is what is looked for in a traditional effective project manager and has been showcased in 2.3.2.2 The project manager. His ability to be decisive and committed to the project' success are required skills for a good project manager.

Andy adds that there is a more emotional and creative way of managing a project, which is another aspect that needs to be taken into consideration by the project manager. He believes that creativity is an important aspect in the music business, and also that the artist, being his project, needs to be taken care of: “Everything I do is based on the artist’s health and nothing else matters. I don’t do things for money, I don’t worry about things that have to happen.”

Another requirement for a project manager has been raised by Grete, which is the consistency in one's work. She claims that consistency and time management are important for a tour manager, as she is working with several projects (artists) at the same time:

“Time management is important around the summer (most things are happening then), I have to split the day to work with the different artists. I have to be consistent, even when I go on holiday for a week. [...] You are less anxious when you work consistently.”

This is an important skill to have as a project manager as they sometimes have to juggle their time between different projects. The following section will discuss the limitations of project management within the music industry that have been discovered through the interviews conducted beforehand.

5.2 Limitations of project management within the music industry

One aspect that has been recurring and also the most interesting finding was that most of the participants that have been interviewed are interested in using traditional project management tools. These so-called traditional project management tools (project scope statement, work breakdown structure, gantt chart and milestone chart) have been mentioned in the second chapter under 2.3.1 Theoretical frameworks: essential tools in project management. However, the main obstacle that they encountered in using them is that they are time-consuming and highly-priced for their respective limited budgets. The participants work differently with projects compared to traditional project managers that work with structured and formalized projects.

Furthermore, when it comes to the results and obtaining an answer to the research questions (mentioned in the beginning of this chapter), these outcomes were not very encouraging.

This is due to the fact that this work has been done in order to highlight some questions and explore some hypotheses and not to make conclusions on behalf of Norway or project management. I have thereby approached this thesis from a qualitative perspective using interviews, where some themes have emerged.

The people that have been interviewed do not show any interests in traditional project management tools. They do not follow any project management patterns or techniques and it is displayed through different examples. The first one regards the deadlines that are not met on time. When it comes to controlling the efficiency of their projects through project milestones, the interviewees found little control over that.

For example, Anna has deadlines to meet regarding grants applications or even artists and conferences releases. The first one has to be met in order for the festival to happen:

“There are some really hard deadlines such as deadlines for grants and stuff, and you obviously have to meet them otherwise you won’t get funded by Kulturrådet⁹ or by other institutions. Obviously there is a type of measurement: do we have the application on time? Did we get the money?”

The second type of deadlines that she encounters is internal as it is about the festival itself and its content. The artists and conference releases, for instance, are deadlines that she does not always manage to reach:

“For example, we always have a goal of releasing the artists, our first artists before the summer break and we also have a goal of releasing our first speakers announcement for the conferences before summer. We usually meet the artists, but last year for example we didn’t manage to release any speakers, and you

⁹ Kulturrådet is the Culture Council in Norway that administers grants to projects within art and culture all around the country.

know ultimately the only people that know that we failed at meeting that goal is ourselves. So it obviously gets easier to get slack on those deadlines or those goals: with the nature of such a project like Sørveiv, where nobody except me works on it as their main job. [...] So we have to be lenient on such deadlines, but I am getting annoying as hell when such deadlines come close.”

In Anna’s case, some deadlines are more difficult to reach as she is the only person working on Sørveiv as their main job. This problem could have easily been resolved, if she would have been using a structured project management tool such as the gantt chart in order to plan and have an overview on the deadlines she has to meet.

When it comes to controlling the efficiency of their projects, the other two participants have different perspectives on that. Andy does not try to control his projects (artists) as he claims that:

“I don’t try and control it. If they have a record label, they control it, it’s their job to keep the schedule around their deadlines and it’s my job to agree to it and keep the artist on that schedule but not at the expense of the artist.”

This proves that he does not have control over any of his projects, but the project itself, being the artist, controls his efficiency and success. Andy mainly tries to keep track on the artist’ schedule and on what needs to be done by them.

Grete gave me an example of when she did not have control over the efficiency of her project management:

“In terms of planning my projects, it’s not that much that can go wrong, unless if I don’t start early on a project to process information. I have to be consistent and check in with people all the time. [...] If I just leave my work for a week, [...] I tried that before and I got everything as a punch in the face when I got back, and would feel overwhelmed. That’s a danger of leaving things for too long.”

In order for her to have control over the efficiency of her projects, she needs to be consistent in her work and constantly check on the people she is currently working with, whether it is the artists she is managing, or people she has to be in contact with, when it comes to planning a tour.

The second example of lack of success in following project management patterns or techniques by the interviewees is reflected through my conversation with Andy. As a manager he does not follow any system or project management methodology. He works with his intuition and humane feelings, rather than using mechanical ways of managing an artist (the artist being his project):

“I don’t have any tools, or project management tools, email, calendar, dropbox. I guess I use my inbox as a to-do list which doesn’t always succeed. I’m like anyone else, I use Skype calls to respond to things. [...] There is no difference between being with an artist and a romantic partner. Even in my industry, people have been doing for 50 years, always fall in this trap of talking about an artist like a one person. How do you manage an artist? Who’s the artist? I can’t answer the question until I have met the person and spent time with them. I work with six artists that want to be managed in different ways, be spoken in different ways. We always presume like we always talk about one person. I manage people as they wanna be managed and if I find a compatibility then we go ahead, just like in a romantic partner. After a while the relationship becomes physically, emotionally and financially intimate in different ways.”

These findings have been based on the interviews that I have conducted with the three participants mentioned in 3.4.2 Participants. They reflect very unstructured and unformalized projects and goals, which seems to work, but where there is great potential for improvements. Certain models, such as the gantt chart, or the milestone chart¹⁰ could be adopted to improve the management of their projects. The people that have been interviewed for this thesis have been treated as cases in order to showcase how different people

¹⁰ 2.3.1 Theoretical frameworks: essential tools in project management.

with distinct positions within the music industry, use project management for their projects.

Based only on these interviews, we cannot draw any definite conclusion on whether a project elaborated within the music industry is similar or different than any other project. We could not conclude either on whether a normal project management set-up into the music industry would work or not. Nevertheless, we could conclude that the people that have been interviewed are a small representation of what most people within the music industry are. They do not use any structured or formalized tools that are used by traditional project managers. This means that more research on this topic needs to be undertaken before determining whether project management within the music industry is similar than in other industries. The interviews were not sufficient to answer the research questions of the thesis and further studies on the current topic are recommended to be done. There is thereby abundant room for further progress in determining the feasibility of the content mentioned through the research questions.

6. Conclusion

The present study was designed to determine whether project management within the music industry is similar than in other industries. Returning to the questions posed at the beginning of this study, it is now possible to state that there are no definite conclusions that can be drawn from the results shown in the previous chapter. One of the most significant finding to emerge from this study is that most of the people that have been interviewed would acquire formal project management and use sophisticated tools if they could afford it. However, they do not seem to use any structured or formal tools and techniques acquired by traditional project managers. The future of management in the music business would be to adopt these tools to help project managers work better in that industry. It has been showcased in the last chapter how people within the music industry work with projects. This does not mean that all project managers use the gantt model, but it only means that these people who have experience in project management do not use it, but rather use different tools instead. This research will serve as a base for future studies and will be helpful in understanding the use of project management within the music industry. A limitation of this study is that the number of participants was relatively small. Although the current study is based on a small sample of participants, the findings suggest that within the music industry, an informal way of project management has been acquired. Further research regarding the role of project management would be interesting.

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