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**Managing artists in the music business:
changing strategies for a changing environment**

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Abstract

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What does it mean to manage an artist in today's music business? Digitalization has deeply changed and reshaped the panorama of music in the last decade, destroying balances and business models of the companies in the industry. The Music industry is not the same anymore and while a lot has been written about management and talent management in general business, the literature focusing on the peculiarity of this subject in the music business is scant. Has the job of a manager changed since digitization took over the world of music? With the aid of interviews made to professionals in the music business and the application of general management theory to the workings of the industry this research will try to dig a little bit deeper into the lives of this important figure of the business. From the results the study will draw similarities and differences between the music business and other industries when it comes to managing talent, and will hopefully give some inputs for new research on the field.

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1. Introduction

Music business has fascinated me since I started going to concerts as a teenager. Before I even knew what I was really doing, I started looking around to try to understand who was there, who were the people working around the stage and the mixer to make the show that would make my night one of the most memorable. From those moments on I have started to experience music, concerts and 'being an audience member' in a different kind of way. Searching articles on the business has become my favourite past time, from the musicians that I love to the ones I don't even listen to. Every little bit of news about the inner workings of the music business has always been fascinating, therefore, choosing the music industry as a topic for a master thesis was extremely easy and natural. I knew from my ten years experience of curiosity that there was not much written on the artists management perspective and knew I wanted to dig a little bit deeper on this side of the business.

As an audience member and a customer of the music industry, I have lived through all the recent changes that the business has endured: from tape cassettes to CDs, from CDs to piracy and ultimately to streaming services. I was a music consumer before Youtube was a thing, and I followed closely Spotify as it was still trying to gain some footing in the industry. The tension between managing artists and the changing environment in the music business has been immediately clear when I started my studies at the University of Tampere, and I build my research on this hypothesis: *If the music business changed so much during the last decade, the work of artists managers in the business must have changed as well.*

I wanted to understand if the managing life of an artists whose working and artistic lives have changed so much during the last decade, has also been transformed into something else by the digital revolution that has hit the business so hard. This research therefore tries to understand and explain not only what it means managing a talent in the music business, but also how you do it in an ever changing environment. It also asks, if the act of caring for an artistic career in the music business is any different from what we know already from management theories, especially those of talent management.

Initially, I have tried to look for books, journal articles and other thesis about this subject. But much of that research – as explained below chapter three – on this thesis was fruitless. It became within the first month of research that there was little or no academic sources on which I could build my case upon, except a couple of ‘know how’ books, mostly were meant to be a guide to the up and coming artists or managers of the business. Those sources, even though of poor academic value, have proved to be a good stepping stool on which to build the framework for this thesis. The idea of going directly to the source and interview workers in the music business had been there since the beginning, and it was even more relevant after my research for other studies on the subject came up empty. Having a direct line between myself and workers of the industry would provide not only a better understanding of the subject matter, but also invaluable personal perspective on what it really means to manage a talent in this business. Of course everything did not run smoothly, and getting interviews for this kind of study was not an easy task.

Managers in the music business are extremely busy people and even though I had received lots of positive replies and confirmation of availability to have the interview both in Finland and in Italy, I could only gather a small sample, often due to unforeseen circumstances that prevented some of the managers to attend. Fortuitously the sample has been varied and diverse, and all across the spectrum of success, therefore providing still a good measure tool for this study.

The questions I asked, (12, and open ended) were designed not only on the literature I could find, but also on the literature I did not find (on questions I wanted to learn about), so I could eventually build a framework in which practical working life and experience would supply to the missing academic perspective. The interviews were held via Skype or via phone, with the aid of a recording tool that allowed me to keep track and gather the data together. By the time I was holding the second to last interview I had already a pretty much defined answer to my hypothesis. When the time came to analyze the data, I found once again that all of the managers with their shared experiences were very much on the same wavelength, no matter their background, the success of the artists they were managing or the nationality they came from. The time frame of completion was quite long, since this work has taken me almost three years to complete, due to personal reasons.

This research starts with an overview of the music business, from how the fruition of music has changed during the recent years, to an overview of the main players in the business, to how the revenues in the industry have switched from a more goods selling based industry to an event-based industry, we will then look at the

management theories in the academic world, and if and how they apply to the music business in chapter three, to them move along to the research I have done, and how I build it all the way to the analysis of the interviews and the conclusions. This study is in no way complete or representative of the music industry as a whole, it is just a little scratch in the surface of an extremely unexplored branch of the Media Industries.

2. Changes in the music business

In the modern day and age, when we think about music and its fruition, whether you are a digital immigrant or a digital native, there are certain natural roads our minds take. One is to think about the physical formats, the cassettes of the 90's (that are now making a timid comeback) the most popular CDs (that still crowd music and entertainment shops' aisles) and the now back in auge vinyl, which seems to have come back directly from the 80's, to take back its place amongst music listeners (Pucci, 2019). Also, obviously important are the broadcasting radio that with its ups and downs and mostly commercially driven airplay, still a pretty big player in the modern music consumption especially when it comes to casual music listeners. Digital age has also brought us new music devices, like the increasingly popular streaming services like Spotify, Tidal and Youtube: children of a world where music is 'liquid' and 'digital' and lastly the digital mp3s fatefully intertwined with the most 'shameful' practise of illegal download.

Music history has its roots deep in the history of the human beings, with the first traces of musical instruments going as far back as 35,000 years ago, all the way to the time when the Neanderthal man was roaming the Earth. A 2009 discovery by archaeologists in the southwest of Germany in the Hohle Fels Cave, has uncovered a five-hole bone flute, which most probably was used by our ancestors to play some stone-age music, together with another two fragments of what seems to be ivory flute, made from mammoth horns, these discovery would seem to prove that together with the figurative arts on the walls of caves, the prehistoric man was also developing musical arts. (Noble, 2009)

From the prehistoric times, music's development continue to grow until it flourished in Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome, where it started to accompany live performances, becoming a useful tool in the performing arts. It is said that the Greeks were actually the ones responsible for inventing some of the fundamental elements we still use today in modern music. Even though both Greeks and Romans, started to record music by hands with primordial notes and instructions on how to play the instruments, musical sheets became a tradition in the European medieval times, when the Churches and Monasteries started to report and write down Gregorian chants and sacred songs, fillings volumes and volumes by hands of square notes and miniatures, which can still be found and admired in museums all over Europe.

Eventually there was a desire to consume music outside of the moment of performance, in the privacy of one's household. Thomas Edison, supplied to that

need, even though unknowingly. (Zantal-Wiener, 2017) Edison in fact was set on discovering a new mean of communication, building upon two other inventions: the telegraph and the telephone. He built a recorded trace of a vocal message that could be sent repeatedly over the telegraph and one year later, in 1878, he patented the "phonograph". When presenting it to world in the North American review in June of the same year, Edison offered amongst the possibilities of use that of "reproducing music" (Millard, 1995). Within two years, his cylinders became wildly popular and as they were being sold, the technologies continued to develop, reaching more proficient ways of reproducing the sound, until they finally reached the vinyl we all know (Zantal - Wiener, 2017). The first singer to produce such a commercial recording was the Neapolitan tenor Enrico Caruso, which between 1902 and 1904 made ten recordings for the record company Victor. One of them: "Vesti la Giubba" from the Opera "Pagliacci" went on to be the first million selling record, earning the company almost 3,5 million dollars in royalties, the largest sum earned by any of the company's recording artists up to that date. (Fisher, 2007) After the invention of the vinyl and the subsequent opening of record shops all over the world (the oldest one opened in 1894) another game changer was soon rising on the music business horizon: the broadcasting radio. Although radio technology had existed for quite some time already, music did not appear on its frequencies until 1920, after being met with somewhat of a resistance from government officials and public who thought radio shouldn't be used for "entertainment". Around the same time, commercially sponsored radio stations started to appear as well, with the KDKA of Pittsburgh being the first one in the USA. In 1922, the first ever advertisement was transmitted

on air, officially ushering the radio into its golden age (usually framed between the 20s and the 50s).

Of course music wasn't the only thing radio broadcasted, and the airing schedule of those years included everything from news, sport reports, weather forecast, soap operas and radio dramas. It's worth to point out that record companies, started to register a decline in record sales starting from the 1929, and even though it was probably due to the Great Depression, the music businessmen of the time, pointed their finger to radio station that were airing music for a roughly total of their 66% of their airtime.

Eventually some contracts, deals and rules for airplay and remuneration were drafted and the two bodies started cooperating, effectively shaping the radio format we know today (Zantal-Wiener, 2017; Albriright, 2015) but even nowadays, collaboration can still be tricky and as recent events in the Italian music business have demonstrated extremely how intertwined with politics this relationship can be. One of the most interesting cases in the Italian music business, has been a law proposal by the extreme right party minister Morelli, which caused outrage with it's suggestion of a compulsory Italian music quota (about 33% of the total airplay, of which at least a half of those should be of emerging Italian artists) in the radio stations. Italian artists and record companies have been quick to take sides and for at least a month, media outlets were full of articles of the news. As Rancilio points out this type of proposal is not unusual, and was already brought up in the past years by other government, and as its the case with the France and Great Britain can also be beneficial for the music business of a particular country. Of course after a little

time, the frenzy around the topic ended and it still remains to be seen if the proposal will become law, effectively reshaping the trend and airplay of Italian radio station.

(Rancilio, 2019)

The last significant development that changed radio technology and let it take a leap into the technology we all know today, was the invention of the transistor. After it was invented in 1947, it was quickly integrated with the radio, and it allowed radio to transition from the big stationary one we associate its golden period, to small and portable ones ushering the era of portable music in. 1958 was another turning point for the music consumer, as it marked the beginning of the tape era, from the RCA's tape cartridge to the iconic 8-track tape that lived a moment between the 60's and the 70's as an automobile player deck to the the Philips compact tape cassettes, that became the go-to mean of music reproduction the late 70's all the way to the end of the 1990s. The innovation that shoehorned tape cassettes into their auge, was surely The Sony Walkman: a light, portable tape cassette player that soon became an invaluable companion to million of people. The brand became so archetypal that was passed down from generation to generation of portable players, all the way until digital mp3s players still in use today. (Albright, 2015). Tape cassette dominion over music business didn't last that long, at least considering the development of technology. After only roughly 30 years of being the premium medium for music all around the world, it was quickly substituted by the Compact Disc (CD). The CD technology had been around since the 60s, but it was perfected and applied to the business only at the beginning of the 80's and it brought a whole new era in the musical format. Since the first pop CD album was

pressed (ABBA'S The Visitor, 1982) CD's popularity exponentially increased through the years, until the early 2000s. It has a constant way of releasing new music, even nowadays in the digital age, when it seems bound to decline. Its success over tape though was due to a combination of factors: the high quality audio format, its resistance to dust and other particles and the possibility to 'skip' the tracks. Many artists, started converting their whole discography into digital format and soon, the CDs catalogue worldwide had expanded exponentially. Obviously portable and home stereos CD player soon began appearing on the market, at very affordable prices and within a decade or so from its appearance, the CD had substituted all the other formats for music reproduction. Of course, vinyl records never ceased to exist, and it is making a comeback now. However while the CD and the tape cassettes were the reigning formats it had remained somewhat of a collector's item or a DJs and audiophile's preference. (Zantal-Wiener, 2017; Albrighthouse, 2015).

Something interesting, also began around the time the CDs were living their golden age. Some retailers started to implement the idea of customers never having to leave their house at all to obtain music, the most popular one in the USA, was the phone and internet service of 1-800 Music Now, a listen-before-you-buy, service, which allowed people to hear snippets of songs and albums over the phone or over website and then decide if they wanted to buy it or not. Unfortunately, the service wasn't extremely popular, and while some pointed at it as a cannibal ready to take over and ruin classic commerce (The Economist, 1997) the real problem laid in the simple waiting game people had to play before actually getting their hands on their music. Most customers were in fact using the service to hear songs, and then

simply heading out at a physical record shop to buy it immediately, rather than wait for it to arrive via snail mail. Of course the amount of sales was meagre compared to the costs of the service and its big marketing and advertising campaign, and after only a couple of years, MCI the telecom company that had invented the service, closed it down. As shortly lived as it was, 1-800 music now was the first precursor of the modern age, the only step missing to it was the chance to actually download music straight away, it might have been ahead of its time, but it was surely the first concrete step into the music environment that we have nowadays. (Johnson, 2015; Zantal-Wiener, 2017).

From the rise of the CD, to the modern age of digital content, the step was very brief, it all started with the new encoding format, the MP3, developed between 1982 and 1991, was a new digital method to shrink audio recordings in very small digital format, since it's launch on the market, as we will see in more detail in the paragraph on piracy, it has not only shook the music business to its core, but at the same time has become the most popular format of the digital age (even though it is far from the only one and compared to others still has very low quality in its decoding process.

From the drastic changes that the mp3 and peer-to-peer programs like Napster, Kazaa, EMule and others similar software brought to the music industry, a new option arose to cater to all the needs of the official music industry bodies and the listeners: Streaming services. While pinpointing the first one that came to completion is quite difficult, surely the American personalized streaming radio Pandora is one that could theoretically take this 'first' prize. Just like it's more European-friendly colleagues like Spotify and Tidal (even though this last one was recently bought by

Jay-Z, so it become American as well); offers two models of subscription, and Ad-paid free one and an Ad-free premium one.(Albright, 2015) Pandora's unique feature when compared to the other services is surely its on their proprietary "Music Genome Project" a classification method that allows the radio to select attributes to define a song from a list of 450, therefore allowing users to pick and listen to music extremely similar to the one they already like and love.(Evangelista, 2014) While Pandora's classification on a "genome" of music might surely be an interesting way of finding new music that supplies to the users needs, the company no intention of breaking into the European market anytime soon. Its performance in the USA is a very good one, with its 68.8 million of active listeners; though only 6.8 million of those are actually paying for the ad-free version of the software (data from May 2018) (Smith, 2019). One might argue that 9,9% is not much, but with new streaming services coming up every other week, it is not unsurprising that the audience is spread across platform. In addition, there would be room for debate and more studies on the appeal that advertisers have on a type of media that has more than 90% of its users choosing the advertisement option (considering that they could avoid it), but this thesis focus is not on that.

From Pandora to the most European friendly stream services like: Spotify (Sweden); Tidal (Norway/USA); Deezer (France/USA); and back to the all American Apple Music and Youtube Music, there are many streaming services out there to choose from. Spotify is surely one of the most popular with globally 191 million active users of which 87 million (46%) are actually premium paying listeners (Garthenberg, 2018). These services available and the amount of people listening to them (even just

accounting the Spotify data), has truly ushered us in the new era of digital music, where every one of us has free access and availability to an immense catalogue of music.

Music streaming of course is an extremely divisive topic, all across the board, from its ongoing battle against piracy, to the amount of revenue it pays to the artists – and to debates about whether it is destroying the music business or how much a premium plan costs and the details and rules of the advertising accounts. Some have addressed (and still do) this digital era Streaming model as the cure to end all piracy, gathering data to support their claim that would seem to prove that people are downloading illegal music files way less than they used to (Shepherd, 2018). Others still think that while it has helped to some degree, it has not been the miracle the music business was looking for especially with new technology arising and new illegal ways to pirate music arising on smartphones and apps (Snapes & Beaumont, 2018). Those interested in the subject like me, or people who are avid news reader, will surely remember the infamous feud between the streaming service Spotify and the American pop-star and teenage idol Taylor Swift, that in 2014 pulled all her catalogue from the streaming platform, since she thought it was paying artists too small a royalty. In the following years, the artists history with Spotify and other streaming services has been a little rocky, with the singer attacking Spotify and pulling off her catalogue from the platform, picking Tidal to publish all her back catalogue but her then latest album 1989. attacking Apple - very publicly - on the decision not to pay revenues to artists for the whole duration of the three-months free trial of their brand new streaming service Apple Music (to which the company apparently changed their minds, putting Swift into a somewhat of spokesperson position of artists rights), then putting all

her catalogue, latest album included, on Apple Music, going all the way as far as agreeing to appear in one of their ads, to finally reloading all of her albums, to Spotify (and Tidal) again in 2017 (Tiffany, 2017). While what Tiffany argues about Taylor Swift being a very vague and sometimes hypocritical spokesperson for artists right she (as far as she could be from a struggling emerging singer and songwriter, and from the chronological story it would seem that maybe her team made a deal with Apple) sounds very true to me. The fact that such an important artists took a stance with how artists are remunerated on this new digital platforms has surely shone a light on the issue not only for the people inside the business that deal with these issues on a daily basis, but also in the light of the public (or has been for a period of time). Unfortunately the revenue payment per stream of any given song, is still very very low: with the giant Spotify paying only 0.00437 dollars per stream, meaning artists would need a total of 336.842 streamings a month, to gain, according to Sanchez of the Digital Music News, the minimal wage of 1.472 dollars a month. Thus looking at this data, it is surely clear that there is still much to be done to improve the artists revenues. This also applies partly to streaming services themselves, since for instance Tidal, which pays more revenues per stream - 0.01250/stream - has reported a loss of 28 million dollars) (Sanchez, 2019). Shining a light on these issues is not only important in the music business but also certainly an improvement in many ways: artists might feel less helpless in the midst of publishing giants like record companies and retailers (digital or otherwise) and the public certainly feels not only more aware of how their money (in the case of paying users) goes, but also that they are actively supporting their favourite artists, by simply listening to them.

2.1 Piracy

Interestingly enough, no matter how modern the phenomenon of illegal downloading seem to be to our eyes, it is actually not. Its roots go deeper, in fact, all the way to last century. Music has been pirated, one way or another since 1929 when bootlegged books of musical's songs note-sheet started appearing on Broadway's street corners containing music and lyrics to more than hundred popular hits. The books were sold for only five cents, offering a low cost way of reproducing hit music. It didn't take long for the major booking companies, song owners and record companies of the United States to ask the government to take charge against the bootleggers, trying to arginate this phenomenon and even though it was a long process, one of the first bills against music piracy was passed by the New York State Legislature in 1930. Unfortunately the phenomenon didn't subside, with court battles spreading all over the US, until the early year of 1940, when officially licensed score books and song sheets made their appearance in shops, offering a valuable official alternative to the bootlegged ones. Even though this is just one of the early examples of music piracy, the dispute between official music bodies and the public on copyrighted material has been going on across years and formats, from the aforementioned songbooks, to pirate radio station to bootlegged phonograph records all the way to the modern and certainly more common MP3s dispute. (Kernfeld, 2011) .

With the advent of CDs and digital format that piracy really took a leap and became a real problem for the music industry: starting from 1992, with the completion of the

new, and soon extremely popular, compression format the MP3: ripping, uploading and downloading songs for free off the internet became increasingly popular. This compressed, light and extremely easy to transfer format became the key that unlocked a Pandora's box. The encoding system allowed people to compress songs in smaller sizes, without loss in quality and to transfer them from one computer to another almost without any effort. The only thing people had to do, was to download the right software (also free) to read them and enjoy music on their computers or eventually burn them back again on a CD in a readable audio format (Of course the sound quality was lacking, but this would be only an issue for the so called 'audiophiles' (Zantal-Wiener, 2017). This, therefore started somewhat of a trend, of 'exchanging songs' which became so widespread, quick and easy to do, thousands and thousands of people started to join in on a very small period of time, effectively starting the piracy era. The MP3 itself has, interestingly enough, a somewhat of a pirated origin; It's original business model, in fact was established to provide expensive encoding processes to clients and cheap decoding processes to the public. That was until a student from Australia used a stolen credit card to buy professional grade encoding software and released it on the internet, effectively sparking a miniature version of what was about to be unleashed by the format originally created. The MP3 creator, Brandenburg, never meant for their invention to be the object of illegal and pirated content, but technology went so fast that was effectively impossible to arginate it. According to Brandenburg, they did try to warn people in the Music Business, striving to suggest a way to shield them from this avalanche, but they were just too slow to react.

"We tried to tell the people from music industry early on, and we tried to discuss possibilities how to react to this ... The idea was that the music industry wouldn't just be able to go on, they would have to adapt to the situation as well, and if we now look back these 15 years we have to say they finally did but it was too slow and some strategic errors in there." (Rose & Ganz, 2011);

Of course we are all aware how the history unfolded, since we are talking about recent media history: MP3s rose in popularity, peer2peer services like Napster, Emule, Kazaa and similar started appearing and after that, it was a succession of legal and digital battles, with record companies and copyright enforcers taking legal action to shut down softwares and websites, and new ones popping out at every other turn. Before Napster, getting music offline was complicated, unreliable and not for everybody but when the software was suddenly available, it was an instant revolution. Suddenly, music was free, easy to come by and the collection was virtually endless. By March 2000, the Napster collection was of about 20 million songs. By then record sales had registered the first real loss, and record companies and artists among which Metallica and Dr. Dre heads started to turn and pointing fingers at the digital peer-2-peer software. Lawsuits started to come from all angles, and the court battles dragged on and on, even after the original creators of the softwares had moved on to other ventures. Not only, Napster was forced to defend itself in court, but is suddenly had to battle other giants that decided to join the digital field as well. In particular this had to do with Apple, with its Itunes and Ipod launch: A

legal way for people to download (after payment) music and enjoy it offline on brand new devices. With physical CD sales dropping drastically over the following decade, it seemed that the music business was doomed forever, and record companies, artists and music business players started to scramble for a solution that seemed pretty far away. (Lamont, 2013)

It all came to a point that the International music associations, also known as IFPI, started including in their mission statement the protection of the rights of record producers, both companies and musicians, and are now actively lobbying on every level, from regional to international, for the safeguard of the copyrights and the education towards piracy. Through a complicated network, that counts more than 1400 record companies all over the world (Strykowski & Scorpecci, 2009) they are constantly monitoring the business situation, and publish every year a detailed report on the state of the industry. It contains not only the biggest charts worldwide, but also very interesting figures for copyrights revenues, already divided by sector. In their latest report that came out in the beginning of April 2019, it is reported that digital revenues were up globally of an incredibly 21,1% compared to last year. This includes both digital download and digital streaming. Physical revenues were down by a 10.1% while performance revenues (gigs and live performances) were also up by a 9.8% compared to 2017 and even synchronization revenues (the money given to artists for the use of their music on movies/ads and videos different than their own) was up by a 5.2% (Global Music Report, 2019)

One question though might strike the most curious minds, how come there's so much talk about music piracy, while there's so little buzz around piracy in other media industries, like for example television? Other industries, even though still affected by piracy, experience this issue in a more hidden manner: without bringing it to the forefront of the public and the press like music business does.

According to Frith (2001) this derives from the particular vulnerability of the music industry. It's easy to carry on theft with music, either by MP3, photocopied score sheet or pirated CD. Music also crosses boundaries easily, and it's hard to control its transmission. Moreover, it can be consumed in ways in which technical qualities count for little. Music market is also bigger than the other sectors (more players involved) and its disorganization allows for more illicit production and distribution. Despite the appearance of legal streaming websites (Spotify, Tidal and Youtube Music,) music piracy is more popular than ever. (Britton, 2018) While torrents and peer2peer programmes like the old Napster have been slowly declining, also thanks to the better control on the net from record companies and obviously the easiness of streaming services like Spotify and Tidal (which I have discussed already), piracy has not exactly disappeared yet. It has become more subtle and hard to track, taking advantage of the new commodity of smartphones and shaping itself in form of applications or websites that allow the user to rip audio files directly from youtube clips and allow you to download it. Most of the time, an average user of a smartphone does not know what Itunes and Spotify are, but will know how to use a third party app that allows you to look up and download the 'Tube' (Global Music Report, 2018)

Is it purchasing music too complicated? Are streaming apps really that hard to grasp in their functioning and aim? Or maybe the 'casual listeners' just don't really care about how they get their music, as long as it is free. A noteworthy exception to this idea, though, comes already to mind. When in 2014 U2 released their latest album "Songs of Innocence" for free on Itunes, what could have been a great idea to enter the graces of people looking for "free music" was in the end a bad PR stunt, with the public outraged and forcing Apple to release a step by step guide as to how to uninstall the album. (Sherwin, A. 2014)

According to data tracker MUSO, in 2017, music piracy grew of 14.7% from the previous year, number of visits to illegal websites were around 73.9 billion worldwide and 30.5 billion visits were done on streaming websites, while 500 million to torrent websites.

"There is a belief that the rise in popularity of on-demand services such as Netflix and Spotify have solved piracy, but that theory simply doesn't stack up,"
(Chatterly, 2017)

This report, however indicates that music piracy is the second most popular form of piracy behind TV ad ahead of movies (cinema). The MUSO rapport, though as published by NME.com, has discordant information when it compared to the IFPI global music rapport that in 2018 shows music industry to have achieved its third consecutive year of growth in 2017 (Britton, 2018).

2.2 The Music Business: brief overview and who's who.

This study's aim is to discuss and understand what has changed with the digital era, in one of the key figure of the music business: the artist's manager. In order to do so, we have to first understand the general environment and pinpoint all the other actors that are moving in the industry and making it what it is today. I have already mentioned some major roleplayers like record companies, television, radio, streaming devices and the Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI) of which we have looked at global reports. But of course, that is just the tip of the Iceberg. In this paragraph, I shall try to delineate a broad overview of the industry, divided by main branches: *recorded music, production, concert and appearances production and marketing/promotion*. This is of course not an official classification, but mostly a mind map of my own that will help the study navigate the field of the business. It aims to give some perspective of the universe in which the subject of our study moves and what they have to deal with on a regular basis.

2.2.1 Recorded music production

Let us start with delineating the intrinsic and granted connection between the artists (so the person who writes and/or performs music) and the manager. Without music performers and writers there is no music business at all, and that is why our division of the music business in branches is based upon the working cycle of an artists.

From the creative process, to the recording one, all the way until the release and promotion of the album, music business gravitates around this process. Every single person working into the business, weather they are record company representatives,

booking agents, lawyers or venue owners, have one the aim to make profit by somewhat promoting, producing, sponsoring and selling a music records to the public. Without music, without the people writing and performing music, there would be no Industry at all. (Passman, 2010). That is why I have chosen to use this particular method of classification, since I have found it is easier to delineate the players in the game, by following the 'ball'. For the sake of this study, we will only take into account already established artists and musicians, as interesting as it would be to follow the ups and down of unsigned artists, my thesis is focusing on the workings of a manager inside the business already, since the aim is to define the changes that have occurred inside the business from a manager perspective after the digital has taken over the music world.

Everything usually starts with a composition, the artists composes one or more songs and after a period of adjustments, arrangements and rehearsals (that can include or not the producer already, as we will see in a moment) heads over (them or the singer they have composed the song for, if they are not the same person) to a recording studio, usually with a chosen producer and other key figures like a mixer and a sound engineer. One step into the life of a record and we are already surrounded by new workers of the industry. Music producers especially are a key role into the creation, they help the recording artist to get the best sound and arrangement and to make sure not only that they peculiarities are shown, but also that the record will be as polished for the market as it could be. Sometimes, when there is a good relationship between the producer and the artists, both of them will be involved in the creation and performing process, playing, shaping and tuning the

songs in synch until both satisfied. Producers leave a distinctive mark on the recording process, and to fine ears it is possible to distinguish these marks and recognize the distinctive touch of one producer or another underneath the performers peculiarities. (Shepherd, 2009)

The input to record and write an album, can stem by two factors. One is pure and simple inspiration, the artists (weather they both write and perform or not) has new material and is spurred by creating forces to go into the studio to record them. The other, more classic and maybe less romantic is the deal they have with their recording label. Without digging too much into the legal workings of the contracts between record companies and artists, we can glance at how they work when we strip them to the bone. There are two main frames in which these contracts usually work, one is time and the other is number of records. A single contract can hold both of these frames, asking an artist to produce a certain number of records in a certain number of years. The artist can also either be signed for a limited amount of time no matter how many new records they produce (this happens mostly with live concert prolific artists) or to be signed for a limited amount of records no matter how much time passes between them (Passman,2010). Record companies in the case of signed artists are the ones who advance money for the production of a record; this means that they are the ones that will pay for the recording studio fees, the production team (the producers usually get a share of royalties, about 3-5%); mastering and distribution. All these expenses, are then usually paid back to the companies from the money the artists will make at a later moment; with royalties and

sales, during the other phases. This process is called “recoupment”

(Passman, 2010).¹

Getting back on track with the overview of the music business, after a record is done and mastered and a release date is set, the record gets delivered to shops and online services by the official record companies’ distributors. This is an entity that works closely with the record company to spread the album on every platform, shop, and online service that exists out there (or that they have a deal with) so that the album gets as much buzz and reception as it can. Distributors can be global, or region specific, where by region it is meant a specific world region. Every distributor needs to know the trends of the markets, where customers are buying or streaming what and how to locate the record in the best possible way (Shepard, 2017).

With distributors and their market knowledge, we have already stepped on the second branch of my music industry classification, that of promotion and marketing.

This is also where the lines are getting a bit blurry, since appearances and live concerts can be and usually are used to promote and market the album, but since

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There is a subtle game of power that occurs between record companies and artists, especially when they are at the peak of their fame or have become so famous and established that they have a mighty voice in the business. Taylor Swift’s new contract with Universal Music Group offers an example. I have already mentioned Swift in my work, in connection with music streaming disputes, and have already established her as a maybe unwilling and unsuited spokesperson for artists’ rights. But whether or not people might like her, Miss Swift has used more than once her power as a revenue-driving artist to ensure she and her fellow musicians are treated equally in the business. The new contract of the singer with the major label, has in fact a clause that affects not only her, but all the musicians and artists in the company’s roster. Universal Music Group owns a share (of about 3.5% - 1 billion dollars) of the streaming giant Spotify. Swift’s contract says that if Universal were to sell this share, all the money from the transaction should be distributed equally to each of their artists, in non-recoupable terms. This means that even if an artist of Universal hasn’t made enough money to pay back the advance the company has given them, they will still get the money from the eventual sale. It might be all still a bit vague and full of buts and ifs, but it is a certain proof of how these delicate balances of power play a key role in the music business (Wang, 2018).

those are event specifics, and have different mechanics I have opted to keep them separated, and focus in the promotion and marketing branch of this overview on all the other activities that are connected to advertising and releasing the record to the public.

2.2.2 Marketing/Promotion.

The first step is usually the release of a 'single'. This means the artist and their team, pick a song from the album for a pre-release to the public via all the platforms we have already talked about. The first single is usually the song that mostly represents the theme, mood and feel of the album; it is the song for which most of the audience has the hunger for, since it might come after quite some time of silence or it will be the first song, most of the 'fans' will get to know the artists with, in the first place. (Passman; 2010).

Living in the digital world means that the single need to be present not only on audio-streaming services, like Spotify, Tidal, Pandora and so on, but also on video-streaming services, like Youtube and musical television like MTV, meaning that for each single released off an album, there will be usually at least two videos produced: a Lyric video, which syncs the lyrics of the song to some visuals, and the official promotion video which usually features the performers and some various actors in different scenes. Both videos can be used on all platforms of course and they can be mutually exclusive, depending on the budget, the marketing strategy and the aim of both the record companies and the artists. (Ferrara, 2012)

Another important part of the marketing and promotion of an album is the airplay that radios offer to the single. Music consumption is divided into fragments between casual listeners (the audience who doesn't follow any particular artists, but only listens to what radio airs) and deliberate listeners (the audience that looks actively for their favourite artists and listens to their own selection). Casual listeners can be 'turned' into deliberate listeners with luck, persistency in the radio programming and the right marketing tools. The selection of songs which airs on radio is usually made by a coordinated effort between the station's program director and music director. The music director is the liaison between the record companies and the radio station. The oversimplified version of the transaction is this: record companies have a promotion representatives (promo reps) that select songs and artists from their roster according to the different radios style and mood. Then they propose those songs to the music directors of the stations, hoping it will get selected and aired. The aim on both sides is to play songs that will keep people interested both in the radio station (bringing money through advertisement) and in the song in order to generate more revenues for that particular artists. (Knab, 2010)

In an ideal world (such as some decades might have been for the music business) this intrinsic relationship between record companies and radio station would be all there is to know about promoting songs in radios, but the digital revolution and the new streaming services we have already discussed about have also managed in a way to disrupt the cycle also here. Artists are in fact adopting a new method of releasing music based on the launch of more singles (sometimes up to 6) before the

release of the album they are contained upon. This approach, which is rather new, in industry times (it started about four years ago, but it has taken foot in the last two) is aimed to 'surf' success while it is still going, without losing the listener's attention. Now that they are used on having an unlimited supply of music for each genre they could possibly want (thanks to all the streaming platform we have already discussed about), attention of the consumers has become the key object of the music industry's concern. When and if an artists is at their peak of success, they want to keep their audience engaged, and keep the attention flowing, especially when this attention is extremely short lived. There seems to be no more patience for a whole album of twelve to thirteen songs, everything needs to be quick, easily accessible and ready to begin the cycle again at a second's notice (Leight, 2018). Of course, this approach puts a hard strain on radios, which are left with the hard choice of having an extensive amount of songs to air, little time to do so, and new singles adding up to the pile every Friday (the globally acknowledged release day for new music) that either clog up the playlists so that an artists is played 3 times/hour or kick away other new songs but less known artists. This leaves radio programme managers with a real conundrum, since the results are not only lack of diversity, in radio but also a general harm to the music business that tends to favour always the same five artists, leaving very little space for the others (Leight, 2019).

Another important side of the promotion and marketing branch we are analysing, is also tightly connected with the digital revolution, and it is the social media.

Sometimes they manage them on their own, or with the help of a social media manager, but either way an online presence is necessary to make sure any given

artists music gets listened to and appreciated (also requested on radio, voted to awards, and booked for appearances and concerts, as we will see). From Facebook, to Twitter to Instagram and all the inbetweens, it is vital for artists and performers to engage on social media. Recent studies have demonstrated that a symbiotic relationship has been created between the social media and the music business. According to the research carried by the company Music Watch (that provides marketing research for the music business) the real stars of social media are the artists and performers of the music industry, according to their research 9 out of 10 regular social media user partake in "music- or artist-related activity on the most popular social applications" (Crupnick, 2018). The research also points out that music is the fabric that often runs underneath social media, with more than half of the content posted daily having to do in one way or another with music, might it be a music video shared with friends, pictures of live concerts or appearances or simply interaction with posts of their favourite musicians. Another important point that the research makes, and that is intrinsic of the modern day social-media era, is the fact that amongst the myriad of influencers, politicians and VIP using social media, it is in fact artists and singers who end up having not only more followers but more pull when it comes to their voice being heard on the web. Artists and bands make a cultural contribution to the social media, and audiences are enrapt with the idea of following their favourite's career and personal life from their smartphones and computers (Crupnick, 2018).

Lastly, social media is a valuable tool to gauge audience reaction, it offers a quick glance and interaction with the public and it is usually a good meter to judge if an

album, an event or an advertising campaign will be successful or not. For example usually the number of attendants to virtual events on Facebook matches the number of attendants in real live, making social media a good instrument not only to engage but to also measure the engagement of the public (Salo, & Iankinen & Mäntymäki, 2013). Of course, social media is a subject so extensive that a separate study would also be needed in order to fully understand the connections between the music business and social media. This short overview was though needed in order to lately understand how all these dynamic come into fruition for the aim of this study.

2.2.3 Concert and Appearances Production

Strictly connected to the promotion and marketing branch of an artists working cycle, live performances such as concerts, meet and greet, in-store signing sessions and TV appearances in front of their audience are an important part of an artists daily life. Not only do they help building a relationship with the customers and build up audience loyalty, but are also a very profitable revenue income for all the parties involved. Building up a tour, whether of concerts or of in-store signing sessions and meet and greets, takes at least (and usually) the combined effort of the artists (via their manager, as we will see later on in this study) of the record company and their own booking agents and the promoters. Each of these entities has their role and pull into making sure that everything goes without a hitch and that not only the audience has the best possible time, but also that the outcome business wise is profitable for them all. Also here, there can be two main directions in which a concert, a tour, or an in-store event can be booked; it can come from the record company, which is

actively trying to promote an album by any given artists, and therefore asks their booking agents with the task of having to get in touch with promoters to book events in cities. It can also be the other way around, with the promoters looking to fill up a calendar for a venue or a concert hall and getting in touch with booking agents and record companies to book a particular artists or performer. This of course includes one time gigs, for private entities such as city festivals and cultural events. Once the concert, the performance or the meet and greet is booked and ready, it will be the duty of the artists manager to ensure that everything goes smoothly, that the artists/performer is where they are supposed to be and to eventually put out fires and troubles that could arise (Passman, 2010).

Live appearances can differ very much in scope and aim, even though just as everything else we are merely glancing over in this study they happen to overlap quite a bit. For the sake of brevity, I have divided them in two main event categories: musical performances and meet and greets. While both have obvious promotion and marketing capabilities, in one category the artist is actively performing their music, getting revenues from royalties and general fees whereas in the other the artist is basically just meeting fans, offering them an incentive to buy the album, by giving them the chance of a brief encounter to have it signed. In fact in most of these events, while the public is given access for free, they often have to bring a copy of the album with them. This allows for a spike in sales right around the time the event is announced and all the way until the event is held (Allen, 2011). Another rising trend in the music business that bridges the gap between meet and greets and musical appearances, is the addition of VIP tickets to live show and concerts. With

an extra fee (sometimes worth even 5 times the price of the regular tickets), some audience members are granted access to the venue before door openings, and usually at least with medium to low famous artists, they get to meet their favourites, snap pictures and ensure they will have the best possible seats in the house. This is of course only valid for concerts, and provides an extra kick for the audience (Rolling Stone, 2016).

Concerts and live performances are the blood that floods into the music business veins, it all comes back down there, they are what the public seeks and where the majority of the revenues flows in and out of. They are almost a separate entity, a little beehive of people buzzing around to make it happen, from the personal manager to the lights and sound engineers, the roleplayers are also many and diverse.

According to the performer or the size of the concert, there can be more or less a definite amount of people working there: tour managers, accountants, security, stage manager, sound engineer, lights engineers a variable number of backliners and lastly truck drivers. The pulsing heart of the music business is there, and the artists personal manager, together with their act is right at the center of it (Allen, 2011)

From the album recording process to the end of the tour, even though it was barely mentioned in this overview, the manager takes care of the artists every moment, fulfilling a series of duties that make their shared lives almost symbiotic.

In the next chapter of this study, we will focus on what it means to be a manager, what do they do and when and most importantly how the digital revolution has affected their lives . Data has been collected over the course of two years, by interviewing professional managers, artists and tour managers, in Finland, Italy and

Germany. Through the analysis of their answers we will try to delineate what changed for their daily life and routines since music became a liquid commodity.

3. Management Theories for the Music Business

With such radical changes going on in the music business, it came natural to wonder if the digitalization of the music industry has provoked deep changes in the lives of one of the central figure to the business as well. This is therefore the key question this study: How has the work of music managers changed since internet took over and music became digital? Surprisingly, while there is a lot of literature and research that focus on the changes that are occurring in such a developing environment like the music industry is nowadays, there is a lack of academic research that focuses on the figure of the artists' manager and on their working life:

“Within the field of Popular Music Studies, accounts of the music industries have tended to over-privilege the recording industry to the exclusion of other activities. The nature of the music industries before 1999 can justify an obsession with the workings of record companies [...] (authors) they still pay scant or no attention to the role of managers. If this suggests that studies of the work of managers are a gaping void in Popular Music Studies” (Dumbreck, & McPherson, 2016: p.88)

Of all the literature studied during the course of this thesis, only four books were found that contained useful but practical information, on the figure of the manager in the music business. Two of these aimed at tangential figures: musicians (Passman, 2012) and tour managers (Workman, 2012), A third study focused on music as a form of entrepreneurship and only held one chapter on the figure of managers as an entrepreneur (Dumbreck & McPherson, 2016). The source (Allen, 2011), which has

been the most useful resource for the course of this research is very much a 'know how' book, meant to be:

“the definitive guide to the students of management of artists in the music business, as well as for those seeking to become professional artists managers.” (Allen, 2011: p.xiv)

Still, 'Artist Management' by Paul Allen (2011), has been a useful source, especially for its first chapters, where the author makes a clear parallel between classical management in general businesses and the peculiarities of the relationship between artists and manager. Overall, the lack of sources, while giving me 'carte blanche' on this research made it also quite pernicious in its development, since I had to draw from different academic sources theories elements that would suit the peculiar job an artist manager does and their particular situation.

Talent management resources, such as *Next Generation Talent Management* by Andres Hatum (2010); “What do we mean by the term “talent” in talent management?” by Carole Tansley (2011) and *Talent Management* by Eddie Blass (2009) helped in delineating the interesting double meaning behind the word “talent” which is still subject of many academic studies for the Human Resources branch of management, but ultimately fell mostly on a scale that was not relevant to this research: the branch of business management that falls under the name of “talent management” is almost irrelevant to the music business and the working ethic of the managers in the industry.

3.1 What do we know from earlier research?

As provided above, there is unfortunately little to no research on managers in the music business, especially when it comes to the hypothesis of this study. What we can gather from the literature reviewed for this study though, is a picture of what a manager does for the artist they are managing, how it is similar or different from the other businesses middle managers and how much of the classical theory (especially by Drucker, 2007) applies to the life of these managers.

When we think about a manager, in any business, we always imagine some sort of detached controlling figure, “paid to oversee, control, and administer” (Hamel, 2007: p.60). We easily think managers people attentive to figures and to strategies on how to improve the bottom line for the business they are working for, when it comes to the music business and the role of the artists manager though, this ideal is very far from from the everyday truth.

With few exceptions mostly relevant for the past (record companies assigning a manager to an artists they just signed) (Passman, 2012: p.32), we can see already the difference that the music business brings on the table when we analyze the hiring connection between the manager and the artists. In standard talent management strategies, the top levels of a business should be hiring, collecting and gathering talents in pools and creating strategies to implement talent management at all levels of the organization (Hatum, 2010: p.18) in a structured, corporate and hierarchical relationship. In contrast, in music business, is the talent itself (artist) that

looks for and hires a manager to be managed (Allen, 2011) the scheme therefore is upside down.

	Employer	Employee
General Businesses	Manager	Talent
Music Business	Talent	Artist

This brings of course already a twist in the classical dynamics and marks a peculiarity that is intrinsic of the music business, the employer looks for a person to manage their business, and then agrees to follow their lead, so they can concentrate on the creative process of their working life. (Allen, 2011) With these premises, it is immediately clear that the relationship between the artists and the manager is one of the closest we can find, with not much hierarchy between them, and often based on strong human connection and mutual trusts. Personal managers of artists in fact become involved in every aspect of the artist's life they are managing, there are no boundaries between the personal and working life, and the bond that forms between them is one comparable to the most successful marriages (Allen, 2011).

Music talent business is a 'people business', therefore managers working for musicians and talents need to understand the nature of interpersonal relationship, and learn to nurture them. This becomes extremely valid not only for the relationship that the manager has with its artists but in also in the connection that the manager

can create within the music business: managers work in close contact with all and any agency that the artist has to deal with (record companies, publicists, booking company etc.) to make sure the artist's career gets smoothly and their popularity grows (Workman, 2012). The symbiosis of the manager with the artist they manage goes way beyond the relationship that they need to build, and can also be found in the legal terms between them, analyzing in fact the literature and the history behind previous famous deals, we know that the average manager receives about 15-20% of the gross income of the artists they manage (Passman 2012: p.29) this suggests of course that the more an artist is well managed and the more successful they become, the more remuneration both they and their manager get. There have been instances in the past (namely the one of Elvis and his manager: "Colonel" Tom Parker, and the one of Jimi Hendrix and his manager Michael Jeffreys) where the manager was granted up to 50% of the gross income and even royalties on the musical production (Allen, 2011: p. 29-33) but artists now are much more attentive and are trying to keep the percentages between the customary 15-20% (Passman, 2012: p.29). Music manager's work is therefore intrinsically connected to the changing environment in the music business. The more successful a band is the more successful a manager is and given the people nature of the music business the more powerful a manager is, the more connected they are (Passman 2012: p. 38). Obviously it is not only about connections and knowing people: managing an artist uses "science, business, and a good measure of creativity" (Allen 2011: p.1). A manager therefore has to know the workings of the music business, know the trends and how to use them to market and promote the artist they are working for, has to understand the technology surrounding the business and their functioning, so that

both their career and the one of the musician can advance and improve (Passman, 2012).

At a general level all the intricacies that seem to form the working life of a manager when boiled down to the essential can still be paralleled to the basic functions of classical management: planning, organizing, directing, and controlling (Hamel 2007, p.20; Allen 2011: p.2). Through this analytical grid, we can look at what we know about the managers in the scholarly field and can start analyzing what it is that we know about this figure and how they fit into the frame of the music business. The manager is the person that, in close collaboration with the artists, performs a number of activities (planning, organizing, directing, and controlling) that ensure the commercial success of the artist. From public relations, to promotion and press, they are the person that everybody reaches to when wanting to deal with said artists (Workman, 2012)

“The buffer between the artists and the outside world [...] the person that takes the responsibilities for decisions the artists takes” (Passman, 2012: p.28).

Even though there is no strong hierarchy inside the relationship of an artists and their manager, when it comes to other companies and customers in the business, the personal manager is at the top of the totem pole when it comes to artists. Dealing with a musicians, means dealing with their manager. (Workman, 2012).

3.2 What can management research tell us?

As mentioned in the earlier paragraph of this chapter, one of the branches of theories I thought I could focus on was talent management, but I have found some intrinsic problematic in both the application of the theory to the music business and the relationship of managers and artists and in the theories themselves. Talent management has no clear definition, nor on their practises (Hatun, 2010) nor on the definition of the word 'talent' (Tansley, 2011).

"it is very difficult to identify a precise meaning of talent management because of both confusion regarding definitions of terms used and differences in assumptions made by authors who write about the issue." (Hatun, 2010: p.10)

"people are rarely precise about what they mean by the term "talent" in organisations and the implications of defining talent for talent management practice (Tansley et al., 2007: p.266)"

Moreover, both Hatun (2011) and Blass (2009) locate the theories of talent management as a corporate-only strategy either for competitive advantage (Hatun, 2011) and as an additional employee management (Blass, 2009)

"talent management is a strategic activity aligned with the firm's business strategy that aims to attract, develop, and retain talented employees at each level of

the organization. The talent-planning process, therefore, is linked directly to a firm's business and strategic-planning processes (Hatun, 2011: p.13)

“Talent Management is the additional management, processes and opportunities that are made available to people in the organisation who are considered to be ‘talent’. (Blass, 2007: p.2)

The lack of academic information and the confusion spread on the talent management theories has made it difficult to delineate a proper framework to this research. As we have seen, the relationship between the artist and the manager is quite different when compared to the one of corporate management and therefore the strategy delineated in the books was not applicable to the dynamic that occurs in the music business. What was useful and relevant to this research though, was the missing and somewhat confounding nature of the definition (or lack thereof) of the word “talent”.

Historically, a unit of weight and then money, the word “talent” acquired new meaning in the middle ages in Europe, and came to signify some special abilities or aptitude, an adjective that signified those able to demonstrate outstanding accomplishments. This remains true nowadays especially in fields such as sports and music (Tansley, 2011). Following the modern management theories is the definition of the word talent given by Michaels et al. (2001: p. xii As cited by Hatun, 2011: p.20) encompass talent as:

“as ‘the sum of a person’s abilities – his or her intrinsic gifts, skills, knowledge, experience, intelligence, judgment, attitude, character, and drive. It also includes his or her ability to learn and grow.’ (Michaels et al. 2001: p. xii As cited by Hatum, 2011: p.20)

As we will see from the interviews data gathered, the definition of the word talent for all the workers in the music business remains the one given by Tansley (2011), and therefore is very much intrinsic to the musical abilities of the artists.

While this absence of consistency between the theory of talent management and the reality of the relationship that exists in the music business between artists and manager has been problematic for the framework, there are some general parallels between the management innovation theories of Hamel (2007) and Drucker (2007) and music business management in general. As the overview on the business changes has already been presented in the previous chapter, I will briefly draw some connection lines between the framework theory and what actually happened in the business.

"Business enterprises exists to build economic performance; business management must always put economic performance first, business management has failed if it does not supply goods and services desired by the consumer at a price the consumer is willing to pay" (Drucker, 2007: p.11-12)

"is it the customer who determines what a business is. It is the customer alone whose willingness to pay for a good or for a service converts economic resources into wealth, things into goods. What the customer buys and considers value is never just a product. It is always a utility, what a product or service does for him (Drucker, 2007: p.15)

"The customer defines the business [...] by the want they satisfy when he or she buys a product or a service. To satisfy the customer is the mission or the purpose of every business" (Drucker, 2007: p.18)

Revenue is of course at the very fabric of every business. The music industry has relied on CD's revenues for more than a decade. Once the technology advanced and CD became from one moment to the next obsolete, music industry found itself having to deal with the sudden reality of much of their income being distributed on the internet for free. Customers, were simply not willing to pay for music anymore (Albright, 2015). Looking at the quotes from Drucker's book (2007) it is once again easy to understand the gravity of the situation that the music business faced with the digitalization of content. How to be "a customer defined business" (Drucker, 2007: p.18) when the customers were actively distributing the content amongst themselves for free?

"Because its purpose is to create a customer, the business enterprise has two and only these two basic functions: marketing and innovation [...] Innovation may

result in lower price [...]but the result may also be a new and better product, a new convenience or a definition of a new want [...] Innovation in distribution has been as important as innovation in manufacturing [...] Innovation can be defined as the task of endowing human and material resources with new and greater wealth-producing capacity" (Drucker, 2007: p.16-17)

"Record companies have been struggling to rejuvenate seriously out-of-date business models, sure, many of these companies will regain their footing, eventually, but in the meantime, billions of dollars and millions of customers will be lost, such is the cost of maladaptation." (Hamel, 2007: p.42)

"The digitization of anything not nailed down threatens companies that make their living out of creating and selling intellectual property. Drug companies, film studios, publishers, and fashion designers are all struggling to adapt in a world where information and ideas "want to be free" (Hamel, 2007: p.10)

Lack of innovation is often the first blame that critics and the public alike attribute to the music business, or more properly the failure to foresee and adapt to the changing technology, ignoring the tell-tale signs that something holding an enormous impact was rapidly marching on their way. Could the industry have prevented losses by adopting the new technology faster? If we take a look at the history of digital streaming services, which were the first proper step into the right direction, it is plain to see how they were born as a solution to a problem, would have Spotify been born

had the piracy not been a problem? This question might surely be something worth exploring further.

"Even as we both over and underestimated the new tools, we failed to realize that they would drastically change the task to be tackled. Concepts and tools, history teaches again and again, are mutually interdependent and interactive. One changes the other. That is now happening to the concept we call a business and to the tools we use to collect our information. The new tools enable us - indeed, may force us - to see our business differently [...] Both creators and creatures of a material environment, which is the area outside the organization in which opportunities and results lie but in which the threats to the success and survival of every business also originates" (Drucker, 2007: p.71)

"Management innovation tends to yield a competitive advantage when one or more of three conditions are met: the innovation is based on a novel management principle that challenges some long-standing orthodoxy; the innovation is systemic, encompassing a range of processes and methods; and/or the innovation is part of an ongoing program or rapid fire invention where progress compounds over time" (Hamel, 2007: p.27)

"An organization that just perpetuates today's level of vision, excellence, and accomplishment has lost the capacity to adapt. And since the one and only

thing certain in human affairs is change, it will not be capable of surviving in a changed tomorrow" (Drucker, 2007: p.160)

We are faced with revealing theories about how a changing and dynamic environment is the only way for a business to adapt. Also a question which would be interesting to delve into is the one about the timeframe. How much time did pass between the creation of the MP3 format and the rise of the peer to peer programs which were allowing people to exchange music completely for free? The music industry, as we have seen has some peculiar characteristics, and an accurate time frame of the events and how they evolved could help to decide if it was its own fault for lacking the willingness, the talents and the meant to innovate and adapt to the changes that were rapidly taking over – or to exonerate the key actors by showing that because the pace was so fast that even with the proper means and innovation-apt mentality the piracy disaster could not have been avoided.

3.3 What we do not know?

We have analyzed what we know about management in the music business from first hand sources and books and its similarities with the academic field of management. we have also looked at how classical theories of innovation management failed to apply to the major companies working in the music business and how much this switch into the internet era has changed the music environment. What we still do not know at this point is how much the digital switch has affected the *life and work of the managers inside the business*. Assuming that the changes

brought by the digitalization have been plenty and all across the board, it would be probable to think that also the working life of the managers in the musical industry has been disrupted in some way or another. Using the interviews and the data gathered during my research for this thesis, I will try to answer this questions.

4. Methodology and data

For my research, I decided I wanted to take a direct approach in asking managers for their personal experience on the field. I wanted to capture their passion and first-hand knowledge about the industry and all its workings. I deemed the personal, in depth interviews to be the most appropriate approach (Creswell, 2013).

“Qualitative interviewing has today become a key method in the human and social sciences and also in many other corners of the scientific landscape from education to the health sciences. Some have even argued that interviewing has become the central resource through which the social sciences— and society— engages with the issues that concern it” (Rapley, 2001 as cited from Leavy, 2015: p.277).

“The goal is to encourage participants to have the time and opportunity to reconstruct their own experiences and reality in their own words.” (Yin, 2016: p.32)

Given the lack of literature from the managerial point of view I deemed the interviewing method of qualitative research the most appropriate, participants were able to explain their reality and their world through their own lenses and a clearer picture of the managerial world in the music business was created.

“For as long as we know, human beings have used conversation as a central tool to obtain knowledge about others. People talk with others in order to learn about how they experience the world, how they think, act, feel, and develop as individuals and in groups, and, in recent decades, such knowledge-producing conversations have been refined and discussed as qualitative interviews”
(Leavy, 2015: p.277)

“High among the expected competencies is knowledge of your own topic of research. (Yin, 2016: p.28)

It was apparent for me from the beginning that having a conversation with people working in the field would be the best approach for this research. Given my earlier knowledge on the topic, I felt secure in my ability to ask relevant questions and to sustain a conversation with useful insights.

I decided to use a set of questions ranging from the personal career of the managers to the specifics of dealing with the new ecosystem of music so that the data shed light to both the specifics on management and the changes in the industry. I kept the questions linked to their personal experiences, addressing them in a *natural setting*,

with a relatively free-flow answers while still remaining attached to to the questions and guidelines I had given. This provided a good balance in giving them space to wander in their answer and putting them at ease at the same time (Cresswell, 2013).

Working with a narrative, comparing words and sentences and feelings proved valuable meter to witness in first hand not only the changes in the business, but also the feelings and the mood of the workers in the industry. Having them at ease and opening up to the questions provided a very good end result (Cresswell, 2013).

From the previous conversations we had via mail to arrange the interviews I was pleasantly surprised to see how keen and eager all managers were to share with me not only their experiences but their thoughts on the subject. This study even though brief and done with little means showed that workers in the industry were been really interested in reflecting about their work.

4.1 Collection of interviews

I needed to find managers in the music business that would be available for the interviews, so I set out to find suitable record companies or management companies and started to collect some names and email addresses to send a formal invitation to, via mail. It was easier to find email addresses for Finnish managers, than it was to find email addresses for Italian managers, which most of the time had only a general information email address. After the mails were sent, divided over a couple of months, it was a long wait until the replies finally started to come over. In the end,

I managed to get an acceptable number to and diversity of respondents to understand the situation for management in the music business.

The managers which I had the privilege of interviewing came from all different backgrounds, giving my research a wider scope of experiences, the music genres they are involved in varies from cartoon music, to alternative rock, to pop all the way to jazz. While the majority of them are Italian (seven); two are from Finland and one is from Germany.

After setting out a date with each participant we agreed on the mean of communication. While I would have preferred to have all the interviewed done via skype, that wasn't always possible, especially with the Italian managers who mostly agreed to have it via phone. Once the date was scheduled and the tool was decided, I was left with the task to find a way to record the answers that would be more suitable for me to gather the data, a vocal recorder on the smartphone was the best option, and I procured two recording at all times at the same time, so I could have a backup record in case of technology errors resulting in missing data.

I prepared the set of questions and translated the questions from English to Italian, so I wouldn't have to do it on the spot during the interview, I started collecting the data, following my interview schedule.

These are the main questions I asked during the interview, which would focus on their career and background, their working-daily routine, so I could understand what

a manager in the music business does and what happens in their lives, on their definition of talent, so I could understand if the academical research we have analyzed fits their lifestyle somehow, on their view of success and lastly on the changes that the digitalization has brought in their business and their lives.

1. *First, could you tell me a little about your work and your career? What do you do and what brought you to this point in your career?*
2. *I would like to understand what it is like to work as a manager in the music business. Could you walk me through a typical day of work? What would an exceptional day be like?*
3. *Most agree that the music business is a talent industry. But it's not clear what that means. How do you understand "talent" in this business?*
4. *Managing talent is not like managing a factory or running a store. What do you see as the special requirements for being a manager in the music business? Are there special privileges?*
5. *I would like to understand what creates success.*
 - a. *What are the most important criteria for success as a talent manager in the music business today?*
 - b. *What is the same as earlier?*
 - c. *What is new and different from the past?*
 - d. *Has the definition of success changed in your experience?*
6. *The online media system is disrupting traditional approaches to most media companies. Has it been disruptive for your business and this industry?*
7. *There are a lot of new platforms for music streaming and sharing online. Which are most important for your work? Which are most important for artists' success?*
8. *How important are traditional mass media in this industry today?*

These the main themes of my research, the full interview was comprised of twelve questions, which slowly and organically moved from one theme to the other (for the full list of questions, see Appendix).

The hypothetical time that would be needed for the interviews was estimated of about 40-60 minutes, so that they would not take much of the busy manager's time. With the exceptions of a couple of cases, where the interviewed was particularly eager and able to talk, the estimated time was respected every time. The couple of instances where it took way more time than expected, resulted in very interesting conversations, and new points of view on things like “music for children TV’s” ; “differences of music scenes between Finland and Italy”; “ninja marketing” and a varied range of diverse topics. As pleasant, fruitful and interesting as the conversation was, given my interest in the musical scene from both an industry and commercial perspective, most of these outlier themes do not feature in the useful data for this research.

I was extremely pleased though that all the managers that agreed to take part in this study demonstrated a keen and vivid interest in my research, in the reasons why I had elected this peculiar subject, since there is very few literature on it, and were very pleased with the set of questions. They found them interesting and to the point and most of them were extremely open and available to reply in a profuse manner.

4.2 Problems of interviewing

Interviews also were slightly problematic, in many ways, even though my head had pictured a way more troublesome scenario than what actually happened. Firstly, the number of agreed agreements I had received via mail from the managers contacted did not correspond at all. This impossibility of some managers, who had given me a positive answer, to attend the interview in the end or due to the fact that many of them failed to get back to me at all after the first positive interaction. Even though of course it was unfortunate, it was also a problem I was expecting, so I had adjusted the number of request to exceed the necessary ones, and managed to still get a decent number by the end of the interviews round. The last problem concerning the interviews has been the translation and the transcription, which have taken a lot of my time, due to the impossibility to translate them from audio to written word directly and have been very time consuming. I had to resort to vocal digitization in the end, to transcribe them and translate them quickly, luckily Google docs has a very good and extremely useful tool for this.

5. Analysis and findings

In this chapter I explain the reason behind the key questions and analyze the interviews, underlining the general trends and commonalities I have found within the answers.

The respondents come all from different music genres and work in different types of environment. This is an interesting background factor if we consider the common trends I have delineated and found in their answers to my questions. It stands to reason that no matter the fame level of the act they are managing or the type of niche music genre they are working into, many similarities still apply, suggesting same unwritten rules of common managerial sense. (More info on the respondents can be found in the Appendix).

5.1 Career track

The first question was of course an introductory one, the managers were asked to give a small presentation on their lives and career, so I could better understand their background and where they were coming from. I aimed to keep things as relaxed as I could, attitude which was greatly appreciated with many of the managers who asked me directly to use an informal and colloquial tone and wanting me to call them by their given name, rather than using a more formal address. This was also

the question that maybe took them more time to answer, as they were all quite experienced in the field. All the interviewed started their careers already in the music business, many (seven out of ten) started out as musician, working in one or more bands, before organically stepping up to be the contact person or the designated person to get in touch with venues and record companies, until fully taking on the mantle of manager.

“after my first band I has a couple more bands that I was playing with and maybe it was just because of my personality it was always me that would take care of the bookings and taking care of business, you know when we should be in a venue and at what time do we play and so on,” (Antti Hietala)

“I’m a musician myself, and in 2007 I was working as a freelancer, making feature music and writing theater pieces that kind of things and trying to get my own music out, with you know...it wasn’t a very successful thing at that point, but something I started thinking about was starting a business in the hopes of creating some sort of forum for my own artistic work” (Tapio Ylinen)

“I started out as a drummer, I’m 33, so I have had quite a fast career, therefore I started as a musicians and toured Italy with some pretty famous artists, after that, I switched to the other side. I’ve always had quite a keen business side coming from an entrepreneurial family, and I found a way to merge the business and the art.” (Paolo Pezzano)

Out of these seven, two of them: Mirko Fabbreschi and Nicodemo were at the time of the interview (2018 and 2019) still mainly focused on music and having the management of their band (Fabbreschi, for Raggi Fotonici) or other (Nicodemo for the record company XXXV) as a side business. The remaining three, started out still in the music business, but as booking agents: Luca De Luigi for Zen Art; and Alfonso Senatore for Marte Label; they were therefore the people actively looking for venues in which bands affiliated with the Companies could go and play live concerts and then switched to the managerial side of things, by taking on more and more

responsibilities and building a relationship with the artists. One of the respondents Jennifer Pohl, started out as a sound engineer.

“The short version is that I studied Sociology and while studying I started as a sound technician, because I thought it was fascinating and I just loved being at concerts, I did that a couple of years and then I switched to stage management and from there I got hired as tour manager, and I did that”
(Jennifer Pohl)

It is interesting to notice that none of these managers, which are all professional and have been working in the music business for years, have classical managerial training. Rather they started out already in the music business in one way or another and because of their personality or making virtue of necessities have slowly taken the role of a manager. This shows that music business management is quite different and quite peculiar when compared to other business, it also proves that the route to be a successful manager develops through some other activities in the field which leads to a necessary sensitivity needed to fully understand the nature of artists management and of the music business. Hierarchies in the music business seem to be in fact quite flat and with a lot of possibilities for movement across the spectrum.

5.2 Everyday practice

In order gain insights about the actual, practical reality of management, I asked the respondents to describe their usual working day and share what a manager does practically during the day and whether or not their day to day working life concurs with the management duties Hamel (2007) describes as the ‘classical managerial’

profile; I knew already that Allen (2011) had mentioned them in his book about music business, so I was expecting the replies to match, but the data confirmed it, this question was also aimed to understand if the job is as glamorous as it is made out to be by the public and the entertainment industry. Moreover I wanted to build ground for one of the following questions aiming to delineate the workings and relationships of a manager with the various players of the music industry (such as record companies, distribution companies, Retailers, artists and so on). Unsurprisingly, the data matched the earlier research and though the respondent were not conscious at all of academic theory, their activities can still be classified by “planning, organizing, commanding, coordinating and controlling” of classical managerial theory” (Hamel, 2007: p.20). This demonstrate that you do not need really need to be classically trained as a manager in order to have analytical sense of what your do, and raises the question: are the classical management theories mostly “common business sense”? (this is, of course, a question for another type of study).

"my daily life consists in managing ongoing and outgoing emails, making scheduled phone calls and that need follow up and making sure that everything goes smoothly. My job is a delicate balance of mediation, because on one hand we need to make sure that the artists is satisfied, but on the other we also have to ensure that our client is happy as well" (De Luigi)

"I wake up fairly early, at about 7am and I start to check computer and smartphones, trying to keep up with everything that's happening, I've also started this habit of actually writing down the things I have to during the day, because for a lot of time I was chasing down the tasks in a very unstructured way, we don't really have a proper office, since I'm the only one working for Tempesta, but basically I wake up and I start interacting with all the people that get in touch with me and or I need to get in touch with. All the way until the evening." (Molteni)

"I was a little bit of the puppet master, in a good way. I took care of the press for example, of album and tour promotion. So I was in touch with the artists and with its collaborators making sure things went smoothly." (Nicodemo)

"I think that in this line of work every day is different from the other, and I will work on every day differently. For sure there's a lot of computer work and a lot of phone calls. I hear from the artists almost every day, I hear from the distribution almost every day and so on with graphics, press office, studio...a typical day is made of all these contacts" (Senatore)

All of the respondents boiled down their typical day of work to a lot of office time, in the most classical sense, all comprised by phone calls, email exchange and rather traditional office duties. This confirms, at least on a daily basis the job of the manager in the music business is not extremely different from the one of the normal manager. The only outlier to this case, was Fabbreschi, who was still mainly a musician, and only had a little "pockets of time" (Fabbreschi) that he dedicates to the management of his band, instead dedicating full months once a year to be the artistic director (then another type of management). Interestingly noteworthy was that Paolo Pezzano had to interrupt our interview on the phone for almost 40 minutes, because he got another incoming call from one of his major acts: Marcella Bella, while this might not be extremely relevant for the study, makes it clear how much the relationship between manager and managed is important and almost symbiotic:

"Then I have to start being a psychologist with my artists, because one has a problem, the other has another one so I'm always comforting them" (Pezzano)

The atypical days of work were a divisive subject across the board of the respondents. Some pointed out that concert days or being on a proper tour were the ones most hectic and peculiar, others addressing a day of rest as an atypical day.

"Then a really hectic day would include a live concert, if I'm arranging a live show here in Tampere so that would be a hectic day, because that would include the morning radio broadcast and then the entire day of organizing the live

event, of perhaps a small trip, I'm going to Jazz ahead, in Germany next week, it's somewhat of a jazz Festival in Bremen it's a yearly convention for jazz publishers, musicians and agents, it's a 4 days get together and we try to make some business at the same time, it's going to be 4 full days and it will be very hectic. It will be 4 days of work, so that's it." (Ylinen)

"tours are another dimension entirely, it's extremely hard to be anchored to real life when you're on the road because of the long travels and the new places. You're never in the same place and that makes it hard to dedicate yourself to a schematic type of work" (Senatore)

"While we were on a break from touring with the Tre allegri ragazzi morti" I have tried for the first time this very atypical day, which I think are extremely typical for normal workers which are Sundays for example. Those days were nothing happens and you can also sleep all day. Those are very atypical days which I like very much" (Molteni)

5.3 Work satisfaction

I also asked the respondent to share their sources of enjoyments and moments of dissatisfaction. This question, once again showed the main differences between the music industry and other industries. Although formulated in a bit of 'naive way', this question was aimed to understand how the respondents fell on the classical view of the managers for the job they were doing. This has been described for instance by Drucker (2007: p147): "every knowledge worker, in a modern organization is an 'executive' if, by virtue of his/her position or knowledge, he or she is responsible for a contribution that materially affects the capacity of the organization to perform and obtain results."

What was interesting in most of the replies, was how focused all the respondents were on the creative process of the music business, focusing their approach, rather than on the economical side of the business on the creative one, some examples:

"I most like when there's us as a company and then there's the artist that we represent then there is the venue or the event or the brand that we work with, and when there something happening, like a show or a deal or whatever that is satisfying for all the three parties, that's the greatest moment, when you sort of you know in a certain situation all the parties involved are really happy about how things go, that's usually very satisfying, 'cause that usually means that you know everybody's happy and that's always wonderful." (Hietala)

"As an artist manager what I liked the most was to be a part of the creating process of music, and you know an album and to give the feedback and when people liked it, that don't mean the feedback from the industry, it's just when people walk up to the band and say "this song means so much to me" And I love the live shows, so that's what I like the most. and AM ovb. has very creative side to it, and obviously I had bands who welcomed my creative side, so that was the fun part" (Pohl)

"I really like having relationships with the artists, and with the creative people. I love witnessing the creation of a product, from a song to an album, to a record cover or a poster" (Molteni)

Paradoxically, what came out categorized in the "what I enjoy less" are traits which are typically associated with the ideal managerial figure, such as competitiveness at all costs, economics gain and relationship with institutions and clients. This is also another topical difference between the music industry and a more classical industrial, corporate and managerial role and a very interesting dichotomy: on the one hand these managers are wearing the classical corporate role perfectly, but on the other they are fundamentally creative people invested in the music and in the arts.

"What I like less is the economic side of things, most of the people I interact with are my friends and when we do something together, especially in the festival contest, I hate having to talk about money and fees. It might be my personality trait, but I really don't enjoying doing so." (Fabbreschi)

"I don't like contracts, billings, invoicing...that stuff" (Molteni)

"What I enjoy less is when your working figure, sometimes, comes across to other people in a negative way. It happened that you're surrounded by negativity or people who would like to be at your place. This hurts me because when I go forward in life don't bring other people down to raise my own qualities; unfortunately in the show business, bringing other people down to advance is something that happens a lot. I don't like people who do that, but it's their problem" (Pezzano)

"Sometimes you meet with clients who don't share your same values, and you stumble with institution who don't understand how things work and that makes the job extremely difficult" (Lisi)

5.4 Working with partners and competitors

I also queried about the relationships the managers had with other companies and organizations, aiming to find out which actors in the business their deemed most important for their artists, and how much time these relationship took of the time of the respondents. I formulated this question specifically to understand and position the manager in the music business picture that has been delineated in the second chapter of this thesis. Learning which companies the manager deals with on a daily basis and for how long, gives us a very clear picture of how central his role is in the life of a musician/performer.

All of the respondents had the same companies around them, namely: distributors, booking agencies, copyright and funding institutions. With the exception of Fabbreschi, which pointed out that for the particular genre that Raggi Fotonici are in (cartoon theme music) they mainly deal with TV channels (who functions as a buyer, ordering them theme songs for their products) and editorial publishers.

"Well of course we work with different types of companies, we work with venues, which I usually there's the company behind it we work with events organizations and then we work with different types of brands or you know

companies like that, in many situations, we are the company in between the artist and the other company, if you you know what I mean, if there's a venue or an event or a brand of whatever so basically it's quite 50/50" (Hietala)

"For the artist manager I guess the most important companies were the record company and publishing company, actually more than one, we only had one publishing but we had more than on record company, it depends, actually my contact to the RC were really good, we would be on the phone daily, publishing company not quite as much, but also close contact, I'd say those were about 30% of the time, because I checked back with them constantly, other companies would be the booking company, that is much less time" (Pohl)

"The most important relationship we have are with distributors, press offices and booking agencies" (Molteni)

"The strategic process is developed as I told you with all the partners that are working with the artists. From distribution physical and digital [...] It's a long process and it takes a lot of time, and one of the main functions of a manager is to ensure that everything goes smoothly between all the parts and that there is synchrony in working towards a common goal. The manager has an important role of coordination and direction, so the contacts are fairly frequent" (Senatore)

From the last quote especially we can understand how central and important the role of a manager is for an artists, and once again we are faced with an alignment of the classical managerial role defined by Drucker (2007) and Fayol (1937).

5.5 Definitions of "talent"

A core question in the interviews probed on how the respondents understood the notion of "talent". This turned out to be really interesting and difficult question.

Earlier, Hatum (2010: p.10) written: "*everyone has their own idea of what the word talent describes or captures.*" The vagueness of the word talent has also been pointed out by by Tansley: "*people are rarely precise about what they mean by the*

term “talent” in organisations and the implications of defining talent for talent management practice (Tansley et al., 2007: p.266). We know for certain though that talent is one of the key motor of any business from Hamel (2007: p.23) “capturing the wisdom of every employee” is one of the key features of “innovative management. ” For Drucker (2007: p.12) “to make the worker productive is, therefore, more and more important [...] It is increasingly a task of management.”

The views of the respondents were also in this instance pretty far away from the Talent Management theory analyzed in chapter 3. Almost all the replies were mainly focused on the ability and skills of the musicians and or artists to capture the attention of the audience, to keep their fame levels and to reach the hearts of people. In couple of instances, after the question, I specifically brought up the definition of talent management as an human resources practise, and while all of them they would agree that it could apply also to the music business, the respondents admitted never having heard of a clear definition of talent.

A small note needs to be done for the interview which were originally made in Italian, because in our native language the word “talento” is rarely used with the meaning of “professional” especially in the Entertainment business (Merriam-Webster, 2019 def. B) but only as a ‘special gift’ to do something (Treccani, 2019 def.2) therefore before let the Italian managers answer the question I had to explain the double meaning of the English word.

"this is a very difficult question, because I think it changes a lot especially depending on which market you are talking about. In our case, we are talking about an independent label, so the definition of talent will be different from the definition of a manager working for Sony or Universal, because they deal with another

type of market. To me, the definition of talent, is when I find an artists that has a good musical production, so I'm talking about demos or already completed albums, and they are a persona which is going to work on a stage, somebody I can build a vision upon, figure which target is going to like them." (Senatore)

"It's a difficult question, how would I put it, some situation are really hard to point out what a talent actually is, I would say that maybe the biggest talent for an artist is to communicate with the people so that people are really interested in the artist if you know what I mean, there's a lots of people who can play an instrument for example, lots of wonderful guitarist or drummers, on this planet but not everybody makes it [...] and I would say that the special ingredient is that you can communicate with people with your music, the lyrics or your music or your image or whatever that's' the main thing. " (Hietala)

"I have a pretty old school view on the word talent, because in my world talent really means someone is especially gifted, I only sign artists who I thought were especially gifted as an artist manager, I do think though that talent is not the only thing you need to succeed, talent is basically the sound of your voice or the ability to have a really good ear for melodies[...].I was never in the industry that sees talent as a warehouse full of people that they can throw on tour, luckily, and I think that's a dummy use of the word, for lack of a more honest use of the word." (Pohl)

The only ones who gave an answer a little bit aligned with the HR competences of the definition of talent were Nicodemo and Paolo Pezzano, the latter which pointed out that even though it is optimal to be surrounded by talented people, it is a strength of a manager to discern each employee stronger suit and have them work on that thing, so to maximize effort and results:

"Surely being surrounded by collaborators or structures where you have talented people inside is the best case scenario, but of course this is not always possible. You can still have quite valuable colleagues or collaborators that have some characteristics that you can use and develop, even if it's just one skill that you can make their strength, so your ability as a manager is to pinpoint that thing that each person is strong at and you have them work only on that. As far as talent for artists goes, weather you're a comedian, or an actor it's clear that talent is fundamental. There are things which are necessary to be on a stage and communicate with people and talent is one of those" (Pezzano)

Nicodemo on the other end, was more focused on smarts and in addressing each artists as a little entrepreneur who needs to have 'eye' in his arrange of talents to get themselves surrounded by the right people that would help them advance in their careers, with the right set of 'talents'.

"Talent is a 360° endeavour when it comes to independent music, you not only need to have musical talent, but need to also be talented in the sense that you need to be smart and surround yourself with people who can help you advance your career" (Nicodemo)

5.6 Special requirements for a manager

In addition to asking about the characteristics of artists, I also tried to find out how the respondents thought about the demands – and rewards -- for acting as a manager. Differing from any other industries, the music business is focused on a very personal and close relationship between the manager and the managed (Allen, 2012). Therefore I was looking to understand if there are a special set of skills needed to be a proficient manager. We have already seen how the definition of management is the same for both classical industry and the music industry (Hamel, 2007; Allen, 2011) but this really all there is to it? Allen (2011) also states in the beginning of his book that:

“As we look at management principles, it is important to understand that the work of an artist manager in the music business is somewhat different from other kinds of managers. The traditional relationship a manager has with the employing company is one that has a reporting hierarchy, and by definition is very structured and “corporate” in nature. Traditional managers use resources of owners to ultimately sell goods or provide services, and in many ways that is what the artist manager does. [...] The relationship between the artist (employer) and the manager (employee) is considerably closer than that of

typical managers in business, and is much more like a partnership. The level of trust and the strength of the relationship between the two are often compared to those found in successful marriages.” (Allen, 2011: p.4)

Therefore it is already clear from the literature that we are talking about a particular type of management style, one where a special bond is formed between the parts, which doesn't resemble at all the classical hierarchy of the other businesses. It is interesting to note, that even though the levels of relationships are quite different, and all the managers pointed out the closest relationship you need to have to both the artists and their music (art) to make the relationship works, they have also agreed that the skeleton, the core base of the management is the same.

"From one side they could be look like each other, for example administration stays administration. Selling stays selling, potatoes or music albums, the core is the sam. And there are some thing that are basically the same. What is not the same is the artistic side, that makes things personal, you can like an artist or not. So it's hard to define if something could be successful,you need to be careful on what you propose and you need a keen eye of the arts that have value to know if they can get through to people. There's a certain finesse involved. And there's the fact that artists are often spoiled, some extremely so" (Molteni)

"Of course you need to have a vision of when do you see a really promising band or artist, of course you need to have a vision of where it could it go, how big can it get. so of course that's a talent a manager should have" (Hietala)

"Interesting question! To be honest I don't actually think it's that much different from running a company, I always try to teach my bands that actually their band, despite the music of course is actually something like a little company that needs to be worked like a company, you need to think business basics to make it work [...] I think flexibility is probably the most important thing, the ability to listen, the ability to negotiate, and the ability to follow through on things you start, and it probably helps if you have a good basic structure. As an Artist manager, I believe you just need the heart for music, in my world, I believe it gives an artist manager or talent manager feels what the artists want to express with the music." (Pohl)

Paolo Pezzano highlighted once again the importance of the relationship between an artists and the manager in two instances:

"First of all, to be a manager of an artists you need to have some qualities, some gifts and some characteristics by default, if you don't have them, you can't do this job. [...] the most important thing in my opinion, is being a positive person, being trustworthy and sincere. You need to be a people person, and make very good impressions on the spot, understanding who you're dealing with right away and make them like you. With the artists, trust is the most important thing, they are leaving their artistic and working life in your hands, and it's not a shop, it's their lives, so there needs to be total trust." (Pezzano)

One interesting point of view here, was the one of Nicodemo, who said he didn't believe in the totalitarian figure of a manager anyway, and believed that managers need to be a polyfunctional figure, who needs to take care of everything all the time:

"I had the pleasure to follow the management of Ciccarelli, who has been for years the guitar player for Afterhours, I have to tell you this, I don't believe anymore in totalitarian figures, like the one of the manager, unless we are talking of very high corporate levels, it is unthinkable to have a manager who for example doesn't take care of social media management as well, or a graphic that is just a graphic. To call myself a manager I took on the mantle of all these roles with passion" (Nicodemo)

We have now a clearer picture of what are the differences and the similarities, between corporate talent management and talent management according to people working in the music business. The core ideas are the same, but the closer relationship that is formed between the manager and the artist make for quite a unique relationship between the two.

5.7 How are management relationships created?

In order to understand the current dynamics of the music business, and the role and need of the manager in the career of an artist, I asked "when do artists usually search for a talent manager (like yourself)?" This question was meant to start digging into the diversification of today's digital-centric industry where artists can directly

access the network needed to publish their music? (Pasbani, 2015) All the respondents here were on the same line of thought: while things have changed from the past -- as we can see from the quotes of Fabbreschi, Lisi, Pezzano and Pohl, nowadays with new technologies and digitalization – it is most common that a band or an artists gets a manager *after* they have reached a level of success that prevents them from self-managing themselves. This trend on these answers also helps us delineate how the digitization has changed the music industry.

"There's no point in particular at some point you just have a necessity, which is when you cannot manage yourself anymore without having great problems. that's at least from my experience at least and the world I'm in. Manager is a necessity that at some points arrives, especially nowadays with the internet fame. I don't think there's a rule anymore, our previous generation we all started with one, when there was a manager which was actively discovering talents or a record companies matching artists and managers to give the musicians a chance on the market, but that is from the past, nowadays there's nothing like that. Unless we're talking about tv talent shows, you win something like that and there's a big company giving you a manager to squeeze you as much as they can, but it doesn't last long, after 6-7 months they come back to small realities either self managed or with smaller companies." (Fabbreschi)

"Nowadays the market is oversaturated, because in the 80's there were three records per year of three artists. Today, between talents show, record companies and self production...because artists today are in their own homes, push two buttons and make a song, put it the distributor and that's it. you understand the market is oversaturated. So much trash, so much competition. So nowadays everybody is looking for a manager" (Pezzano)

"With the aid of technology and the internet, every artists or self proclaimed one has all the chances to show themselves, then somebody comes along and develops, and maybe will have them on bigger and bigger stages, but the figure of the talent scout that goes to clubs to find the new star, is very much romanticized and doesn't exist anymore [...] It starts when there's a reciprocated interest, as I was mentioning before, when the artists understands that they can live off their art, it's the appropriate moment they start to think about delegating technical activities that are ill suited with the creative life. It can be a person (manager) or an agency, but it's best for all parts to have somebody that can do menial tasks like getting out contracts, or checking balances. Because those are a loss of time for the artists who just needs to create" (Lisi)

“I believe ...oh interesting... I believe there are different categories of artists and reasons for why they are looking for a manager, the easiest one is after one is quite successful and just need a manager because they can't handle stuff themselves, it's just too much and if the business side takes over, it just takes so much of their time to actually make music or look after their resources and they can't find the time in between because it's constant, it never stops. And then I think there are two categories of young bands who haven't made it yet, that's the unfortunate category of young bands who think they need a manager to their work for them, those yearly fall for the you know, the price of 'I'll make you a star' management companies I learned with the years to filter those out pretty quickly, but I've met a lot of young artists who thought with the right manager they would break it simply because of a phone call you make, and that's just not how it works. And then, there are the young artists who are willing to learn, who need guidance, who need you know a partner who helps them do what they want to do and those in my world can be really successful.” (Pohl)

“There's always a moment in an artist of band career there's a moment where they actually need managerial help if you know what I mean, usually that's the point when things already start to happen I mean, when there's..it's the same thing with having an agency, having a booking agent for yourself. in the beginning there's no necessarily a need for anybody to help you you actually need it when there's so many shows that it really disrupts your artistic work, if you know what I mean, so in the beginning if you do one show a month, or two shows a month that's not a problem for anybody to handle by themselves, but when there's more shows coming and there starts to be so many productional details and stuff to think about so it's really better to have somebody else to take care of things for you, instead of yourself losing your hair trying to take care of all things.” (Hietala)

These quotes from half of the respondents (as said all of them were on the same page) show a key result of this research. Digitalization has radically changed the music business, songs are easy to produce and distribute, but the moment they pick momentum and the artists starts having to deal with the woes of fame, they still need to relay to somebody else - a manager - to deal with the supervision of their working life as to not take away important time to the creation of new music. This was well illustrate when the respondents talked about an artist having a manager versus being “self-managed”?

Being self managed is possible and feasible in nowadays digital industry, but it becomes increasingly difficult the moment the artist becomes successful, and there is without a doubt a point in time where the evolution goes a tiny bit backwards, and instead of relying on technology to do everything by themselves, artists need to go back to a more classical managerial approach and hire a manager to take care of their career and manage everything else but their creativity on the side. The central point of success for these question, made it natural to switch to the following question as well.

"as I said, there comes a point, if you're doing well where you just need help. If you're doing your job well as an artist you will need help at some point. Tours will get bigger, you will need more money to do your album there's a lot of stuff that needs to do and the longer you're doing it and the more successful you're hopefully going to be, there's just too much work for one person to do, or be good at that, so at some point you're going to have to hire people to help you out and preferably people who already know what they're doing. There will be a point even if they are self managed in the end where they will need help." (Ylinen)

"I really do appreciate self managed artists, even though it goes against what I do, because they need to have the capacity of managing their own time, because selling yourself while still being productive on a creative and recording process is very difficult and time consuming. Time is the same for everybody, so if you're self managed you have to work twice as hard especially when compared to those artists who have an agency backing them up. And for the artists who are actually working with an agency, they need to have trust. They need to trust the agency, because the moment you give your working life in the hands of an agency, you need to trust them" (De Luigi)

"Artists that have a manager, can afford it. They are bigger acts that make enough money to hire a manager." (Pezzano)

5.8 Success

After working through several themes, the interviews zoomed in of trying to capture what makes a manager successful in today's music industry. This also opened a further perspective on thinking about the changes in the field.

Success is the defining factor for the music business (Passman, 2012). For the artists, nowadays all the revenues come from either pleasing the audience or convincing the audience to buy your merchandise. So I wanted to try to dig a little bit deeper both in the meaning of being successful for a manager and also on the timeline of success.

For all of the respondents, the grounds of success hasn't really changed in the managerial life, nor in the artistic life – even if the industry has changed a lot. The only differences are that revenue flows have switched, since we live in the era of digital music and CDs are not something people buy anymore, but all in all, the margins of success have stayed the same throughout the time.

"I think the one thing that has really changed is that nobody is buying records anymore, so that as a scale of success has disappeared in every way, nowadays people measure success with for example streams, and that is easy to measure if somebody has a song that has been streamed one million times usually that's more successful as a song that has been streamed five thousand times, but that's the biggest thing, but on the other side you might have an artist that are sort of internet success and that sort of comes to the position of the record sale. you have an artist that has really much internet hype social media hype and still might get good attendances to the shows so." (Hietala)

"Well, I think the main one is a successful band and as a manager you're only as successful as the band you're managing is at the end of the day." (Pohl)

"the most important thing for a manager is to bring home results. Pick an objective and then reach your goal. Usually with the artists, you plan the career plan and you bring home results. That's the main criteria for the success of a manager. And yes, it is the same as it was in the past. Even though everything is digital, it doesn't matter if the song comes out on Spotify or vinyl, the most important thing is that your product is good and that people react to it." (Pezzano)

"Success for a manager is tied to numbers, having big numbers is surely tied to success. Big concerts, records in radio and charts, that's the meter. Making their artists known and loved. And I would say they are the same as in the past. I think the only thing that changed today are the means on which communication flows, yeah just the means. The way to reach the public is different, but the objective are the same" (Molteni)

Digging deeper into what the digital revolution has brought up in the music business and their first hands experiences with the digitalization of music, what it meant, what changed, we reach the core of this research on. The respondents recognized the change::revenues switched and the economy was disrupted and it took years for people on the Music business to get their bearing back again.

"Tastes are fragmented and choices are fragmented. it's really hard to find what you like on massive channels like youtube, but at the same time it's also easier to get your production out there. You live of millions of crumbs rather than a full slices, they might be less rich and smaller than a full slice, but there's a lot of choice, old style manager might not think about this as enough, but for me is on opportunity for sure" (Fabbreschi)

"Yes, drastically. The forces switch was a mess, in the first years nobody was understanding what was happening and how. All the revenues had disappeared and album sales were dropping. Everybody was scrambling to understand what streaming was and how much they could make off it, all the percentages...7/8 years of complete chaos. It was devastating and really bad. It took ten years to understand that the switch and the fact that the economy was changing" (Pezzano)

"One thing that has been changing is of course that print media has been dying very much which has to do something with social media, because social media is so important that all the conversation go through there and you see there's not so much need for an average consumer to have print media so that's clear, but I think it's just of course things get fractured through social media that's something that you have to be prepared, if you have an exceptionally good song it will get exposure in social media quite quickly because I mean

everybody is sharing the video and stuff, so that would mean that there might be some quicker surprises in success for some artists and it's something that wasn't possible 10 years ago." (Hietala)

"it brought a lot of changes, CDs are not a business anymore. Once upon a time an artists made an album and both the artists and all the people surrounding them were making money off that album. Today making an album is just an instrument to give life to a new musical product. It's just an excuse to say something new, if we take out the big numbers, record sales are very low." (Lisi)

"yes it changed a lot, because as an artist manager you have a deal with a band, you get a percentage of the income, so when people stopped buying the product and started streaming stuff instead it just means that the artists loses a huge percentage of their income and of course I feel that directly. and ovb there are other ways to come up with selling music, we tried selling mp3 on usb sticks right after the concerts but then again it limits the smaller bands because it's really expensive to do that so only bigger bands can actually afford to do that it has made merchandise more important so the value of selling merchandise actually went up." (Pohl)

Despite these narratives of disruption, the respondents saw that eventually the industry found a new balance (Global Music Report 2019; retrieved from: ifpi.org), where some of the old some pleasures stay the same

"It's a big revolution but some mechanism stays the same, the pleasure of listening to a song stays the same no matter when you listen to it. It was a juke box or a vinyl, but the desire was the same. Today is just easier you can do it from your home and more often [...] the basics are the same, writing and playing a song in front of an audience is pretty much the same thing [...] the fruition method changed and there are million of choices, but music is music" (Molteni)

In the new environment, digital sharing platforms and networks play an increasing role, and I also asked about which ones of these are the most important. Having the interviewee talk about their personal relationship with the new platforms gave me an idea about the correlation between old media like CDs and new streaming services and the managers. Even though some manager admitted they were not using them

in their personal life (like Mr. DeLuigi) one of their duties is still to be the connection and the facilitators of the relationship between these platforms and the artists.

Even here the results were quite predictable, with Spotify and Youtube on the podium for most important streaming platform, and SoundCloud being the one that business workers use the most to discover new talents, and sharing files for previews and such. The responses really underlined how digital streaming has become the tool everybody needs to use, no matter how little the revenues from it are. If we take a look at Pohl's answers she says "they broke the artist, but if you're not there, you won't be heard" and I think that says a lot about disruptive and fundamentally changing the online system has been for the music business.

"oh my words... I hate them all, because they broke the artist but we got to the point where you can't get around and simply because if you don't join you won't be heard, so I guess the most important one was Youtube, right from the beginning, and then probably Spotify" (Pohl)

"I'm not extremely technological, but as an audience I use Youtube a lot. I do recognize the strength of Spotify though, I have colleagues that use it on a daily basis but it's not something for me" (De Luigi)

"They surely are Youtube, Spotify, Apple Music which is growing, even dear old Itunes is still going. And yeah these are the ones that are more importance. And yes, they are the same for everybody. Then if we talk about social media, I guess Instagram is the place to go, since Facebook is at this point half dead." (Molteni)

"All the platforms are the same, you need to find the right platform for your project. You need to be cross-medial. Internet is very democratical, you can use it no matter from your budget." (Nicodemo)

"The most important is Spotify, it's an fundamental instruments for sharing and publishing music. Through their playlist it's so much easier to bring an artist on the forefront when compared to other stuff. Even though it's still a double edge blade, because for example if a song end up in a playlist it could have millions of streams, but then the rest of the catalogue doesn't, so there's a fidelization on the playlist and you need to understand how to use it properly. Youtube is also very important, and not having the playlist you can get the people to

follow the artist, there's also SoundCloud, but that's mostly for the business workers" (Senatore)

"At first, my opinion is that we could just ditch the CD right now, in my opinion nobody should release cds anymore, in my opinion is just waste, it creates a lot of plastic that our environment does not need and I understand people will still cling on to listening to cds and I understand the niceness of a physical object, but still I would say that the people who buy cd could really well live without buying CDs, from this we get to of course Spotify is the most important, especially in the scandinavian countries, if you look at the figures how much uses Spotify has in scandinavian countries it's pretty clear that Spotify is the most important then of course it's really handy for us as a promotional tool is really hand to have some SoundCould around, because when an artist is releasing new material and when I try to get things happening with the new album before it's released I have to get the music to people so that they can hear it before the actual release, and in that soundcloud with a sort of hidden link or a password link to the material of the album is really really handy [...] Of course bandcamp is really nice, it's good for bands that don't have distributors, who don't have record labels they can just put it in band camp and people can actually pay for the music if they want.[...]so to my opinion Spotify, Soundcloud, BandCamp those are the most important at the moment." (Hietala)

In contrast to the social media distribution as a change in the terms of success, the respondents still appreciated the power of traditional mass media. It turned out, TV and Radio are still very important according to the managers that I interviewed, with radio especially playing a key role both in the mainstream and the indie industry.

"They are still fundamentals, I think they are fundamentals. Especially radio and TV. Fundamentals. Magazines are also very useful for promotion, but they are not as relevant." (Pezzano)

"so I would say at the moment for the whole industry radio is the most important media, and the radio is so important because artist actually gets pretty good money for getting music played in commercial radio, so that's also really important thing, but for many types of music this mainstream commercial media, traditional media doesn't mean anything because of social media , because of Youtube, so for many artists it really doesn't matter what happens in traditional media." (Hietala)

"tv is super important, well...if you are a good artist and let's say minimum amount of authentic and people like you, you're sympathetic, that makes a huge difference...if people don't like you,it won't do much, then it won't make a

difference if you're on tv, but if people like you it's huge. Huge flow, it can be good for the career." (Pohl)

"I would say that they all have their meaning and music, radio is still very important regardless of the genre, you do want to have your music played on the radio. [...] Tv obviously still has its field, it might not be what it used to be because there's so many tv stations, but if you can score a live on tv it'll still be very influential and for magazines even though people are not reading as much as they used to, in the indie field where it's hard to get any kind of press, anything you can get from a respected news outlet is good for you. In terms of influence all of them are still important." (Ylinen)

This is another extremely interesting result, as it stands to show that the fundamental changes that have shaped the music business in the last years, have only affected part of the practices of the field. They also suggest that radio may have been the only giant left almost untouched. Yes, they became **also** digital, but FM radio is still going stronger than ever and still a very important mean music business and its managers rely upon.

6. Conclusions

Building up this research has been extremely interesting from my point of view, since the starting point was one of the many questions that -- as someone passionate of the workings in the music business -- I have myself found asking many times. It has been a privilege to talk with the many managers in the field I interviewed about their working days and connecting all the dots between practical life and theories. Even though I have started this project with all the passion I had, there have been unfortunately many problems I incurred in, while constructing this research. First and foremost was the lacking literature on the subject. I have been unable to find a

book about music business from a managerial perspective, that dealt with the intrinsic problematic of this peculiar industry, from the point of view of those who work in closest contact with the artists. What I have found and used though, have been books on the proverbial 'know how'; guides aimed at aspiring musicians or aspiring managers; teaching what being a manager in the business means and giving advice; tips and tricks on how to navigate the business, while those books were extremely helpful in some way, it would have been surely easier for academic purposes to have at least one book on the subject, even though it has been extremely interesting to be the first one to navigate this issue. Still relevant for the sources and references was the problem that most of my knowledge on the matter, comes from reading many web-articles on the music business, from first hand experiences at concerts, and as an atypical audience member who is extremely critical and sees everything with a much more clinical eye than the average music listener. Therefore I have had to cross check what I knew and what I lived not only with web articles, but also with journals in the business that could corroborate my experience. Luckily that has been (except for the one case of the in-store signing sessions which seems to be an extremely Italian phenomenon) rather easy after a bit of google and library research.

The results I have come to, are indeed the first scratch on the surface of an extremely underrated topic, are in no way conclusive. More studies on the subjects, with perhaps a better range of interviews carefully selected to cover even a wider range of music scenes and success spectrum could be considered to have an even better understanding of these peculiar relationship and business.

The first point I would like to make as a conclusion, is the one of the connection between a manager and their artists: *The relationship between the manager in the music business and the artist is indeed closer than any other relationships between employer and employee, in all the other businesses.* The little theory I could find had already underlined the complex and very personal mechanics that incur between those two figures in this business, mentioning that the dynamic is not only symbiotic, but mostly similar to the ones found in families and in marriages, everything is shared, everything gets discussed by both parties and to move forward there needs to be total trust and sincerity; the interviews have confirmed this peculiar relationship, one that is possibly not found anywhere else in the business world. Whether is dependant on the fact that both the careers of the manager and the artists are intrinsically connected to one another, or because the workload of the artists at some point becomes just too overwhelming to be able to focus on the creative process and therefore they are compelled to delegate most of their 'normal' tasks to somebody else, that literally begins to take care of every aspect of their lives, it is not sure. Might be both of them or a thousand other reasons why, it is though a very special bond, and it would be interesting to explore this relationship furthermore in psychological studies, to understand for example, if it is connected to all the artistic and creative processes, or if it is only relevant for the music business, for example are actors' and managers in the film industry sharing the same bond?

Music managers are mostly creative people and managing artist is maybe different than managing other things. Another interesting finding, is that the work of a

manager in the music business, while being extremely in line with the business theory and the general idea of what a corporate manager should do, and how they should think, from the interviewed has emerged that the music managers of my sample are very creative people that dread the most common management practises, and are quite uncomfortable with everything addressing a bottom line, while being extremely focused instead on the quality of music their artists is producing and putting out, that the performances are top quality and that everything goes smoothly to improve the career of the artists they have 'under their wing'; music and creativity has proven to be a very important part of their ideology and a powerful motivator when it comes to their jobs, therefore I would say that even though they are business people, they remain fundamentally creative and artistic in their own way. Once again, it would be interesting to do more studies on the subject to see if this peculiarity belongs only to the field of the music business or if other managers of creative industries share this personality traits. A difference could be made between various type of creative industries, to see if this managerial trait is shared also with theater, film industry or paintings.

The word "talent", for the managers coincides with the Tansley (2011) definition, proving that talent management is mostly too corporate for the music business.

Another interesting find from my research is that according to the sample of managers I have interviewed, the word 'talent' is mainly and only significant as to the distinguishing skills that one person has over another, mainly connected with the musical ability, their conception of 'talent' is therefore more akin to the one described by Tansley (2011); Talent management theories though, while still been very

confusing and in need of definition (Hatum, 2011) is for certain not applicable to the relationship of artists managers and musicians; it could be used though as a basis to the understand the functioning of other companies of the Industry, such as record companies and booking agencies which by definition have a more structured and corporate formation, but one would need to be careful about making a clear distinction in that case, because while it is true that major record companies and booking agency work in close contact with music, to them it is still just a product they need to sell, they provide services for a lot of artists at the same time, therefore in a way it might be valuable the presupposition that in that context, dealing with music or dealing with industrial grade concrete, might bring the same results.

Lastly, I come to the answer to main question: *The digitalization has not really changed the way managers manage artists but it has changed the practises they implement.* This means that while an artists is still managed nowadays like it was managed forty years ago, the marketing, promotion, techniques and distribution around them has changed and managers had to adapt to the ever changing environment the music business has brought them, they have had to adjust their strategies and practises to the different revenue streams brought by the different circumstances: concerts and merchandise have moved to the forefront of the revenue flow, the whole industry has come up with a unique way to have people buy the physical CDs, such as signing + photography sessions in malls and CDs shop, where the simple act of buying an original CD from this or that artists guarantees customer to meet and have their picture taken with their idols; or bundle packs, where the CD is sold together with as much merchandise as possible.

Managing artists in the music business is certainly a very interesting area of management that offers diverse challenges uncommon to the other branch of corporate management given both the unique relationship of the manager and the artists and the constantly changing and evolving music businesses, given how little we know about these challenges and what it really means to be a manager in this industries more studies should definitely be done about it, on my side, I will absolutely continue to gather information to try to understand better a world that intrigues me like no other.

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8. Appendixes

8.1 Appendix A

Questions

1. First, could you tell me a little about your work and your career? What do you do and what brought you to this point in your career?
2. I would like to understand what it is like to work as a manager in the music business. Could you walk me through a typical day of work? What would an exceptional day be like?
3. What do you most enjoy about the work you are doing? What do you like least about it?
4. I suppose you must deal with other companies and organisations. Which are most important for working with artists? How much of your time does this take as a percentage of the whole time you are working? For example, is it half your time or only a few hours a week?
5. Most agree that the music business is a talent industry. But it's not clear what that means. How do you understand "talent" in this business?
6. Managing talent is not like managing a factory or running a store. What do you see as the special requirements for being a manager in the music business? Are there special privileges?
7. When do artists search for a talent manager like yourself? I guess they don't all start off with one, do they? Can you explain how this tends to happen, and when?

8. In your experience, what are the most important differences for an artist having a manager versus being 'self-managed'?
9. I would like to understand what creates success.
 - a. What are the most important criteria for success as a talent manager in the music business today?
 - b. What is the same as earlier?
 - c. What is new and different from the past?
 - d. Has the definition of success changed in your experience?
10. The online media system is disrupting traditional approaches to most media companies. Has it been disruptive for your business and this industry?
11. There are a lot of new platforms for music streaming and sharing online. Which are most important for your work? Which are most important for artists' success?
12. How important are traditional mass media in this industry today?

8.2 Appendix B

Respondents names in alphabetical order by surname and background:

De Luigi, Luca: Starts in 2013 as a booking agent for Zen Art, a company born in 2008, which mainly dealt with aiding artists and musicians in fiscal matters. When Zen Art opened their business to promoting live concerts, he started out as a tour manager and back liner. Zen Art deals mainly with the Jazz genre in Italy.

Fabbreschi, Mirko: Starts out as a musician for Italian singers like Tony Esposito and Paola Turci, then casually started composing Cartoon music for RAI, which led him and his band Raggi Fotonici also out of the studio and into live concerts for comic festivals and such. Raggi Fotonici started out with a management firm, but then Fabbreschi took over out of simplicity, due to the reduced dimension of the niche they move in. He also has experience in organizing the Comic Festival in Rome called "Romics"

Hietala, Antti: He started in '94, by booking shows for his first band. Then in 96-97 he joined a non-profit association and started organizing music and arts events in

Tampere area. He also started Djing and promoting some other bands in relations to his events. In 2004 he applied to Polytechnical school, to study cultural management and formed another non-profit association which started organizing an indie music event called Monster of Pop for ten years. He then started working for the Tampere venue Klubi and gained experience there for three years before starting a period of changing a couple of cities. When he came back to Tampere, he started working for Gaea Booking first, before setting up his own company called Alt Management Agency.

Lisi, Luca: Started playing sax, then after two seasons on the Costa Crociere cruise ship, and after meeting a friend who had an agency, in 1999 he started booking live gigs for bands needed on ships and holiday resorts. In 1999/2000 he opened his own agency and has started being the liaison between musicians and hotels/resorts. In 2008 he opens a cooperative that helps artists with their fiscal needs: Zen Art, which opened also a management wing later.

Molteni, Enrico: Starts out as a musician when he was 15. And around 18 he met Tre Allegri Ragazzi Morti which was an alternative rock band just starting out in Pordenone, they became friends and he then joined the band, and started a career as a professional musician. After some years, they formed a label called La Tempesta and started taking care of other artists.

Nicodemo: Started out as a singer songwriter; he participated in a contest that had him play with the Italian singer Teresa De Sio on tour. He continued with other artists, to play as a bass player, while developing his own projects. He opened then a label called XXV (thirty five in roman numbers) which aims to be as cross mediatic as possible, taking care of multimedia project that merge music with other forms of art.

Pezzano, Paolo: He started out as a drummer for some famous Italian Artists. Developing his business side together with his artistic side, he started managing at 27 his first artist: Alan Sorrenti when while playing with him, he noticed that his manager was not representing the artist at the best of his possibilities. Sorrenti gave him trust and his official career as a manager started in 2013, he now manages three quite popular Italian acts.

Pohl, Jennifer: Started in '99 as a sound technician while studying Sociology. She kept being a sound technician for a couple of years, before switching to stage management, she then got hired as a tour manager, formed her own company "Artist Alliances" with her husband that has since worked for bands like Scooter, Sunrise Avenue, Scorpions, Guano Apes, Sarah Brightman and Meatloaf.

Senatore, Alfonso: At the time of the interview he was Booking and manager for the indie Label "Marte", located in Rome; he started on his own before ending up working at the label and has an economical background. Has been in the business for four years and was one the youngest respondents at 27.

Ylinen, Tapio: Started out as a musician, and in 2007 after a conversation with Pauli Lytinen a prominent Finnish Jazz saxophonist, he started his own label: Eclipse Music, with which he has published 15 albums, up until the time of the interview. He also works in radio, hosting his own Jazz program and arranges live shows and concerts for the Jazz artists his label follows.