

## **Reflective Paper**

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In my early days as a musician, I always wanted to know why certain records sold and what worked. During my time at Berklee I attended various keynote speeches, classes and presentations on the music and tech industries. These talks were very eye-opening and really changed my perspective on what the next few months meant for my career.

As a graduate student, I have learned to appreciate the fulfilling and exhilarating moment when my mind engages with an idea and thoughts shared with me. In my early days as a student, I wanted to know the hidden engine behind the music industry, however, I have now realized this would void music of its most noteworthy complexities. Individual interpretations on culture bring varied insights to a work and it is also interesting to point out messages that may not have been realized.

I have always been a thinker, but throughout my graduate degree coursework, I have greatly sharpened my critical analysis skills. Instead of focusing on proposed meanings, I have learned to continuously ask "why" on many different levels. I challenge myself to dig into a piece of information as deeply as possible and unpack every detail to develop a satisfying understanding of what can be made of it. Also, by interacting with various cultures and points of view among my fellow students, I have learned to identify different perspectives and make connections that I had never previously conceived; this helped me develop a deeper understanding of the music industry.

Instead of focusing on what's not being done in the music business, I have learned to continuously ask myself what I can do to contribute; how are my skills and unique perspective helpful. I feel that I have largely expanded my analysis and business skills, but I need to be prepared to work and teach. I challenged myself to go into the next internship/work phase of my life ready for any challenges I may face. Also, by working on various industry real-life scenarios in the graduate program, I have learned to identify different challenges we face and make connections that weave business solutions together; this has helped me develop a deeper understanding of the global industry.

During my undergraduate studies, I became passionate about traditional Ugandan cultural music and started to put forth suggestions for conservation. My Bachelors dissertation was a research paper analyzing the cultural music of that era and suggesting ways in which this heritage can be preserved. For my graduate C.E I decided to concentrate on how these instruments can be recorded and used in a wider context and as part of modern production techniques. The outcome was to bring together, heritage, programming and business.

Throughout the course of this year I have transformed this idea and started doing something totally different. In the first semester, I took the marketing elective which changed my perspective on what's important in a marketing campaign. I've learned that the mind engages with the songwriter's internal perplexities, as much as with the narrative or marketing message. I have also learned to appreciate the key moments when music demand and supply are in sync.

During the second semester, I took part in a data analytics class and this changed my perspective on how I could be more useful to Uganda. I had no prior knowledge of data analytics and was able to earn valuable knowledge on how to analyze big data and many quantitative measures of gathering data; I also gained knowledge on statistical calculations and data processing functions on MS Excel, basic functions on Tableau and understood how to visualize data and give objective insights. I learned so much from individual assignments, and managed to get practice on how to analyze a music genre, how to clean, audit and visualize data sets. I also learned the importance of metadata, data privacy and programmatic ad buying.

This class contributed to my professional C.E project in many ways. An important part of my graduate thesis started to involve data feedback. This means giving artists from East Africa and Uganda consultation, analytics and insights from their data. Understanding the value of statistical calculations, advanced MS Excel functions and data visualization techniques really helped to put my thesis in perspective. I felt more confident going into the last semester that with these extra skills, my professional project would be in a better and more useful place.

Music had always been one of my strengths, but it was challenging to take that initial step past the undergraduate form that had constricted my ideas for so long. Moving past this form, however, has greatly opened my entrepreneurial mindset. My analytical thinking skills are now more complex and involve more layers of understanding because I have learned how to collect thoughts and information in an organized manner. My thoughts are now able to be more complex because I have learned how to sustain a logical argument in an organized manner. Another improvement is my ability to point out multiple complexities within a legal or financial text. Furthermore, learning

how to market records has significantly widened the scope of my capabilities, which has led to more collaborations with upcoming acts.

Throughout the course of this year I have interacted a great deal with my supervisor Tony Woodcock whose insights have been invaluable. I have also consulted with Prof. Alexandre Perrin who helped me understand the ideas I had, and put them into context. Interacting with great counsel allowed me to transform my idea of preservation of Ugandan heritage into a business plan for a digital services company. I still believe in conserving the culture, however this method presented me with more options, more alternatives and pathways to take. Through Marabou Digital I am able to work with various artists to prepare digital marketing campaigns and share insights from their analytics.

My career path has not changed vastly however; I do feel that I've got a clearer idea of how to complete my next steps. Furthermore, learning how my peers felt about various industry issues discussed throughout the year significantly widened the scope of my knowledge and research. My next steps would be to build up my marketing portfolio; fine tune my data analytical skills and practice more; begin to play out a business strategy on how to move to the next short-term goals of my career and how I can sustain the growth.