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Berklee Sessions: COPE Radio Valencia

Berklee College of Music - Valencia

Global Entertainment & Music Business

A Culminating Experience

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Summary

Widely known across the country, Cadena COPE is one of the largest national radio stations in Spain. Coming in at just over two million daily listeners, they broadcast from several locations nationwide; with one in Valencia. An amazing opportunity presented itself when the local station connected with Berklee Valencia to feature live music performances on the radio.


With this knowledge, I approached the Berklee Valencia Communications department head, Amanda Tornel, to express my interest in turning the COPE Radio collaboration into a monthly feature that I would then organize and manage as my Culminating Experience. I wanted to organize an opportunity to showcase the cultural and musical diversity of the Berklee Valencia campus, while at the same time creating an invaluable experience for the emerging artists who are currently attending various degree programs during the term.



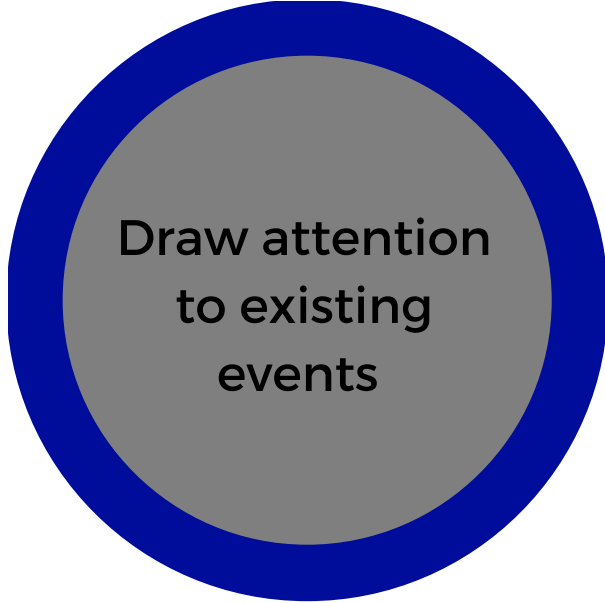
Summary

From this came the COPE Radio and Berklee Valencia collaboration. Over the course of six months I executed six genre diverse live or recorded music sessions to be featured on air with COPE. This collaboration proved to be an invaluable experience for all parties involved. Not only was it enriching for COPE's programming, but it also created a unique performance opportunity for new artists. Each of the student performers commented that they believed that the COPE collaboration was an invaluable initiative to help students promote themselves and their music. Pre-show and post-show social media numbers were collected from each artist in order to observe if any noticeable difference could be determined in connection to the sessions. However, throughout this process I was able to determine that the true value of this collaborative initiative was on a more personal level. For Berklee, organic promotional content, COPE unique and engaging programming, and for the students, an industry relevant resume builder.

Objectives



**Create a Unique
Performance
Opportunity**



**Draw attention
to existing
events**

The talent of Berklee students comes in so many different forms. It knows no specific race, gender, history, genre or beyond. That is one of the amazing advantages of organizing a series like this one with the vast diversity that comes from the music programs offered here. I knew that I wanted to organize a unique performance opportunity that would not only showcase amazing talent, but also the varied genres, backgrounds, and goals of the students who attend Berklee Valencia.

The choice was made to partner with COPE Valencia to provide one Berklee student acoustic act each month with an invaluable opportunity to perform live on Spanish National Radio. Therefore, gaining a real music industry relevant performance experience that they could then add to their artistic resume.



By providing exposure to these emerging musicians, an opportunity is also created to promote different student/faculty/ campus organized initiatives or events that take place throughout the year. This created a foundation for monthly "theme creation," which, by doing so allowed me to segment and plan each monthly session to achieve highest visibility and promotional value towards each event.

Resources

Cadena COPE is one of the largest radio broadcasters in Spain. Their network is wide as well as a strong local presence. By connecting with COPE we provide an extensive platform for Berklee and their students for organic and unique promotion.



For this project, student performers from Berklee Valencia will be utilized for the radio sessions, as well as other guest speakers Staff/Students/Faculty/Fellows. This will provide an amazing performance opportunity for students to grow as professionals, as well as provide an opportunity for Berklee to promote diversity and inclusion on campus and the different programs offered.



My most important contact at Berklee Valencia is the Head of Communications - Amanda Tornel. Amanda proved to be an invaluable asset during the process of planning and coordination. I worked closely with her to communicate with COPE, as well as assist me in streamlining each performance to ensure that each session kept in line with the Berklee brand and showcasing a diverse campus.



Tasks

Starting with a test show in December, a Berklee act was selected to be featured on COPE Valencia's Monday show, "La Tarde," during their segment called "Escenario FM," which hosted our sessions. These students came from various cultural and musical backgrounds, as well as different degree programs within Berklee Valencia. Out of six sessions, four were graduate students and two were undergraduate students. In addition to the student performers, a Berklee faculty/Fellow/staff member(s) were also selected to incorporate an additional dynamic to the show, creating more content showcasing the exciting events happening on campus and the immense talent of the students who come here. As an additional element of the project and in an effort to gather hard data towards the impact made on each artist/initiative, social media data was collected pre-show and post-show.

Session Background and Requirements

The session lineups for each week needed to be planned around key events happening with Berklee Valencia. This would allow for maximum exposure in the Valencian community. Each artist was evaluated based on ensemble size, genre, sound, diversity, social media presence and language. Specifically, I needed a performer(s) no larger than an ensemble of 2-3 who could adapt to the acoustic and Spanish-speaking only requirements of the radio station whilst still showcasing the diversity of Berlee's students.

In order to find student musicians to perform, I created a Google Form application in which the students submitted an artist bio, sample audio and video clips, as well as links to any social media. Students would be approached in person after live performances in a more traditional “scouting” A&R method. I reviewed all of the applicants and made programming decisions with the supervision of Amanda Tornel in the Berklee Valencia Communications department. We met every few months to go over my plans for the coming sessions and she provided me with advice to ensure all session plans aligned with the Berklee brand. The test session was executed in December, upon the completion of which COPE confirmed and locked us in for our Monthly feature through June 2018.



Timeline



| Activities | Start Date | Finish Date | February | March | April | May |
|---|------------|-------------|----------|-------|-------|-----|
| February Performance | | 12th Feb | █ | | | |
| Final CE Proposal | | 15th Feb | █ | | | |
| Share form for March Gather/Record data from Feb. Performance Establish "live listening" or remote Broadcast possibility | 19th Feb | 26th Feb | █ | | | |
| Confirm Artists and faculty for March | | 26th Feb | █ | | | |
| Preparing artists for performance | 26th Feb | 12th March | █ | █ | | |
| March Performance | | 12th March | | █ | | |
| Share form for April Gather/Record data from March Performance | 19th March | 31st March | | █ | | |
| Confirm Artists and faculty for April | | 31st March | | █ | | |
| Preparing artist for performance | 31st March | 16th April | | █ | █ | |
| April Performance | | 16th April | | | █ | |
| Share form for May Gather/Record data from April Performance | 22nd April | 30th April | | | █ | |
| Confirm Artists and faculty for May | | 30th April | | | █ | |
| Preparing artist for performance | 30th April | 7th May | | | █ | █ |
| May Performance | TBD | 7th May | | | | █ |

December: First test session, Discover-i Event
 January: Voices of Love Concert
 February: Faculty feature
 March: DIY Musician Conference Europe
 April: MUSAICO Festival
 May: Women In Music Album Release



Pre-Session Checklist



- Student Performer(s)
 - Acoustic or Recorded Music Capable
 - Spanish speaking (at least one)
 - Solo or no more than 3
 - Social Media
 - Social Media # Recording pre-show
 - Varied Genre from previous session (if applicable)
 - Session Briefing

- Guest Speaker(s)
 - Berklee Faculty/Fellow/Staff/Students
 - Related to an upcoming campus event/initiative
 - Solo or no more than 2
 - Social Media
 - Social Media # Recording pre-show
 - Session Briefing

- COPE Confirmation
 - Confirm Dates
 - Send Artist Bios
 - Send Guest Speaker Bios
 - Confirm any recording requirements



Post-Session Checklist



- Student Performer(s)
 - Send all photos and videos taken during session
 - Day 1 - Social Media # Recording post-show
 - Day 2 - Social Media # Recording post-show
 - Day 3 - Social Media # Recording post-show
 - Day 4 - Social Media # Recording post-show
 - Day 5 - Social Media # Recording post-show)

- Guest Speaker(s)
 - Send all photos and videos taken during session
 - Day 1 - Social Media # Recording post-show
 - Day 2 - Social Media # Recording post-show
 - Day 3 - Social Media # Recording post-show
 - Day 4 - Social Media # Recording post-show
 - Day 5 - Social Media # Recording post-show)

- COPE Confirmation
 - Request Data
 - Receive Podcast link to share



Risks

No on-air translations were a specific request from COPE. It slows down the flow of the interview and can be confusing for the interviewer and audience. Possibly the most difficult aspect of the session planning was making sure that at least one featured student would be able to speak Spanish. While there are many Spanish-speaking students, it does, unfortunately limit the diversity pool, and would made the task of genre variety increasingly difficult. The same issue arose with guest speakers. The selection of Spanish-speaking faculty is far smaller, and will present a potential issue in the future should the show continue, as most Spanish-speaking faculty members have been utilized as guests for the show. An added benefit of the students is that there is the rotation out of undergraduate study-abroad students, which provides additional options for each month

Though acoustic, an effort was made to showcase a variety of genres. At least one performer needed to speak fluent Spanish in order to converse with the show host, Carles, in a casual manner. The session was roughly thirty minutes long of music and conversation where the performers and guests answered general questions about their background, musical influences, as well as life in Valencia and their time spent as a student at Berklee. Most of the performers had never done anything like it before, which made it an exciting learning opportunity for them. Nervous and full of anticipation, each executed a fantastic interview and experience, regardless of inexperience.

December 11th, 2017 Session

Outcomes

Performers: Nan MacMillan & Sam Amos

Instruments: Voices, Guitars, Banjo, Mandolin

Genre: Folk

Guest Speaker(s): Polo Orti & Enric Alberich

Event Promoted: Discover-i Berklee Concert

Performer Selection Reasoning:

- Nan is a Performance graduate student and Sam is a Performance Fellow and have an already established gigging routine. Both speak near-fluent Spanish
- Music is easy-listening and family friendly; good place to start our initial relationship: COPE is a Christian radio station and is owned by the church
- Both are friendly and outgoing personalities from interesting backgrounds - makes for good radio conversation
- Both performing in the Discover-I concert that we plan to promote during the session

Speaker Selection Reasoning:

- Polo and Enric are two of the most-famous faculty on campus
- As the first trial-run of the radio collaboration, it is important to make an impressive impact and hit the ground running - all other programs depend on if this one goes well
- Organizers of the Discover-I concert, know Nan & Sam and can promote the event

This session went extremely well! There was a surprise turn of events as the performers who were supposed to show up after our segment, did not. This worked in our favor. Since Nan & Sam regularly gig together, they had a set of repertoire that was ready to go, and were more than prepared when COPE asked if we would be able to stay and fill the second 30min segment of the show. This reflected great on Berklee, with the radio host event commenting on how impressed he was with our flexibility. From this they approved sessions for us through June. This was the first session and now, knowing what to expect from the questions and structure, I can better meet with students ahead of time and prep them for the session since COPE doesn't provide interview questions ahead of time. Overall Nan & Sam had a great time performing and Polo and Enric were able to discuss the Discover-i performance and their amazing work as musicians and professors at Berklee.



Outcomes

January 29th, 2018
Session



Performers: Eva Villalba & João Bouhid

Instruments: Voice, Clave, Guitar

Genre: Spanish/Brazilian

Guest Speaker(s): John Leavitt

Event Promoted: Voices of Love Concert

Performer Selection Reasoning:

- Eva & João duo the only applicant to Google Form
- Regularly perform and gig together, have upcoming shows to promote
- Contrasting genre and backgrounds from previous session

Speaker Selection Reasoning:

- John is a Scoring for Film, TV, and video games fellow organizing a concert event - Voices of Love
- It was difficult to find a speaker for this session due to the changed schedules of faculty. This is when I made the decision to start including others (besides faculty) to speak on the radio about events being organized.

Performance was great! Eva has a really outgoing personality which was great for the radio and everyone got along really well. Unfortunately the upcoming event did not really match the music that was on the air so note for next time: It will be better and more stream-lined if we make sure that the performers and the speakers line up together. It was initially an issue because COPE ended up changing our pre-set date around, this threw off the faculty speakers who I was looking to feature, as their schedule was not compliant with the new dates for the performance. After this session, I decided that it would be good to start collecting information on the performers' social media accounts to see if their performance gained them any exposure on their professional platforms. Eva and João did not have any professional social media accounts, so it would be good to request that information from future performers. Also for this session, there was a poor response on the Google Form, so for coming sessions I will modify my selection process and begin to also attend performance events and approach people directly.

Performers: Mohannad Nasser & Sergio Martinez
Instruments: Oud, Cajon
Genre: Syrian
Guest Speaker(s): N/A
Event Promoted: Upcoming live performances

Outcomes

February 12th, 2018
Session



Performer Selection Reasoning:

- Sergio Martinez is a Berklee Faculty and well known throughout the flamenco community in Valencia, gigs occasionally with flamenco ensemble member and Performance grad student Mohannad Nasser, who plays the Oud.
- Sergio is also an alumnus of the Berklee Valencia campus, providing opportunity to feature on-air the talent of a faculty member and alumnus
- Mohannad is a very talented performer and Syrian refugee and are able to promote upcoming performance

Speaker Selection Reasoning:

- Sergio is the Performer and speaker in one. Mohannad does not really speak Spanish, so Sergio would do most of the talking.

There were some unexpected variables that came up with this session. Mohannad showed up with an electric Oud that he needed to plug into an amp because he didn't have his acoustic. I had not been told in advance. Sergio also brought a very large hand drum, in addition to his Cajon, that I was not expected. However, the session went well once we figured things out by mic-ing the amp with the desk microphones and COPE was able to manage the volume of the Oud and the Cajon and drums. Once everything was set, Mohannad was actually able to speak some Spanish which improved the overall session.

This was a really cool opportunity to show something really different, luckily it worked out because it could have gone really badly! Sergio and Mohannad both had established artist social media accounts which I recorded and monitored over the next few days.



Outcomes

March 12th, 2018
Session

Performers: Faride Blanco & Martín Levallois

Instruments: Voice, Guitar

Genre: Pop/Singer-Songwriter

Guest Speaker(s): Shana Swayne & David Pozuelo

Event Promoted: DIY Musician Conference Europe

Performer Selection Reasoning:

- I saw Faride and Martín perform at an open-mic night at Ubik Café, a popular gig spot for Berklee students
- Both undergraduates so they could give a new perspective to the Berklee Valencia experience, having come from the Boston Campus.
- Contrasting genre and backgrounds

Speaker Selection Reasoning:

- Shana Swayn is the Global Entertainment & Music Business Fellow, David Pozuelo is a GEMB student working with her on the DIY Musician Conference EU project
- This project is a huge event for Berklee and a really big deal that it is happening for the first time ever on our campus. This is an excellent opportunity to feature exciting content about the projects some students are working on campus

Selecting undergraduate musicians was a good idea! The session went extremely well and COPE was very impressed with the level of talent from Berklee, even from someone of such young age. They made sure to comment about it live on the air. This was one of the best sessions so far in terms of overall quality of conversation and performance. Faride had a lot to say about her time at Berklee. Additionally there was a lot of great feedback from Faride, she had never done anything like this before and really felt like it was a great stepping stone and something awesome that she could put on her artistic resume. This was also a great moment for me because it was a true testimonial that this process has been proving beneficial for all parties involved.

Note: Having trouble getting COPE to send me information about their listeners. We have requested many times, still waiting. Not refusing. Saying yes but then not sending. Decided it would be interesting to see if the engagement was higher on podcasts.



Outcomes

April 16th, 2018

Session

Performers: Andres Llano

Instruments: Recorded Music (DJ/Producer)

Genre: Deep House/Electronic

Guest Speaker(s): Olympia Ornelas

Event Promoted: MUSAICO Festival

Performer Selection Reasoning:

- Andres Llano is a Dj/Producer Music Production & Technology Innovation grad student here and I have seen him perform several times at the Berklee Lagos concerts and Discover-i
- This was a great opportunity to feature something really different NOTE: several months in with an established connection with COPE I felt like it was okay to take a risk on some music that was a little more experimental

Speaker Selection Reasoning:

- Struggled to find someone who could speak to the festival, limited on Spanish-speakers who were involved in the planning, but also hadn't already spoken on the radio
- Olympia is a GEMB grad student working on the committee organizing the Berklee MUSAICO Festival, a huge first-time concert event for Berklee.
- This is a great opportunity to promote this exciting event to the Valencian Community

This Berklee session went way better than expected! COPE really liked how different the music choice was and Carles, the radio host, had a lot of interesting questions about Dj-ing and electronic music in general. Andres was able to shed some light about its true complexity, so it was a real learning experience for the host and hopefully listeners as well. Carles often commented about how shocked he truly was by the diversity of the performers who have been on the air with them from Berklee. Olympia was also able to relay the interesting details about the MUSAICO Festival that was happening later that week in the City of Arts and Sciences. It was a great moment to promote the event and help spread the word about the exciting activities and music for FREE!



Outcomes

Performers: Cristy Alover

Instruments: Voice, Guitar, Recorded Music

Genre: Blues/Jazz/Pop

Guest Speaker(s): Clara Barbara

Event Promoted: Women in Music Berklee Album

May 7th, 2018
Session

Performer Selection Reasoning:

- Found Cristy through Women in Music Events and posts
- Selected for WIM Album and would be featured in the upcoming Album release event
- Has a decent established social media following
- Varied genre from previous session

Speaker Selection Reasoning:

- Clara Barbara is a Berklee Faculty member that has been heading the student committee leading the Women in Music Initiative here on Berklee's campus
- With the release of the WIM Album this week and the release party event, this is excellent timing to promote this initiative at Berklee and to highlight the issues faced by women in today's music industry.

This was probably one of the best sessions overall. It was really awesome to have Clara and Cristy on. Cristy's accompanist turned out to also know a little bit of Spanish, so it was an added bonus to have his input on his time at Berklee as well. Cristy was the perfect person to have on. We played her single off of the WIM Album and she performed one original song, in Spanish, as well. When it was all over she got a little emotional with the realization that she was hearing herself on the radio for the first time. We had a short discussion about the Berklee Women in Music initiative and Clara had some great insight about the WIM movement and had a lot of wonderful things to say about what is happening here at Berklee to bring attention to the importance of WIM. Carles had a lot of really interesting things to say on the topic as well, resulting in a really interesting discussion on air. The WIM Album launch and release party was taking place at the end of that week.



February Results

Mohannad Pre-Show/Post Show

- Facebook: 4,997 / 5,028
- Instagram: 330 / 343

Sergio Pre-Show/Post Show

- Instagram: 938 / 951

March Results

Faride Pre-Show/Post Show

- Instagram: 1,350 / 1,373

Martine Pre-show/Post Show

- Instagram: 938 / 951

April Results

Andres Pre-Show/Post Show

- Instagram: 1,189 / 1,194
- Facebook: 83 / 89

MUSAICO

- Instagram: 89 / 93
- Facebook: 420 / 433



May Results

Cristy Pre-Show/Post Show

- Instagram: 1,138 / 1,138
- Facebook: 160 / 164

Pre-show and post-show social media numbers were collected from each artist in order to gauge if any noticeable difference could be determined in correlation with the session.



Conclusions

This project, at the execution level, immensely exceeded expectations. I couldn't have found better performers. Though stressful at times, everything worked out at the end of each session. If I were to pinpoint an area that I struggled with, I would say it was the actual selection process of the musicians. The Google Form, great in theory, did not get as many submissions as expected. In fact, as was often the case, there were 0-2 submissions per form. This led me to lean heavily on a more traditional approach of seeking out the musicians myself and familiarizing myself with the assets around me, on my own. It was a difficult situation at the time, but it ultimately worked in my favor and it became much easier to connect with the musicians.

Though there are many musicians who perform acoustically, it did present another problem and limiting factor to the selection process. Many of the on-campus musicians perform in large ensembles, as well as using non-traditional instruments for performance. To combat this, I was able to arrange with COPE the potential to feature "live listening" of featured student performers. This allowed a performer(s) that required more instrumentation to still be featured and answer questions. The final two months of sessions took advantage of this new arrangement and resulted in excellent discussion content. April's student feature was an aspiring DJ/Producer who was being featured at the premiere of Berklee's MUSAICO Festival. May's feature was an undergraduate jazzy singer-songwriter who was promoting her featured single on Berklee's Women in Music Album project. COPE was able to play their recorded music, which would have otherwise been impossible due to instrumentation limitations.

Each performer was encouraged to share their social media handles on the show. As previously mentioned, I monitored their social number growth over the five days following the radio broadcast. From this collection, I noticed that it really depended on the platforms that the artists were already working with and their own interaction with their current followers. For example, each artist gave a shout-out for listeners to follow them on their social media. Upon review of follower count, on average, it did not change much in the hours following the show. Contrary, each artist who chose to take advantage of the photos I provided to them of the sessions posted to their pages and stories about the experience. To this their followers responded very well. However, no definitive number growth was noticed out of the ordinary in the following days post-show. Ultimately any significant change of their socials was completely dependent on how much each artist chose to engage with their followers about the radio show event.

Those with higher follower counts, like Mohannad, showed the most significant increase after a week with no other posts that could have potentially skewed the numbers.

This was a tremendous experience for all parties involved, each having gained invaluable assets along the way. Each student performer claims to have added this experience to their own artistic resumes, proud of the experience they have gained from performing with COPE. They attest that it was an invaluable stepping stone to prepare them for future similar experiences.

By result of this collaboration, COPE Radio has decided that they would like to continue their partnership with Berklee in the future and schedule radio sessions in the following school year. It is my hope that this relationship continues for many years to come, continuing to grow and allowing a countless number of students the opportunity to showcase their talents and the many different cultures, genres, and backgrounds that come together to create amazing music at Berklee Valenica.