

BERKLEE COLLEGE OF MUSIC

Culminating Experience – Reflective Paper

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Summary

While training towards being a Crossfit athlete in 2015, I understood the power of music and how it could enhance my workouts, I could truly feel the pulse of music. I started creating playlists for the gym goers and that's how my music journey began. I learned how to disc jockey and started playing to my bedroom curtains. I was inspired by the passion of playing music and the love of entertaining the crowds. In the Indian culture to be a disc jockey was not a kind of a career parents would let their children get into, my parents had a condition if I wanted to continue being a disc jockey I will have to get a full-time job. The only job I managed to like was at an artist & tour management agency. I started being a tour manager, so I could spend time with successful and bigger artists on the road and understand how they would prepare for shows and understanding their day to day life. Soon, I was promoted to being an assistant artist manger where I worked towards managing artists and learning the business aspect of music. In 2016, I attended my first international music conference in Amsterdam called Amsterdam Dance Event. At the conference, I joined several panels where I had no clue what they were talking about, but I still wanted to understand as much as I could due to my passion towards music. After the conference, I understood how big is the global music industry and I wanted to get Indian artists to perform more shows outside India and get their music to be played outside the country since they were incredibly talented. I wanted to change music scene in India and revolutionize the Indian music Industry. I had no idea how I am going to do this, but the first step was to understand the music industry in the best possible way. So, I enrolled at Berklee school of music and I was thankfully granted the opportunity to lay the foundation of that dream by getting accepted into the global entertainment and music business master's program.

My culminating experience is a business plan for my future company, ROBACH, a limited liability company based in Mumbai, India. At ROBACH, we will provide musical artist with

all the necessary tools like management, booking agency and a record label to successfully penetrate the music market, specifically India. We aim to globalize the Indian music community through cross collaborations between Indian and western artists. Unlike other artist management agencies, we handpick artists who are open to the idea of collaborations. We further aim to focus on the management and development of the Indian artists by providing artists with all tools required to be successful. The ultimate goal is to export talented musicians in India to the world and allow western producers to enter the rapidly growing market through cross collaborations. ROBACH has the potential to grow not only globally but also expand further into other management industries. Although the market is competitive, we believe that ROBACH's values and beliefs along with precision in data analysis and finding right trends in both markets, which will allow it to compete and become a threat to the already existing artist management companies and indie record labels.

The Process

After working in different aspects of the industry such as artists & tour manager, production manager, logistics manager and club promoter. I understood the industry vaguely and the way it worked, but that wasn't enough. I always have wanted to be an entrepreneur and contribute towards the music industry and bridge the gap between India and rest of the world. While I started my masters, I took subjects such as Economics of creative industries and understood terms like GDP and how an economy of a country is based on creative industries. I understood contracts and the different agreements between the artists and their teams, such as management agency, booking agency and entertainment attorneys. I understood intellectual property and contracts, producer agreements. I wanted to gain knowledge about each and every aspect of the music industry to be able to start my project. During the music business

seminar in the first semester, I asked the same question to many speakers on how I could export Indian artists and music outside India. I got different answers, such as there isn't enough cultural resemblance between the two nations, there is enough coal already in the west only if the Indian artists produced something very different they would be a chance their music would be accepted globally. I began to brainstorm on ideas that there could possibly be a way on how I could bridge this gap. The answer was cross collaborations. When two artists collaborate with each other, there is cross pollination of the audience which allows both the artists to tap into each other's fan base. The only ways Indian artists could make an impact in the west was through collaborating because no big label or indie label was interested in signing an artist from India. This was obviously an idea but I started to see a collaboration pop up between Marshmallow and a singer from India. I thought this is it. When I returned for the spring semester, the entrepreneurship practicum allowed me to develop my plan from scratch, which was very helpful because making a business plan can be a bit intimidating. The course structure broke up the business plan in to several steps which allowed me to think and work consequently and linearly. I had time to think through all the steps critically, such as the branding and value proposition. I also took the data analytics elective where I understood how data could help forecasting trends and create marketing strategies based on the data. Creating infographics and data visualization can help understand the growth in the artists career and in which direction is the artists moving.

I feel I was very fortunate to have taken the entrepreneurship practicum and worked with Alex Perrin on the business plan simultaneously being advised by my CE advisor Alf Oloffson. This combination really helped me work on the structure in the classroom and gain industry perspective during my monthly meetings with Alf . I started working on my business plan from January to May where I transformed my ideas into a business plan with branding concepts, financial projections, marketing strategies, contracts and licences agreements,

marketing analysis and a realistic plan of action. I am very confident on starting my business when I complete my internship in New York and move back to India.

Results

My culminating experience is my business plan, which I worked in the entrepreneurship practicum and is everything I need to start my company in India. When I came to Berklee or even started my application process my main goal was to revolutionize the music scene in India and I mentioned this in my statement of purpose during the application process. I am happy to see after this amazing year. I not only gain the knowledge on how to bridge the gap between Indian and the west but also have a full proof business plan ready to start the company. India is still a developing market in terms of music and has a lot of potential. The ideas and knowledge I have gained while working on my culminating experience has helped me get an internship in New York at Mtheory. Mtheory offers artist managers a platform to build their businesses and enhance their artists' careers, which is in line with my culminating experience.

The business plan I created during my culminating experience is the base from which all the business plan will evolve in the future. ROBACH LLC represents the evolution of my thinking over the year. The ultimate aim is to export talented musicians in India to the world and allow western producers to enter the rapidly growing market through cross collaborations. It has the potential to grow not only globally but also expand further into other management industries. Although the market is competitive, we believe that ROBACH's values and beliefs along with precision in data analysis and finding right trends in both markets, will allow it to compete and become a threat to the already existing artist management companies and indie record labels.

Next Steps

My future goals involve in completing my internship at Mtheory where I will get a better understanding on how the cross collaborations are done in the practical world along with creating artist marketing pitches, creating artist marketing one sheets, compile weekly artist updates, tracking reports and artist research which help me execute my business plan when I move back to India.

The umbrella name of the company is ROBACH. All brands will fall under this name i.e., *The Booking Agency*, *The Management Company*, and *The Record Label*. The management division will be launched first and once we have signed 2-3 artists. The Record label will be formed to release collaborations with western producers which will eventually lead to the formation of the booking agency when the artist is ready to begin touring.

The record label is going to be registered in Los Angeles in partnership with my classmate at Berklee – Nicole Casino. Unlike other indie label our label is only featuring collaborations between various artists around the world. We are in the process of shortlisting artists who are open to collaborations before we start with our first project.

Once I move back to India the phase one will be signing 1-2 artist who are open to idea of collaborations and trying to find the right match for their collaborations. In the meanwhile work on the development of the artists and providing the artist with all the necessary tools needed to be international and successful. Phase 2 will be getting the artists in a studio and produce the track based on a strategies, we will provide the artists with all the research about the current trends and taste in the market before they get inside the studio. Phase 3 will be working on release strategies and working on a tour for the Indian artist.

Once the three steps are perfectly executed we will see how we can further diversify by signing new artists or work on further collaborations.

Contribution to the Profession

My culminating experience is a business plan which helps both Indian and Western artists enter into the rapidly growing Indian market. The plan helps export Indian artists and their music all around the world. I feel it's the perfect time for western artists to enter the Indian market as we see various Digital Service Providers enter the Indian market and music has become more global than ever. With over 1.3 billion people a lot of money from streaming is being generated from India. ROBACH will not only help the artists but also create job opportunities in various sectors of the industry such as management, booking agents, label managers and data analysts.

The company helps upcoming and talented musicians to produce a record based on a strategy which will help them tap into both the markets. It also provides a platform for new talent to be nurtured and developed. The company promotes cross collaboration of western and regional music in India. It allows music producers around the world to enter into the biggest and fastest growing market, and at the same time give an opportunity to Indian artists to perform/play outside India. It provides Indian artists a medium for their music to be heard all around the world. It would be correct to say it globalises the Indian dance music community. Many talented artists cannot afford a marketing campaign, and also have no knowledge on how they can distribute, licence and publish their recordings. My company can take care of this and let the artists focus on the music.

The company has three divisions which help the artist make his record based on a strategy, licence and distribute his record, market and manage the artist and have a live event for the artist to do his own album launch, one stop for everything.

Now that I know how I will market and launch the company because of the knowledge I have acquired at Berklee. I have a clear idea of what my business plan really represents. With an idea of revolutionizing the music scene, I finally have a blueprint in place which will help me execute my ideas and hopefully help the artists and the Indian music Industry.

Personal Impact

My time at Berklee has been the best year of my life. I consider my acceptance in this program a blessing and I have nothing but gratitude towards the program directors, faculty and staff who gave me the opportunity to study and develop my thesis in the best possible setting. This year has been life changing, to say the least. I was able to move forward in my dream of revolutionising the Indian music industry with a full business plan. Also staying halfway across the world, making new connections, learning a new language, making new friends and experiencing a culture very different from mine has been nothing but a beautiful journey that has led to a major personal development in me as a person. The amount of knowledge I gained in this one year was intense and extremely challenging. However, I am forever thankful and grateful for this opportunity.

Coming from an Indian family where music or music business has never been an easy career path for children to pursue, I am thankful to my parents for giving me the opportunity and financial support to pursue my dream and to Berklee for helping me bring this dream to reality. My culminating experience and master's program is a symbol of hope to other young people who think their journey is unreachable. I am living proof that no matter where you come from or what you think is too difficult, you can always rise above unfavourable circumstances. This year has not been easy, from the initial visa process to keeping up in class with assignments, I have been often thrown in the deep end to get the best possible

results. All the sleepless nights and hard work are finally paying off, and now I am able to prepare a business plan through the culminating experience as a strong base of my career.