

The **Marketing Superstar Award** honors a marketing campaign that was innovative and thought-provoking. Candidates can be from any sector of the industry and campaigns can be physical or virtual.

## Submission #1

### **U2-UV: AR Fan Experience Campaign | U2:UV Achtung Baby Live at The Sphere**

*The Current Sea*

[davidbenjamindecristofaro@gmail.com](mailto:davidbenjamindecristofaro@gmail.com)

Collaboration between The Current Sea with Immerse Lab, Full Stop Management, and Instagram. The campaign consisted of developing an interactive Augmented Reality fan experience on the world famous “Welcome To Las Vegas” sign for U2 to connect with their fan community while marketing their residency at The Sphere and their new single, “Atomic City”. The creative studios worked together to integrate the experience for the band's Las Vegas audience through Instagram’s Spark AR platform. The deal was arranged by top music executive Irving Azoff and his son Jeffrey of Full Stop Management’s team and ran for the entirety of the band’s residency as well as their immersive film run. The total attendance and engagement numbers were 663,000 people (roughly six times the attendance of Coachella) grossing \$244.5 million from tickets sold, and reportedly more than a quarter of a billion dollars in total revenue at \$256m million. The residency ran for 40 shows total, 25 shows from September to December in 2023 including dates they added to scale to the demand and number of submitted ticket requests, plus a 15concert extension into March 2024.

Additional Links:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cD52pk6-UWqLevi6qPxEHJuML\\_6T91FM/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cD52pk6-UWqLevi6qPxEHJuML_6T91FM/view?usp=sharing)

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David Benjamin De Cristofaro, The Current Sea  
davidbenjamindecristofaro@gmail.com | 7742780821

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## Submission #2

### George Straits's "Cowboys And Dreamers"

*Universal Music Group Nashville*

tara.master@umusic.com, helen.mayer@umusic.com and gary.keffer@umusic.com

Helen Mayer came up with the idea of involving veterans creating art pieces inspired by George Strait's recent album "Cowboys And Dreamers" nearly a year before it came to fruition in a brainstorm meeting and worked tirelessly alongside Tara Master to make the dream become a reality. UMG Nashville partnered with the local organization CreatiVets to allow wounded veterans to heal through the power of music - in this case, each individual veteran was given an acoustic guitar and a specific song off George's album "Cowboys And Dreamers." They used various mediums and created original pieces - some that required hundreds of hours worth of time spent on these pieces! Universal Music Group Nashville launched the initial exhibit around George's album release in Nashville, but then also took it on the road with the help of Gary Keffer to Las Vegas' Fontainebleau. There is a writeup with more info here: <https://www.reviewjournal.com/entertainment/entertainment-columns/kats/george-strait-inspired-display-of-veterans-art-opens-on-las-vegas-strip-3222648/>

I work daily with these marketing gurus and can confirm that this was not only a wonderful campaign to watch unfold, but it was incredibly powerful to be in the room with the veterans themselves showcasing their work with such pride. There is also a video that was shown at the initial event that I can track down if this moves to the next round of voting that showed the veterans actually making the pieces. I assure you there was not a dry eye in the room that night. George Strait is a veteran himself and was proud to be part of this inspiring activation for our wounded veterans.

Additional Links:

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Leah Ducey, Universal Music Group Nashville  
leah.ducey@umusic.com | 2174172189

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### Submission #3

#### **\$uicideboy\$ New World Depression**

*The Orchard*

roliver@theorchard.com

\$uicideboy\$ released their 4th studio album New World Depression, we worked to engage their loyal following and reach new audiences alike. The album delves deep into a tumultuous psyche, portraying a world riddled with inner demons, existential crises, and a stark defiance of societal norms. The album premiered at No.5 on the Billboard 200 and No.1 on the Billboard Top R&B/Hip-Hop Album Chart.

Lyric and official music videos supported the album's themes, while the North American Grey Day arena tour brought it to life on stage. Promotional efforts included trailer content, mysterious posters hung by college reps highlighting bold song titles, and an anti-marketing strategy featuring artist-led comments and fan-led TikTok trends to drive engagement. An indie store sweeps campaign also collected newsletter emails while boosting sales of exclusive New World Depression physical products.

The digital ad rollout focused on pre-order signups, driving single streams, and boosting album visibility across key global markets. With strategies targeting core fans and lookalike audiences. Spotify Marquee and Showcase also drove streams to the album across less engaged and prospecting fans. Out-of-home (OOH) efforts included static billboards in LA and Chicago, digital placements in NYC and Denver, and building projections on release night.

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Renee Oliver, The Orchard  
roliver@theorchard.com | 3474102798

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#### Submission #4

##### **Kalsea Ballerini PATTERNS**

*The Orchard*

roliver@theorchard.com

PATTERNS, the 15-song follow-up to Kalsea Ballerini's GRAMMY-nominated ROLLING UP THE WELCOME MAT showcases the next chapter in a life completely embraced. Beyond her "Cowboys Cry Too" duet with alternative sensation Noah Kahan, she explores what it means to move on, fall in love, stay in love, hate love, exhale love - and face her own patterns, good and bad. Atmospheric, sunny, rhythmic and whispered, PATTERNS balances self-discovery with an album one can blissfully surrender to.

The marketing campaign embraced the themes throughout the record and amplified fan interaction through creative content strategy, direct marketing efforts, college marketing reps, effective tactics focused on super-fans, stunning D2C offerings boosted by engaging visual ads, artist unboxing videos, in-person fan events and more. Fans related to Kalsea's lyrics and storytelling in their own lives, sharing their reactions and responses to song teasers, new visuals and collecting merch and vinyl leading up to release. The pre-save campaign generated over 150,000 pre-saves, the highest the artist has had to date. Days following the PATTERNS release, Kalsea headlined a sold out Madison Square Garden where fans were already singing along to the new album.

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Renee Oliver, The Orchard  
roliver@theorchard.com | 3474102798

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#### Submission #5

##### **MF DOOM - MM..FOOD (20 Year Anniversary)**

*Rhymesayers Entertainment*

emily@rhymesayers.com

<https://vimeo.com/1051593070/3f8f58d80c?share=copy>

Additional Links:

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[https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity\\_forms/247-d46d8bb0a9119dc49a3dc3dc270946b1/2025/01/Mm-Food-Awards-Recap.pdf](https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/247-d46d8bb0a9119dc49a3dc3dc270946b1/2025/01/Mm-Food-Awards-Recap.pdf)

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Emily Williams, Rhymesayers Entertainment  
emily@rhymesayers.com | 2489901497

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## Submission #6

### **Sony Music Now Spanish Language Version**

*Legacy Recordings & FanMail Marketing*

walter.gross@sonymusic.com

Legacy Recordings, Sony Music's catalog division, has been running the highly successful Sony Music Now newsletter since 2020, leveraging it to promote frontline releases and deepen fan engagement. Recognizing an untapped opportunity within their email database, the Sony Music Now team collaborated with FanMail Marketing in early July 2024 to launch a Spanish-language version of the newsletter. This initiative was designed to better serve Spanish-speaking fans, an underserved segment with enormous potential.

FanMail Marketing worked closely with the Sony Music Now team to develop, design, deploy, and continuously optimize this campaign. The launch featured a simple yet effective opt-in strategy: a Spanish-language banner at the bottom of the English-language newsletter, inviting fans to subscribe to the Spanish version with one click.

The results were remarkable. By December 2024, the campaign had achieved an astounding 4,039% growth in the Spanish-language subscriber base, making it the newsletter's most engaged audience segment. This achievement was amplified by deliberate messaging adjustments to resonate with the Gen Z U.S. Hispanic population. The newsletters blended English, Spanish, and Spanglish slang to create an authentic and relevant voice, strengthening connections with this audience.

The collaboration didn't stop with subscription growth. FanMail Marketing and Legacy Recordings curated Spanish-specific content to sustain and enhance engagement, including artist spotlights, playlists, tours, and social media posts. The campaign energized a previously dormant segment by leveraging the vast Sony Music catalog, platforms, and content, proving the potential of targeted messaging and personalized experiences.

### **Why This Campaign Deserves Recognition**

This campaign stands as a shining example of innovative and audience-first marketing. It used data-driven insights to unlock the potential of an underutilized segment, resulting in exponential subscriber growth and engagement. By tailoring content and communication to the preferences and cultural nuances of the Gen Z U.S. Hispanic audience, the campaign delivered both measurable results and a deeper emotional connection with fans.

### **Ongoing Efforts and Future Vision**

The success of the Spanish-language Sony Music Now campaign has paved the way for further exploration of dormant audience segments. Legacy Recordings and FanMail Marketing plan to continue leveraging insights from this initiative to grow and engage audiences based on genre, location, language, and interests. The learnings from this project will guide future strategies to explore, curate, and

monetize segments with untapped potential, solidifying Legacy's position as a leader in innovative and inclusive marketing.

## **Conclusion**

The Spanish-language Sony Music Now campaign showcases how combining strategic segmentation, personalized messaging, and collaborative execution can create remarkable results. By energizing and monetizing an underserved audience, Legacy Recordings and FanMail Marketing expanded their reach and set a standard for culturally resonant and innovative marketing strategies.

Additional Links:

[https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity\\_forms/247-d46d8bb0a9119dc49a3dc3dc270946b1/2025/01/SonyMusicNow-EarlyCampaignExample-English.png](https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/247-d46d8bb0a9119dc49a3dc3dc270946b1/2025/01/SonyMusicNow-EarlyCampaignExample-English.png)  
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Hannah Swisher, FanMail Marketing  
hannah@fanmailmarketing.com | (513) 444-4000

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## Submission #7

### **Brazilian Listenership Campaign**

*Round Group & Fourth Pillar PR*

[hannah@fourthpillarpr.com](mailto:hannah@fourthpillarpr.com)

“Round’s work on the Brazilian artists has been outstanding and quickly noticeable in our internal consumption reports. They have created a previously non-existent social media space where Brazilian music is discussed and presented daily to the US market. A key factor in the project’s success was Round’s deep commitment to understanding the local music and culture, which included an immersive trip to Brazil.”

- Marcelo Naritomi, Director of Data & Insights at Sony Music Entertainment Latin.

5020 Records, a Miami-based division of Sony Music and a recording studio and creative hub for the Latin music industry, tasked us with expanding the listenership of their Brazilian artists among U.S. audiences through UGC platforms.

5020’s roster spans frontline and catalogue artists, covering mainstream genres alongside regional Brazilian styles such as Pagode, Sertanejo and MPB. With an estimated 1.6 million Brazilians living in the U.S. and a rapidly growing appetite for Brazilian music, there was significant potential for Round to outperform on this brief. The campaign was a huge success.

Throughout our eight month campaign, we implemented a test-and-learn methodology to gather insights at scale across 5020’s diverse roster of artists and songs. This approach enabled us to establish benchmarks; predict campaign success based on early engagement metrics; and optimise our client’s marketing spend with much greater confidence and impact.

The results were impressive and delivered a measurable impact on 5020’s core business metrics:

2,000 pieces of content were generated, amassing over 77 million views and 4.7 million likes.

5020 saw a 16.1% increase in listeners on Spotify U.S., with the client reporting a 16% rise in streams as a direct result of our campaign.

We are proud to submit this campaign, which exemplifies our deep understanding of local and regional music trends and our ability to scale them effectively to reach global audiences.

With this project, we took a pioneering approach to content and creator marketing, focusing efforts on fostering long-term fandom. By leveraging innovative tools and strategies and deploying our proprietary technology, we were able to activate micro-creators, collaborate with creators in person, and harness authentic fan engagement.

The strategic approach we took to this campaign, showcasing our diverse capabilities across content creation, creator activation and data-driven strategy, resulted not just in double digit engagement metrics, but to more lasting and powerful community building.

Additional Links:

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Hannah Mollet, Fourth Pillar  
hannah@fourthpillarpr.com | 7540354835

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## Submission #8

### **Nationwide Sub Pop Records Campaign at Barnes & Noble**

*AMPED Distribution, Sub Pop Records, and Barnes & Noble*

Jocelynn@AMPEDDistribution.com

I am nominating the Nationwide Sub Pop Records Campaign at Barnes & Noble for The Bizzys 2025 Marketing Superstar Award due to its innovative approach, successful integration of physical + digital marketing channels, and remarkable results that demonstrated the campaign's ability to resonate with both music enthusiasts and a wider consumer base.

The campaign, which ran from October 2, 2024, to January 5, 2025, was a bold collaboration between two iconic brands: Sub Pop Records and Barnes & Noble. The campaign focused on the physical music format in an era dominated by digital streaming and featured six Sub Pop limited edition color vinyl variants (sold exclusively at Barnes & Noble) along with an exclusive Sub Pop/Barnes & Noble branded tote bag. During the event customers who purchased any Sub Pop album or CD at a Barnes & Noble retail location received this collectible tote bag as a gift-with purchase (while supplies last). One of the campaign's tentpole exclusive albums was Suki Waterhouse's *Memoir of a Sparklemuffin*. Concurrently during the month of October this album was one of Barnes & Noble's Album Of The Month titles.

What set this campaign apart was its multi-faceted strategy featuring custom in-store signage and leveraged collaborative social media (Sub Pop Collaboration - <https://www.instagram.com/p/DA3t4NLxc-A/>) efforts (Barnes & Noble email marketing, and Barnes & Noble online visibility). These efforts were paired with a targeted publicity campaign, press release and press materials surrounding 16 new Barnes & Noble stores' grand openings that aligned with the campaign run dates. Sub Pop provided these stores with an autographed Suki Waterhouse or Father John Misty exclusive album as one of their premium giveaways. By combining both physical and digital engagement tactics, the campaign effectively connected with a diverse audience of music lovers and collectors, creating an immersive and highly engaging shopping experience.

The success of this campaign is further highlighted by the enthusiastic support of the key stakeholders involved. Crissi Bariatti, Senior Merchandise Manager, Music & Video at Barnes & Noble, noted "Our goal in the Music Department at Barnes & Noble is to offer great music that our shoppers would never find in other national retailers and to give those artists and bands the attention they deserve" and Jon Strickland, Head of Sales at Sub Pop Records, emphasized the campaign's success in connecting fans with the tangible experience of purchasing a physical record "This partnership with Barnes & Noble is all about Sub Pop's single-minded pursuit of connecting fans with physical records. In a world gone virtual, we love the fact that there are Barnes & Noble stores in neighborhoods everywhere where fans can go in and put their hands on a vinyl LP! Especially a SUB POP LP!"

Ultimately, this campaign not only achieved significant sales increases, Vinyl store unit sales increased +40.7% and CD store unit sales increased +118.46% in 622 Barnes & Noble stores but also set a new precedent for marketing in the music retail space by creatively blending nostalgia, exclusivity, and

community engagement. For its innovation, impact, and thoughtful execution, I am proud to nominate the Nationwide Sub Pop Records Campaign at Barnes & Noble for The Bizzys 2025 Marketing Superstar Award.

Additional Links:

[https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity\\_forms/247-d46d8bb0a9119dc49a3dc3dc270946b1/2025/01/Sub-Pop-Records-and-BN-Exclusive-Marketing-Campaign-BizzyAwards.pdf](https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/247-d46d8bb0a9119dc49a3dc3dc270946b1/2025/01/Sub-Pop-Records-and-BN-Exclusive-Marketing-Campaign-BizzyAwards.pdf)

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Jocelynn Pryor, AMPED Distribution  
Jocelynn@AMPEDDistribution.com | 3107380845

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#### Submission #9

##### **Wilson Fan Engagement**

*mtheory and OOO Management*

ed@mtheory.com

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sf1J2D-V0QQ>

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Ed Rivadavia, mtheory  
ed@mtheory.com | 9172870291

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#### **Submission #10**

##### **Ticket Time Machine™**

matt@TicketTimeMachine.com

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xCUXepK722U>

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Matt, Ticket Time Machine™  
matt@TicketTimeMachine.com | 9545925144

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## Submission #11

### **The Music Industry Lives Here (TMILH)**

*Downtown*

ecordell@downtownmusic.com

In September 2024, Downtown launched its largest and most ambitious brand marketing campaign to date: The Music Industry Lives Here (TMILH). This multi-channel, multi-year project features nearly 100 artists and songwriters across a wide-ranging digital campaign - including John Lennon and Yoko Ono, Tori Amos, The Hives, and Yoss Bones - alongside interviews with over 50 clients globally.

Spanning over a dozen global locations and multiple languages, TMILH celebrates Downtown's exceptional client base across its four divisions, aligning those divisions under one banner for the first time and positioning Downtown as the true home and partner to the music industry. By spotlighting its impact and influence through its diverse roster, the campaign underscores Downtown's commitment to fostering creativity and independence.

Since its launch, Downtown has published 16 in-depth, exclusive interviews with artists and clients such as Abbey Cone, Big Yellow Dog, Giant Music, Chris Moreno, and Jordan Keller. These interviews celebrate their journeys in independence, sharing valuable insights and advice to inspire the broader music community. The campaign had more than 300k views in its first three months and has seen over 1M impressions since its launch.

The digital campaign is also paired with real-world moments, including limited edition merchandise drops in partnership with some of the world's most celebrated graffiti and street artists. The first saw Downtown partner with OurTypes, one of the world's most renowned international art studios and online galleries. For the first of its drops, they welcomed pioneer and one of the most successful letterform artists in the world, Ben Eine. Eine has partnered with Banksy and collaborated with Louis Vuitton; his international acclaim was further heightened when the UK Prime Minister David Cameron gifted his 'Twenty First Century City' artwork to President Obama.

As part of TMILH, Downtown also introduced its first-ever group-wide newsletter, open to the entire music industry. This newsletter, which now reaches over 1500 people, delivers exclusive news, artist features, and unique opportunities from Downtown, creating a platform for deeper engagement and collaboration across the industry.

Additional Links:

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[https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity\\_forms/247-d46d8bb0a9119dc49a3dc3dc270946b1/2025/01/NOTE-BOOK-ARTWORK-A3-Logos-1.png](https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/247-d46d8bb0a9119dc49a3dc3dc270946b1/2025/01/NOTE-BOOK-ARTWORK-A3-Logos-1.png)

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Emma Cordell, Downtown  
ecordell@downtownmusic.com | 447875932859

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## Submission #12

### **All Time Low 20 Year Celebration**

*Alchemy Artist Services x Photo Finish Records*

KP@alchemyartistservices.com

Alchemy Artist Services x Photo Finish Records collaborated on a catalog marketing campaign to celebrate twenty years of All Time Low. The central goal of the campaign was to amplify excitement from core fans to re-engage lapsed listeners, increase first week streams of Forever Sessions Vol. 1, and facilitate re-discovery of the band's catalog leading up to the re-release of nine of their greatest hits. The team leveraged organic Spotify, Instagram, and YouTube tools to engage the DSP and social algorithms ahead of the first single release and ran simultaneous "easter egg" and fan engagement campaigns to keep fans engaged through street date. Our campaign resulted in 1M new Spotify monthly listeners and 2.2M re-activated monthly listeners ahead of street date, helping drive the album to #7 on the Spotify UK Top Album Debut chart and to accumulate 15M world wide streams since its late-August release. By dropping hints in the existing Spotify discography playlist and driving fans there with clues, we grew the total number of playlist followers by 212%, increased saves across the catalog by 22% and increased streams across the catalog by 12% in the first 28 days post-release. Through increasing total monthly listeners, re-activating lapsed listeners, and bolstering the following of the discography playlist used to promote all new releases, the band has a re-engaged audience and playlist destination to continue to drive catalog streams while promoting each new release.

#### Additional Links:

[https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity\\_forms/247-d46d8bb0a9119dc49a3dc3dc270946b1/2024/12/Alchemy-Artist-Services-x-Photo-Finish-Catalog-Marketing-Campaign.pdf](https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/247-d46d8bb0a9119dc49a3dc3dc270946b1/2024/12/Alchemy-Artist-Services-x-Photo-Finish-Catalog-Marketing-Campaign.pdf)

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Kaitlyn Parmenter, Alchemy Artist Services  
KP@alchemyartistservices.com | 6154064180

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### Submission #13

#### **Coldplay's "Moon Music"**

*Warner Music Group & Parlophone Records*

jalen@styngnr.com

Coldplay's "Moon Music" campaign exemplifies innovative music marketing by integrating the album into digital platforms and interactive experiences, engaging a diverse global audience.

#### **Digital Integration and Fan Engagement**

The campaign strategically utilized popular digital platforms to foster fan interaction. On TikTok, Coldplay launched an exclusive in-app interactive experience, inviting fans to explore content, participate in challenges, and earn a Coldplay-themed profile frame, thereby encouraging user-generated content and amplifying the album's reach. Simultaneously, the band ventured into the gaming world by collaborating with Roblox, integrating "Moon Music" into existing games, offering themed experiences and virtual items, and reaching younger audiences through gamified interactions.

#### **Innovative Promotional Strategies**

Demonstrating a blend of traditional and modern marketing, Coldplay made a surprising appearance on the QVC shopping channel to promote "Moon Music." During this segment, they performed songs from the album and introduced merchandise inspired by the album's artwork, such as a special toaster and tea set, showcasing their willingness to explore diverse promotional avenues and connect with a broad audience.

#### **Sustainability and Environmental Consciousness**

Aligning with their commitment to sustainability, Coldplay released "Moon Music" as the world's first album on a 140g EcoRecord rPET LP, with each copy made from nine recycled PET-plastic bottles. Additionally, the standard CD editions were produced on EcoCDs, created from 90% recycled polycarbonate, underscoring the band's dedication to environmental responsibility and setting a precedent for sustainable practices in the music industry.

#### **Cultural Integration and Global Reach**

Further extending their cultural impact, Coldplay partnered with FC Barcelona, featuring the band's logo on the team's jerseys during a high-profile match, promoting the album and demonstrating the band's ability to integrate their brand into diverse cultural arenas, thereby reaching a global audience.

Coldplay's "Moon Music" campaign was engaging for audiences across various platforms and media, amplifying the album's reach, and reinforcing the band's commitment to global cultural engagement.

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Alex Tarrand, STYNGR

Alex@styngnr.com | 253-709-0704

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#### Submission #14

##### **Ni/Co's "on purpose"**

*Innovo & Symphonic Distribution*

sam@innovomanagement.com

Ni/Co's rollout of "on purpose" leveraged unique creative marketing in specific niches to win. We targeted romance and wedding niches to release this romantic pop ballad. The artists original content took off as we lent into narrative storytelling. This resulted in us doing a three-pronged approach to how we pushed it out. The first was a hyper-targeted influencer marketing campaign ran by Innovo where we had couples creators post "love montages" to the sound on TikTok. This resulted in over 18,000 video creates and millions of organic views. Alongside this, we had our distribution partner Symphonic get gratis ads for Meta & TikTok and run niche advertising targeting romance, weddings, engagements, anniversaries, valentines day, etc. We noticed a huge uptick in people saying they were planning to use the song as their first dance song at their wedding. Using social listening, we then rolled out ancillary versions of the record with an acoustic version and a wedding version on streaming platforms. This helped us to sustain and elongate the moment that was happening without continuing to push the exact same content over and over. This resulted in over 66M views on TikTok & Instagram, creator reach of over 50M, 18,000+ social media UGCs, #2 and #7 charting on the Spotify viral charts in Nigeria and South Africa, over 10M streams across Spotify, Apple, and YouTube, editorial on every DSP, and charting on Shazam. All independent.

Additional Links:

[https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity\\_forms/247-d46d8bb0a9119dc49a3dc3dc270946b1/2024/11/TikTok-Data.jpg](https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/247-d46d8bb0a9119dc49a3dc3dc270946b1/2024/11/TikTok-Data.jpg)

[https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity\\_forms/247-d46d8bb0a9119dc49a3dc3dc270946b1/2024/11/Spotify-Charts-Data.jpg](https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/247-d46d8bb0a9119dc49a3dc3dc270946b1/2024/11/Spotify-Charts-Data.jpg)

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Sam Saideman, Innovo

sam@innovomanagement.com | 6789941528