The Impact of Social Media on Touring and Live Performance

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Abstract:

The concept of Social Media is at the forefront of the minds of many music industry professionals today. With its ever-growing popularity among casual internet users as well as its increasing role in the successes of musicians world-wide, social media has seemingly become a remarkably profitable resource for the music industry.

Sites like Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter have made it possible to reach hundreds of thousands of people about music and about the artists that create it. As these sites have evolved, so too have their uses in the careers of many music industry professionals.

Social Media has fashioned a direct link from consumers to their favorite musical groups, giving them immediate access to tour information, ticketing links, and a wealth of other relevant information. With the decline of record sales as a dwindling source of revenue, artists are continually seeking alternative streams of income. Artists have begun making profitable use of these sites by redefining the artist-fan relationship, linking to a variety of applications, and creating an exceptional outlet for music discovery, in an effort to capitalize on the direct accessibility of their fans, and ultimately, bring in revenue from them.

This research initiative will explore whether or not the explosive popularity of social media has had a significant impact on the touring and live performance industry for musicians. Throughout this document, I will begin by describing the evolution of social media including its historical context and purposes, continuing into an exploration of how musicians and industry professionals have begun to capitalize on the opportunities provided by such sites, and conclude with an analysis of the effectiveness of social media in whether or not it has had a significant impact on the industry of touring and live performance.
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Introduction

There is no question that the role of the tour as an element of an artist career has changed significantly since the birth of the digital age. Whereas the tour and live performance used to be a primary promotional tool in selling an album, a tour is now one of the, if not the most, significant products that bands sell. As the digital era took hold, the physical recorded album became obsolete, forcing a change in the business model.

Social media, with its expansive reach and ever-evolving features, has earned its place amongst the most important music business tools today. The concept boasts explosive growth and popularity among fans, bands, and industry professionals alike. Its increasing role in the successes of musicians world-wide remains at the forefront of the minds of many industry professionals as they continue to seek ways to bring in new fans and ultimately, revenue for artists.

With the decline of record sales as a dwindling source of revenue, artists are continually seeking alternative streams of income. Sites like Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter have made it possible to reach hundreds of thousands of people about music and about the artists that create it, emphasizing the importance of the artist experience and transforming it into artists' most profitable income stream.

With such resources in place, artists have begun making use of these sites by redefining the artist-fan relationship, linking to a variety of applications, and creating an exceptional outlet for music discovery. Social Media has fashioned a direct link from consumers to their favorite musical groups, giving them immediate access to tour information, ticketing links, and a wealth of other relevant information. The industry has seen a positive impact for venues, promoters, managers, ticketing, new artist discovery and the subsequent birth of new mega tours, among many other aspects of touring and live performance.
A Historical Perspective

Live performance and touring is the very aspect of music that facilitated the development of our modern day music industry. From the first compositions of music in the early middle ages, courtly life demanded entertainment, hiring 'troubadours' to provide music for the royal families. With the economic expansion of the Renaissance, the demand for music increased significantly allowing the best composers and musicians to command high salaries and travel from one city to the next selling the live performances of their music (Bonds, 2011). The demand of music continued through the Baroque and Classical eras, enabling the industry to flourish with the advent of the printing press and thus, the spread of sheet music which allowed musicians to earn a living through the physical sale of their work.

During the nineteenth century technologies revolutionized the industry even more allowing music to be utilized not only as sheet music, but as a recording. As a result, the concept of physical sales was taken to an even higher level but live performance remained a key component in the careers of musicians. In the late 1880's, The Columbia Phonograph Company successfully sold the Graphophone based on sales of recorded music. Live performances of music could now be sold as a "good" rather than solely as a service.

Soon, the 3-4 minute performance on a record became even more popular than the full length versions that were performed at clubs, compelling performers to modify their performances to fit within the preferences of their audience (Difazio, 2011). The demand for recordings of live performances continued to increase and as a result of advances in recording technology as well as new knowledge from experiments in sound quality the industry experienced the rise and demise of a number of recording media formats. Shellac discs, magnetic tape recordings and cassettes quickly replaced one another followed by the explosive demand for CDs ("Music Record Industry"). With each of these
technological advances came a reoccurring trend; fear that the desire for music would decrease as one technology replaced the next.

The fear, as one music critic described it was that "If you had a phonograph player in your house, [you would never] go outside of your house to listen to live music again[.] In the 1980s...they thought that because people had cassette tapes, they would just tape their friends' music and never buy albums again" (Suddath, 2009). The result in each case, however, was quite the opposite; sending record sales to exponential new highs, dramatically increasing the excitement surrounding music, and giving people even more of a desire to see their favorite bands live.

In the 1980s and early 90's, CD sales were booming and the number of shows performed to promote those albums continued to rise (Connolly, Krueger, 2005). Compact disks sales held the largest market share of all music media being sold, with over 779 million CDS shipped in 1996 (Shwartz, 2007). According to artist manager and artist marketing professional, Mark Cunningham of Aware Records and A-Squared Management (Chicago, IL), "pre-internet, the album was the main thing for almost every act - it was the main reason they toured, made videos, etc. and a lot of bands really only played live to sell more albums" (Cunningham, 2012). Artists traveled far and wide to generate excitement for their albums, with the emphasis primarily being to sell the record.

However, as a result of the massive expense of promotion, their tour-stops typically only included major markets in which they knew the band could draw a crowd, then it was back to the studio. Bands had to utilize print promotions and mass media like the radio to communicate with their fans about tours and albums. "It was through paper newsletters or postcards you'd mail to your fans...you had to get people to sign your mailing list in person at shows and then you'd mail them information on new releases, tour dates, etc." (Cunningham, 2012). The problem lay in the fact that when people moved, their address became invalid, and consequently, they would no longer receive the bands
promotional materials. "You’d end up getting a ton of bad address returns and you’d waste a ton of money on bad shipping addresses and you could never track those people back down. It was the least efficient system you could think of." The only other method of discovery was mass media, but if you couldn't get a song to play on the radio or through a TV broadcast (like a Saturday Night Live performance), then it was very, very, very hard for people to find out about you" (Cunningham, 2012).

Mass media furthermore aided in the development in a large gap between artists and fans. "It was a very firm one-way relationship. There was a big curtain up and a fan really didn't have resources to find anything out about an act unless the national media talked about it. The media was the filter and consumers picked from what was handed to them" (Cunningham, 2012). Before the integration of digital tools and online social media sites, these artists spent huge sums of money to keep the audience engaged and aware of the happenings of the band, performed live to help gather a greater following and then released an album in hopes that these loyal names on the mailing list would buy it.

**Enter the Digital Age**

In 1994, something happened that would change the dynamics of the industry drastically and cause a shift in the existing model. Among the many advances in technology of this time, The Fraunhofer Institute released the first MP3 encoder enabling listeners to transfer songs from their CD collections and store them as files on the computer (Nair, Srijith). Storing and playing music on computers became increasingly popular which soon lead to the exchange of music files through the internet (Nair, 2008). In 1999, Napster introduced an online hub predicated on the concept of peer-to-peer (P2P) file sharing which eventually attracted as many as 70 million registered users (Boorstin, 2012). With this new feature, the bargaining power of consumers went from virtually non-existent to extremely significant. Suddenly, users could access millions of new songs uploaded by their friends (or
complete strangers) and download them free of charge to their own computers, without any repercussion from intellectual property or copyright law.

This concept was not well-received in the music industry and lawsuits flared up between industry professionals and sites like Napster, Kazaa, and Grokster (peer-to-peer file sharing sites) as well as with individuals who had been "caught" with illegally downloaded music. The industry panicked as this new trend emerged, fearing that the availability of free digital copies would completely replace the purchasable physical album. Companies like Apple capitalized on this idea, bringing millions of songs to the online market place, and creating new distribution channels for music. In just one week, Apple's music store, iTunes, sold over 1 million songs, breaking every record and becoming the largest online music company in the world in 2001 (Dalrymple, 2003).

Though iTunes and other online music stores boasted record setting success, a number of issues became pervasive. First, digital piracy (the illegal acquisition of music online) remained a much more popular medium through which to acquire music, even though the option to obtain music legally became an option. The IFPI reports that in 2001, approximately 99% of music files available online were unauthorized (IFPI Music Piracy Report 2002). Consequently, the price of songs began tending toward zero and as music was unbundled into single songs through availability of single-song downloads, the revenue stream from huge sales of artists albums was destroyed. The value of the recorded album plummeted, forcing artists to recognize that they would soon be required to exploit their alternate revenue sources to account for the loss in profits from album sales.

Secondly, though fans now had excessive amounts of music, the divide between artists and fans became even more apparent. Not only was the need for mass media eliminated for the purpose of music discovery, but consequently, it was no longer necessary for fans to filter through bands' stories
and media coverage. Fans had no medium through which to connect with the bands, and no real reason
to be any more engaged than simply downloading the songs from the internet.

The digital revolution seemed to be a key factor in what appeared to be an inevitable demise of
the music industry. As more and more music became available online, and with the majority being
consumed for free, the industry frantically searched for innovative new ways to work with the new
music industry model.

However, as with each preceding change in the industry, the emerging trend was not without at
least several benefits. In stark contrast to the pre-digital era, fans could now easily access the music of
the bands they liked and could discover even more of an artist's repertoire based on the presence of
unfamiliar portions of the band's discography that became available for download. Fans could also
download new, unfamiliar music without the penalty of financial loss if they didn't enjoy the track,
addressing the issue of limited exposure that prevailed in the old model.

Whereas previously, fans had to attend a show, see a posted promotional flyer around their city,
or hear about a new band from a friend, music consumers had a new method of music discovery. It
quickly became apparent that this model was the way of the future for the industry. If the industry was
going to keep up, it had to align with the newest change in demand. In the mean time, the internet was
establishing another trend that would help the music biz do exactly that: capitalize on the availability of
online music and change the music industry like never before.

Social Media Explodes

With the turn of the century, and the continued establishment of the digital revolution,
computer mediated communication, and more specifically, the concept of "social media" began to take
its place in society. In 2001, Ryze.com launched to help people leverage their business networks,
followed by Friendster in 2002, a site designed to connect friends-of-friends (Boyd, Ellison, 2007). From this point forward, hundreds of social networking sites were launched tapping extremely broad audiences world-wide. Accordingly, the era of social media and its prominent position in society today was born.

These sites gained a huge internet following within their first months of operation, facilitating the emerging popularity of user-generated content and the creation of specific niche-oriented social media sites. MySpace, though not founded with music in mind, became the first music-oriented social media website in 2003. "Indie rock-bands from the Los Angeles region began creating profiles, and local promoters used MySpace to advertise VIP passes for popular clubs" (Boyd, Ellison, 2007). MySpace, followed by Facebook, Twitter, and an array of other networking sites, introduced the concept of the mutually beneficial relationship that was now possible between fans, industry professionals, and bands; positioning itself as another milestone in the new online music industry business-model.

With the availability of these networking sites fans, bands, venues, promoters, and essentially all other industry professionals had a way to connect with one another. Not only was it simple to access the music you like and utilize the online music discovery features of these sites, but for the first time a business-customer or, artist-fan, relationship was established on a personal level.

The rapid success of these networking sites prompted the innovation of not only social networking sites, but the concept of incorporating a social aspect to media websites that have come to serve as unmatched resources for bands today. For example, in 2002, Last.fm was launched in the UK as an internet radio station and music community site using music profiles to generate playlists. The site later partnered with Audioscrobbler a computer science initiative that developed a Plugin for computers which, through the use of a database, "tracks listening habits by collecting play lists of users’ media players (e.g., Winamp and iTunes)" (Golubchik, Leana, et al, 2010). In 2005, YouTube was launched for
people to upload, view, and share videos with their networks (YouTube.com). In 2007, Ustream.tv launched with the purpose of "bringing people together around shared interests for amazing live, interactive experiences that build and maintain relationships" (Ustream.com). Social media websites fostered the creation of user-generated content, and sparked the fad of sharing information with friends.

Such sites have gained enormous popularity since their initial launch and, according to Nielsen's "State of the Media: The Social Media Report Q3 2011, now claim the attention of 4 in every 5 active internet users. Social networks account for 23 percent of time spent online, dominating the majority of time that Americans spend at the computer. (State of the Media Q3 – Nielsen). Through the plethora of advances in the concept of networking, these sites became more than just a medium through which to listen and discover music.

With the importance of the physical album essentially obsolete, promotion of the album was no longer the main goal of artists. Now, bands had to promote themselves and sell their tour, compelling artists to turn to concert tours for their primary source of revenue. To do so, artists switched the focus of their promotions from album-centered to artist-centered. Bands now had to sell their story, their community, and their music by engaging fans in new ways that could not be replicated and downloaded online. In one particular reflection of this, David Bowie, in an interview with the New York Times, stated that "music itself is going to become like running water or electricity. You'd better be prepared for doing a lot of touring because that's really the only unique situation that's going to be left. It's terribly exciting" (Pareles, 2002). Social media made this shift possible.
Translating Social Media into an Advantage

Social Media made this shift of focus from albums to artist possible by providing bands with two major opportunities: 1. Increased connectivity with fans and industry professionals and 2. access to a global audience.

Increased Connectivity

Fans

In an era of interconnectivity, the importance of specific demographics or geographic location is outweighed by the habits, trends, and personality of fans (Howard, 2010). Establishment of online communities around bands stimulated an artist-fan relationship where this kind of information became relevant, moving from a purely business relationship (connecting with fans only when it was time for radio promotions, print promotions, live concerts, in-store appearances, etc.) to one that included a more human element, fostering a more meaningful relationship between fan and artist.

Artist Manager, Josh Terry of A-Squared Management (Nashville, TN) states that "It's more important now than ever to give fans a behind the scenes look at their favorite bands, to keep them connected, and to let them know just how important they are. Without a solid fan base, a band as a business can't operate" (Terry, 2012). As such, bands have made huge strides in finding ways to keep their existing fans engaged as well as finding ways to attract and engage additional fans into their audience base.

"We see a lot more bands doing USTREAM chats, responding to kids on twitter, doing pre-show meet and greets, playing house shows, and in general just trying to create new experiences for fans" (Terry, 2012). The sharing of pictures, posting of exclusive online videos, involvement in contests and promotions, and even a blog post on current happenings give fans a window through which to perceive bands as their "friends," giving them a view into their experiences that take place offline. "We do not
make profound connections with products, services, or people online. Profound connections occur offline, in person. ... We upload pictures and detailed stories of our offline activity so that our friends and family can be aware of our offline experiences." (Howard, 2010). By doing so, fans are much more likely to relate to the band and thus, develop an emotional attachment to their work (Howard, 2010). Based on the responses to these postings, bands are able to utilize the information to identify the psychographics (habits, trends, personalities, etc.) of their fan base, and respond accordingly.

Such interactions assist the band in displaying the appropriate amount of offline and online content. Finding the balance between promotional material with other aspects of their careers that will interest and engage the people who make up their social media networks is crucial. To appropriately engage fans, it is argued that bands should post 80% of their content about things other than promotional material and 20% related to promoting their music (Dahud, 2012). This concept emphasizes the idea of building a strong, "offline" relationship with the fans through the online resources, thereby creating an online community that surrounds the band.

By commenting on videos and pictures, responding to blog posts, or posting on the band pages fans are able to directly communicate their demands, whether it's for tour stops or music or to provide feedback on events, and in many situations can reasonably expect some form of response. Fans can feel as though their demands are actually generating a response making them feel valued. Through the social media sites, fans identify with specific genres of music and specific bands based on their interest or a certain social group with which they want to be associated. When people feel an emotional connection or sense of belonging to a group, they are more active participants in that group and more invested in the well-being and successes of it (Reich, 2010).

As a result, fans are feeling more engaged with the bands they like and bands can reasonably expect that those involved in the community will be the ones who are, in turn, sharing their experience
with their friends and networks. According to a report by Nielsen, in a survey of over 25,000 internet users from 50 different countries "90% of consumers surveyed noted that they trust recommendations from people they know" more than any other outlet (Nielsen, 2009).

This group of engaged people who are recommending or receiving recommendations about bands are the groups of people who are informed about tours, updates, and information that is shared on social media pages, and are most likely to be the ones whose online attention will translate into revenue for bands. Nielsen also found in their 2011 "State of the Media Report" that when compared to the average adult internet user "active adult social networkers are 75% more likely to be heavy spenders on music" (Nielsen, State of the Media Report 2011).

What this means for bands is that now more than ever, it is imperative to engage the online followers and keep them active within the community. Such hugely inclusive communities present an enormous opportunity for bands to convert online interest into revenue.

**Industry Professionals**

Not only do the opportunities exist for fans, but they are also especially existent for industry professionals from all aspects of a touring perspective. Venues, promoters and managers among others can all reap the benefits from social media as well.

**Venues**

Venues, whose role in touring is fundamental, acquired numerous ways to utilize social media to better the touring industry. Smart venues have already begun getting on board with social media to open their lines of communication directly to the bands who headline them and the fans who fill their audiences.

As one Los Angeles venue learned very quickly, if you stop listening to people, they stop coming; If you stop listening to bands, they stop booking your establishment. Without feedback and the
appropriate adjustments, the experience becomes much less enjoyable and the venue ultimately shuts down. Nic Adler, owner of The Roxy, saved the famous venue from closing by embracing a blog format and incorporating social media into their venue strategy. The venues "smart, careful wielding of technology" has become a case study in staying relevant and how venues can utilize the benefits of social media to their advantage.

Adler referred to his venue as "lost" saying "we didn't know how to listen" ("Nic Adler Talks Saving L.A.'s Roxy"). They noticed that right away that not only were the new tools social and great as an advertising and amplifying tool, but that what people were saying through comments served as "a mirror of [their] business." Utilizing those comments, feedback, complaints and suggestions that were trending on their page to make changes is what brought more people to the door.

With happy fans, the venue next sought out ways to get the bands back, and social media was their ticket to success. Because they have developed such a significant online following, The Roxy can also serve as a development tool for bands. "When a band comes in town they can look at us and a couple other venues. They'll notice that the rooms are similar, the sound's about the same, but [The Roxy] can expose [them] to a half a million people through its social [media]. It gives us a leg up on the competition" ("Nic Adler Talks Saving L.A.'s Roxy).

**Promoters**

Promoters are evaluating fan feedback and band statistics every day to look for demands and trends in their areas. If Facebook or Twitter show a certain trend, a promoter can act on the demand to bring new bands to new areas and new venues.

*For A Rocket To The Moon*, a U.S. band signed to the label Fueled by Ramen, social media enabled a promoter across the world to discover a demand for their music in Jakarta, Indonesia.
According to the band's manager, Josh Terry, "A Rocket To The Moon received literally thousands of Twitter "@ replies" from kids in Indonesia asking them to come to their country. The promoter in Jakarta noticed this and eventually put in a great offer for the band to come over there for 1 show." The band had never played internationally and never been to Southeast Asia, but at their very first show the band Headlined a 45 minute set, playing for 5,000 fans who each spent over $50 USD per person on tickets to come see it (Terry, 2012). Terry explains that now, Indonesia is the bands biggest market. "Had those kids not tweeted the band so much, we would have never received an offer to play there and would have never known how big of an audience the band has out there" (Terry, 2012). It is clear that an opportunity exists for promoters in terms of bringing new talent to their areas as well for bands who can be discovered by these promoters.

**Artist Managers**

The benefits for artists managers are invaluable. Posts by fans can be monitored by managers and interpreted for business practices. "I'm looking for if certain things we do - whether that's posting a video, posting a new song, or doing any kind of contest, increases awareness and causes fans to really react. Everything now a days is reactionary, so if something is bubbling, you know you have something that can make you a lot of money" (Terry, 2012).

When things begin to "bubble" it is because fans have begun to share and respond to the posting. Analyzing Twitter, MySpace, Facebook and other social media analytics every week enables managers to see if fans are talking about bands, how many people are visiting their sites or "liking" them online. Such analytics give insight into the excitement surrounding bands, and can help managers track what's working and what isn't. Social media analytics have been a highly significant indicator for success in today's online atmosphere.
Access to a Global Audience

With the emergence of the digital age, there truly are no limitations to the reach of music. If the trend spreads, geographic boundaries are no matter. The social nature and consequent wide-reaching abilities of social media enable bands to surpass geographic and cultural boundaries every day, resulting in new markets.

Combined with the analytics available to bands through their social sites, the ability to define and effectively target a model consumer on a global scale is created. Bands are able to determine where their fans are located geographically, identify new markets for their music, and bring their tours to those areas, creating new revenue streams. "Through digital file sharing and social networking sites, musicians mobilize social capital around their image and music" (Sargent, 2009).

"I can put pre-sales for tours up in a specific city and promote it on our social networks and we can sell out of those tickets within 20 minutes. You used to have to depend on print advertising or the venues to promote the shows. Now we can put something up on Twitter or Facebook and sell to our core audience who are on the internet with their credit cards in hand, it's a great thing" (Terry, 2012).

One critic argued that social media creates a dilemma for musicians because it "provides a global platform for distribution without ensuring an audience" (Sargent, 2009). While they were able to amplify their reach and build networks of "old friends and colleagues, friends of friends, and other local musicians" which built strong local music scenes, some musicians felt challenged in reaching a wider audience (Sargent, 2009).

The global reach of social media stems from interactions with followers. To an extent, networks will continue to share the works of the bands they like and continue forwarding it through their networks. However, without meaningful interactions the buzz dies down, and people stop sharing. Consider the example of A Rocket To The Moon; because they continued to interact with their
international fan base, the trend continued to grow and eventually it was noticed by a professional who could translate a demand into a product. In order to project success across international boundaries, it is imperative for bands to actively utilize their social media. The global reach is available, but it is up to the bands to ensure that they act on the opportunity.

**Ticketing**

The global reach of music and the interconnectivity provided by social media has also had incredible results for social commerce, particularly on the ticketing front. The sharing of musical interests has moved beyond just sharing songs, but expanded into sharing information on concerts, specifically. Ticket sites like, Eventbrite, TicketFly, and Ticketmaster have moved into social settings as well, offering fans the ability to "share" when they buy tickets to a concert, if they are interested in attending a certain concert when it comes to town, and even as much detail as where they'll be sitting at the concert.

According to event expert, Eventbrite, people share events for various reasons, "to gauge friends' interest in attending, to show off something really cool or unique they discovered, or to encourage others to attend with them" (Tamara, 2011). The shares that are projected through networks have been analyzed by a number of ticketing sites whom have been able to quantify the value of each "share" through sites like Facebook or Twitter.

Eventbrite has done extensive research on the motives for sharing through social media, and the subsequent value of sharing for ticket sales to certain types of events. In their findings, Eventbrite claimed that "when looking at dollars per share by type of event..we find that shares are most valuable for music events and concerts, at over $12 per share" (Tamara, 2011). They noted that a Facebook share, specifically, generated $2.53 in ticket sales.
Ticketfly, an independent ticketing and social marketing platform found similar results claiming that Facebook is a major driver of their ticket sales. In 2011, Ticketfly events were shared on Facebook and Tweeted over 31,000 times with those links being clicked 52,000 times. As a result, Ticketfly claims to have sold 3.25 tickets for every Facebook share or Tweet (Ha, 2011).

Taking this concept even further is the ticketing giant TicketMaster who launched a Facebook-integrated social seating application. "After clicking the "find tickets" link for an event, users are given the option to log into their Facebook account. Any friends of theirs who have purchased a ticket and tagged themselves in the seating chart will show up accordingly on the venue's floor layout" (Digital Trends). TicketMaster has taken the reach of social network and the idea of sharing through social media to the next level, and its working! TicketMaster CEO, Nathan Hubbard said that "whenever fans posted on Facebook about concerts they'd just bought, the company would see an average $5.30 more in ticket revenue. It was those results that demonstrated to executives the power of social media when it comes to commerce" (Salter, 2012).

Clearly, the social nature of concerts is in high demand not only at the venues, but also at home. Many other ticketing sites have integrated with social media to reap the rewards of sharing and the ease of putting concert links in front of their target markets. With the benefits of ticketing sites, and the developing technologies to make the pre-concert experience even more social, ticket sites can reasonably expect increased ticket sales.

Artists Discovery, New Tours

Further evidence of the significant role of social media on the touring and live performance sector are the artists whose successes are a direct result of social media. Fame and popularity amplified through the social websites like YouTube, USTREAM, StageIt, among others has launched some of the biggest names in popular music including Mac Miller and Justin Bieber.
Through these sites independent artists can post videos of their live performances, giving fans a unique, but also genuine taste of their talent. Once talent is discovered it goes viral, shooting through social networks at a rapid-fire pace.

One such example is Pittsburgh native, Mac Miller whose online viral popularity has earned him over 180 million views on his YouTube channel. Billboard magazine stated that social media is a "solid force" for Miller, with over a million twitter followers, over 1.4 million Facebook fans (Malone, 2011). Though in 2011 he had essentially zero radio rotation on terrestrial radio, and only occasional rotation on satellite radio, Miller's interaction through social media has propelled him to outstanding success.

Billboard notes that Miller has played to consistently sold-out venues of increasing size, from 300-capacity venues to 3000-capacity venues across the nation. On his most recent tour, Miller has sold out 22 of 25 2000-capacity venues, and sold 99% (up from selling 94% of his tickets on his previous tour) of the tour's tickets (Malone, 2011).

A second Example is the mega pop-star, Justin Bieber, whose fame and popularity was a result of none other than YouTube. When his YouTube clips started picking up steam, an Atlanta producer, Scooter Braun, saw them and flew Justin in to sign a contract, ultimately getting him a deal with Usher. In under three years, Bieber went from singing on the street to a household name in popular music. His key to success: social media.

Bieber has been called a "social media case study" because of his perfected use of social media to catapult his career. His manager claims that his success validated the use of social media as a promotional and developmental tool. Bieber's team knew that statistics show that kids are spending more time on the internet as opposed to TV or radio, and responded accordingly (Schawbel, 2011). He has over 10 million Twitter followers and 30 million Facebook fans whom all loyally refer to themselves as "Beliebers."
It is this exceptional fan-base that enabled Bieber to sell out Madison Square Garden in a mere 22 minutes. Overall, Justin has generated over $83 million in ticket sales revenue. When asked if he believed that more artists will be discovered online, Mr. Braun’s philosophy was "if the number one retailer in music is iTunes, then why shouldn't the number one marketing avenue be the internet?" (Malone, 2011).

Social media has enabled a number of powerhouse bands and artists to emerge and new tours to be created. Millions of tickets have been sold as a result and the careers of these social media artists have been positioned perfectly for success.

Conclusion

It is undeniable that social media has had an extremely significant, positive impact on touring and live performance. Though you can't download the concert experience, the social atmosphere of the concert is continuously getting closer to home. Billboard.biz claimed that "one of social media's biggest assets is how it has opened a clear channel through which fans, artists and venues can interact in ways that are much more in depth than just applause or tomatoes" (Rhys, 2012).

With the advent of social media sites, bands have increased connectivity with fans and potential consumers, access to a definable global audience, a direct line of communication with their fans, and a method through which to share live performances as a promotional tool. The results are unmatched by any other platform: emotionally invested fans who, in turn, promote the bands and concerts to their own networks, new geographically identifiable markets, increased ticket sales, an effective feedback system through which to better their product, and a method of discovery for up-and-coming bands.

Fans can comment, post, review, and interact with bands, venues and even industry professionals letting them know what they do and don't like about music or tours. Based on this
information bands can make modifications to their tour logistics, venues can evaluate fan feedback and fine-tune their facilities for enhanced fan experiences for future shows, and managers can track the success of their artists and make better informed business decisions.

Through social media bands have accelerated the awareness of their music, tour information and concerts well beyond their individual networks. The interconnectivity with fans provided by social media is truly mutually beneficial and has infinite possibility for the future. Every day sites are working to develop new programs that are making concert-going more social.

Social media has penetrated the touring and live performance industry through a number of mediums. The expansive reach and flow of information combined with the new enthusiasm that artists put into shows result in more people wanting to go to shows whom are also more willing to pay more money to see shows.

It goes without question that touring and live performance would not be what it is today without the benefits of social media, and it will continue to get more social! The application developments will continue, the sharing will grow enormously, and the impact of social media on this industry will mature tremendously.
Works Cited


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