The development of the artist-fan engagement model

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Abstract
The Artist-Fan Engagement Model was developed in 2012 to help explain the relationship between music artists and their fans. The model, based on hedonic consumption and parasocial interaction theory, explores how the effects of music and artist drive fan engagement through access or ownership of recorded music. This paper highlights the development of the original model, along with the initial study results. The model is now being updated in order to complete a second round of the study.

Keywords: Artist, fan, engagement, recorded music, marketing

1   Introduction

The Artist-Fan Engagement Model (e.g., figure 1) proposes a theoretical framework that was developed in 2012 to help explain the relationship between music artists and their fans. The model, created using hedonic consumption and parasocial interaction theory (PSI) as its foundational underpinnings, was designed to explore how the effects of music and artist drive fan engagement through access or ownership of recorded music. In an industry where the music consumer has unprecedented access and prefers ongoing interaction with their favorite artists (Borden 2009), it is important to identify how these relationships can be best leveraged. Many musicians communicate directly with their fans through the use of various internet platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Snapchat, Twitter, and Tumblr, among others. United States media personality Conan O'Brien has referred to this overall phenomenon as a "symbiotic relationship." As he notes, *"It's not just driving people on social media networks to your television show… you want to*

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get people on the TV getting emotionally involved in what you're doing on Facebook or Twitter" (Ingraham 2012). In an era in which digital and social media interaction helps to develop a music artist's brand, it is essential to consider how the mediated engagement between an artist and his or her fan base can provide economic value, whether through recorded music access or ownership.

This paper explains the development of the various facets of the Artist-Fan Engagement Model. An abbreviated examination of several questions explored in the initial study, along with the accompanying results, are also discussed. The paper concludes with a discussion of how to strategically apply the results from the initial research in building a synergistic marketing plan around a music artist.
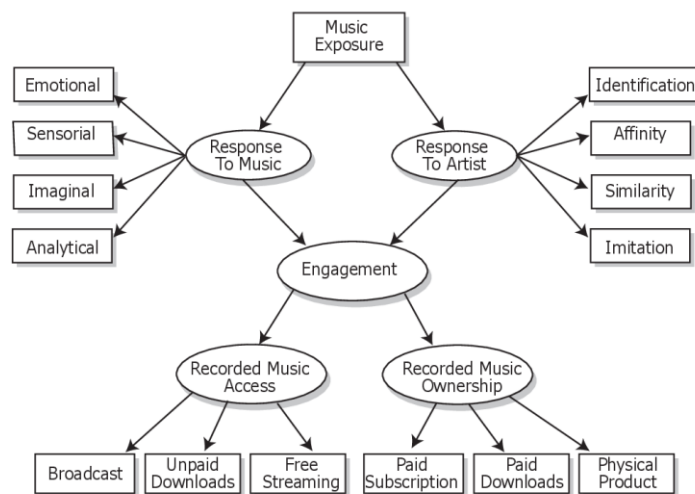

Figure 1: Original conceptualization of the Artist-Fan Engagement Model.

2   Theoretical development of the Artist-Fan Engagement Model

2.1 "Response To Music" variable

Hedonic consumption theory is the theoretical underpinning of "Response To Music" framework within the Artist-Fan Engagement Model. This theory focuses upon subjectively oriented experiential products that generate emotion and arousal. Hirschman & Holbrook (1982: 92) defined hedonic consumption as *"facets of consumer behaviour that relate to the multi-sensory, fantasy and emotive experience with products".*

Lacher (1989) first began to explore music as a hedonic consumption product in the late 1980s. She suggested a paradigm for studying music as a product, based on diverse research in music education and psychology. Her 1994 study with fellow researcher Richard Mizerski used hedonic consumption to predict the purchase of recorded rock music. The "Response To Music" construct used in the study included the "Emotional," "Sensorial," "Imaginal," and "Analytical" responses to music (Lacher & Mizerski, 1994). These four facets were instrumental in developing the "Response To Music" variable for the Artist-Fan Engagement Model as shown in Figure 1.

Emotional response. Music is recognized as *"the language of the emotions"* (Farnsworth 1969: 78), and is capable of arousing strong and significant emotions within individuals (Sloboda 1991). Hesmondhalgh (2011: 107) considered music, more than any other cultural form, to be linked *"with the emotional dimensions of our selves"*. The initial Artist-Fan Engagement study focused upon how an individual's emotional response to music (i.e., induction) represents the feelings they experience when listening to music, whether joy, rage, sadness, love, etc. (Gatewood 1927; Yingling 1962; Hargreaves 1982; Lacher & Mizerski, 1994). Emotional response has also been recognized as one of the primary factors in music appreciation, as well as a potential factor in the purchasing process (Lacher & Mizerski 1994; Ouellet 2007).

Sensorial response. The sensorial response is simply the *"raw sensory material"* of music (Ortmann 1927; Yingling 1962: 109). Hodges (2009) categorized bodily responses to music as being either physiologically or physically based. He noted *"when we listen to music our bodies naturally respond with largely involuntary gestures, such as head nodding and foot tapping"* (Hodges 2009: 26). Ortmann (1927: 43) considered the sensorial music response to be primitive and *"essentially physiological".*

Imaginal response. The third facet of the "Response To Music" is imaginal*,* which researchers have defined as involving *"images, memories or situations that music evokes"* (Myers & Valentine 1914; Lacher & Mizerski 1994; Ouellet 2007: 109). Myers & Valentine (1914) referred to this response as *"the associative aspect, which means a given sound tends to suggest various ideas, either with or without accompanying concrete or visual imagery."* Ortmann (1927: 66) considered this individual response psychological, *"based upon the presence of an auditory subjective stimulus"*, and labelled it "imaginal". Yingling's (1962: 109) definition of the imaginative response (which he later referred to as an "associative" factor) was the *"translation of tonal stimulus into objective terms – pictures, story, impersonation or the like; suggestion"*. Baumgartner's research (1992) focused on how music can trigger an individual's autobiographical episodes. He cited Dowling & Harwood's (1986) work in order to distinguish between music's iconic representation (i.e., the patterns within the music itself) and indexical representation (i.e., the pairing of a musical event with an extra-musical object). Basically, an indexical transfer occurs when the emotion associated with the extra-musical situation becomes associated with the actual musical event.

Analytical response. Various research studies suggest that differing music elements (i.e., mode, tempo, pitch, rhythm, harmony, volume) are capable of producing both main and interactive effects on the affective, behavioural, and cognitive responses of consumers (Bruner 1990). Active participation in the music process, whether by a composer, listener, or performer, engages mental-processing capabilities (Hantz 1984). Hargreaves & Colman (1981) found three of the five music categorical responses generated in their study (e.g., categorical, objective-analytic,

objective-global) tied directly to the cognitive aspects of music response. Lacher & Mizerski (1994) used Hargreaves' (1982) research to delineate three separate areas of music cognition as a component of music's analytic response for their empirical study.

2.2 "Response To Artist" variable

Parasocial interaction theory (PSI) was synthesized into the framework of the "Response To Artist" variable as part of the Artist-Fan Engagement Model (e.g., figure 1). PSI is defined as *"a false friendship between an audience individual and a media character"* (Sood & Rogers 2000: 387). Shen & Zhou's (2011) expanded construct of PSI was used to construct the framework of the original Artist-Fan Engagement Model which includes four facets, "Identification," "Liking," "Similarity," and "Imitation". These researchers had found high positive associations between PSI and identification (r=.74), affinity/liking (r = .74), similarity (r = .51), and imitation (r = .51) during the course of their study. A more thorough examination of these four factors follows below.

Identification. Cohen (2001: 245) conceptualized identification as *"a mechanism through which audience members experience reception and interpretation of the text from the inside, as if the events were happening to them."* It should be noted that there is some confusion surrounding the constructs of identification and PSI due to how previous studies have operationalized PSI, defining it *"as a kind of long-term identification or parasocial relationship with a media performer"* (Hartmann & Goldhoorn 2011: 1104). Shen & Zhou (2011: 59) delineated these factors a bit more cleanly, noting that identification *"entails media users' temporary merging with the media figures; parasocial interaction involves media users' response without losing their identities"*.

Affinity. Affinity occurs when an individual displays *"a liking for a media figure, without identifying with, or forming a parasocial relationship"* (Giles 2002: 290). Cohen & Pearce (2003: 22) noted in their study of viewer-character relationships that *"parasocial interaction, the sense of 'friendship' with a character, is most strongly linked to liking the character."* Interestingly, affinity towards a media character is likely to in-

crease fandom (Cohen 2001), as the audience is expected to reward successful performers with loyalty from their fan base. This includes, among other measures, not only buying the products that the media figure recommends, but keeping his sponsor informed of *"the esteem in which he is held"* (Horton & Wohl 1956: 219). According to Davisson & Booth (2007: 35): (a) the fan may want to participate in commerce based around the show and (b) *"the activities and commercialism based around the show can cause the fan to become attached to the character."* It should be noted that the artist-fan relationship can be affected, whether positively or negatively, by a performance event that the fan sees by a music artist in a live setting, but this is outside the scope of the original model.

Similarity. Perceived similarity (i.e., homophily) is considered *"a basic principle"* that leads to interpersonal attraction between two people (Turner 1993: 444). Within the context of the viewer-character relationship, this refers *"to the degree to which an individual perceives that he or she is similar to a character"* (Moyer-Gusé 2008: 410). These perceptions generate a judgment of the viewer's commonalities with a given character. Similar demographic characteristics include age, ethnicity, gender, and social status. Other perceived similarities surrounding a viewer's impression of a character may include shared behavioural tendencies, experiences, life situations, or personality attributes (Hoffner & Cantor 1991). Similarity is often considered a predictor of parasocial interaction (Shen & Zhou 2011).

Imitation. Hoffman & Buchanan (2005) defined a viewer's identification with a character to occur when an individual loses their identity by (a) assuming the role of a selected character within the program or text and (b) then vicariously participating in the character's experiences. This type of long-term attachment is referred to as wishful identification, or *"the desire to be like or behave in ways similar to the character"* (Hoffner 1996: 390). Imitation is considered both external and behavioural as well as key to the relationship viewers form with media characters (Cohen 2001; Cohen & Perse 2003). Emulation is another term that is often used to describe wishful identification, whether in a general (i.e.,

as a role model) or specific (i.e., imitating behaviours) context (Giles 2002). Research has shown that actions of popular culture heroes have strong effects on adolescents in terms of their clothing, food preference, hairstyles, music, verbal expressions, as well as their basic social values (Englis, Solomon & Olofsson 1993).

2.3 Engagement

The influence of both the "Response To Artist" and "Response To Music" variables was assessed upon "Engagement" in the initial study of the Artist-Fan Engagement Model. Scott & Craig-Lees (2010: 53) referenced audience engagement as a *"multi-dimensional, holistic measure that describes a person's emotional and cognitive engagement with enter-tainment content."* The term "Engagement" was used to describe this variable, since it seemed to best reflect the relationship between the audience members and the selected content within the media environment. Audiences now have greater control over the media content that they choose to consume, given the transformative changes within the technology sector (Scott & Craig-Lees 2010). This was especially important given all of different methods that individuals use to search information and consume content around music artists. Examples to this end would include various engagement platforms, including the social utility site Facebook, the microblogging platform Twitter, the visual storytelling platform Instagram, Internet search engines, wikis, YouTube videos, artist fan clubs, and artist-specific music apps. Also, promotional and publicity vehicles, such as music blogs, music videos, artist-domain websites potentially allow for an individual to engage with the music artist as well.

2.4 Consumption Outcome Variables – Access and Ownership

Six general categories of music consumption outcome variables were proposed within the original Artist-Fan Engagement Model that reflected the music market realities during the 2012-2013 time-period. These outcome variables included: broadcast, unpaid downloads, free streaming, subscription models, paid downloads, and physical products. IFPI,

the non-profit worldwide trade association for the recorded music industry, referenced two main music consumption outcomes, access and ownership (IFPI 2012: 7). As Jones (2000: 221) states, *"the commercial processes of the music industry require it to create audiences and markets, a process itself one of distribution."*

2.4.1 Access

Access is a term used within the industry to describe the outcomes from the various publicity and promotional avenues that help drive marketing exposure around artists and music through various media platforms. Traditionally, music has been consumed through some type of media platform prior to purchase (Lacher 1989). Simply listening to music is considered "free", although the artist is generally compensated for their work through public performance and other music revenue streams, depending upon the consumption medium that the listener utilizes. "Free" music consumption can eventually lead to the purchase of recorded music product or other artist-related artefacts (e.g., concert tickets, artist merchandise, branded consumer products). The defining factor concerning music product access for the purposes of the initial study was that no direct monetary exchange took place between the end consumer and the artist. The access variables utilized in the study were broken down by broadcast models, unpaid downloads and free audio streaming as highlighted in table 1.

Access variables	Mediums/platforms
Broadcast	Radio
	Television
	YouTube
Unpaid downloads	Unpaid downloads
	Piracy (illegal downloads)
Free audio streaming	Interactive streaming (Spotify, Napster)
	Non-interactive streaming (Pandora, iHeartRadio)

Table 1: Music consumption access variables

Discussion of these access variables is included in order to provide historical context around each of these outcomes.

Broadcast models: Terrestrial radio (e.g., local radio airplay) has traditionally been the main source for "breaking" new artists. The record labels provide recorded music product that radio uses for entertainment programming, while the record label uses radio for exposure to the station's audience in a "symbiotic relationship" (Macy, Rolston, Allen & Hutchison 2016). Record labels have traditionally employed significant staff to properly manage this promotion function. It is very expensive to promote songs in the popular mass audience radio formats (e.g., Adult Contemporary, Pop Contemporary Hit Radio, Country). At the time of the initial study, AM/FM radio was a powerful presence in the lives of Americans, reaching over 92 percent of individuals over the age of 12, with an estimated weekly overall listening audience of 243 million (Arbitron 2013; Edison Research 2013). Nielsen Audio (2018) has reported that the radio listening trends to be similar percentagewise in 2018, with an overall listenership reach of 270 million Americans weekly.

Television has also been a very important medium in allowing music artists to reach a mass audience since its inception over 50 years ago. There were two types of television programming primarily available at the time of the initial study: (a) network programming, based on an ad-supported "free" model; and (b) cable television, which generates revenue from paid subscription income (Hull, Hutchinson & Strasser 2011). Many music artists promote their upcoming music releases and tours through network press appearances and performances on top network television shows. A 2012 white paper co-authored by *Billboard* magazine and the then NARM U.S. music association reported that television shows and TV music channels were found to be the second strongest influence in music discovery for 49 percent of consumers (Peoples 2012). It should be noted that the television medium has changed substantially since the time of the initial study, with digital streaming platforms such as YouTube, Netflix, Hulu, Amazon, and other cord-cutting services coming into mainstream use (Bond 2018).

YouTube was also included in the initial study as a "Broadcast" variable. At the time of the initial study, YouTube billed itself as *"a forum for people to connect, inform, and inspire others across the globe and acts as a distribution platform for original content creators and advertisers"* (YouTube, 2013). Many individuals in the younger demographics regularly engage with YouTube in order to view content, with this phenomenon being cited as a new form of broadcasting (Murray 2015).

Unpaid music downloads: The second set of recorded music access consumption outcomes focused on unpaid music downloads. These downloads are often considered to occur as digital piracy through illegal music downloads. The RIAA (2018) defines piracy as *"downloading authorized versions of copyrighted music from a file-sharing service to illegally copying music using streaming ripping mobile apps."* Ouellet (2007: 109) considered *"illegal downloads and the legal purchase of music allow the consumer to achieve the same purpose, which is to listen to a piece of music when he or she so wishes."*

Alternately, some artists choose to provide free music downloads and streaming tracks to their fan base as a way of publicizing their new single or album release, in an attempt to drive "word of mouth" marketing. NoiseTrade is a digital platform that allows recording artists and recording labels to distribute music for free while receiving in exchange the fan's email addresses and postal codes (NoiseTrade 2018). This uncompensated exchange provides music artists with direct data on the fans who download their music product. One resulting benefit is that artists can route their touring schedules more effectively using their audience's zip code information.

Free streaming: At the time of the initial study took place, the music industry was just beginning to experience tremendous growth through innovative online streaming music and access models (Friedlander, 2011). Music streaming allows users to be able to listen to a digital track or album via internet or mobile platforms. Streaming services, including Spotify and the revitalized Napster, employ an interactive "freemium" business model in which a first level "free" consumer access tier is sup-

ported by advertising revenue. These 'lean-forward' music services which allow listeners to control their own experiences.

Spotify was founded in Sweden in 2006 and launched its online streaming services in 2008. Spotify debuted as a publicly traded company on the New York Stock Exchange in April 2018, valued at $29.5 billion at the end of its first day of trading (Sisario & Phillips 2018). In contrast, Napster first began operations as an unlicensed music service in 1999, shaking up the music industry, prior to being closed due to numerous lawsuits in 2001. The company's assets have been sold to numerous organizations over the years, prior to being acquired by the streaming service Rhapsody in 2011 (Harris 2018). Corporate parent Rhapsody International now operates using licensed music content under the brand name of Napster.

There are also non-interactive streaming options available through online radio services such as Pandora and iHeartRadio. These 'lean back' services allow the actual platform to guide the listener's experience. Pandora was primarily a non-interactive online music streaming service since its webcast beginnings as an offshoot of the Music Genome Project in 2000. This service now includes 'on demand' features for its 70 million active monthly users. The audio entertainment company SiriusXM is set to purchase a 16 percent stack in Pandora during the first quarter of 2019 for $480 million (Wouk 2018). The iHeartMedia organization is now recognized as the largest media company in the U.S. with 858 radio stations, and online broadcasting via iHeartRadio, among numerous other media assets. The company reaches over a quarter of a billion listeners in the U.S. market (iHeartMedia 2018).

Depending the way that the consumer engages with the interactive or non-interactive streaming services, these free access streaming websites trigger different revenue payment streams to the copyright holder depending on the streaming interaction. In 2017, digital revenue sources (which includes streaming sources) accounted for 54 percent of the global recorded music product (IFPI 2018).

2.4.2 Ownership

Traditionally, recorded music product purchase has generally resulted when individuals wanted to be able to better control their listening experience around their music selection choice (Lacher 1989; Lacher & Mizerski 1994; Ouellet 2007). As Lacher (1989: 372) noted, *"it is important to understand and predict the elements of a hedonic product that will impel the consumer to purchase the product"*. The IFPI (2011: 8) reported that *"ownership still has value when artists build sufficient audience appeal."*

Recorded music ownership was defined in the initial study as when a consumer directly purchased recorded music content or paid an annual subscription fee to be able to stream their music without commercial interruption. Table 2 lists the three music ownership variables defined in the initial study. A discussion of the various services and products below is included in order to provide context around each of the ownership variables.

Ownership variables	Mediums/platforms
Paid subscription (psychological)	Spotify Apple Music Napster
Paid downloads	iTunes Amazon MP3
Physical product	Compact discs Vinyl records Cassettes tapes

Table 2: Music consumption ownership variables

Subscription models: One of the business goals of the free streaming access tier is to migrate the listening consumer from "free" access to a "paid-for" subscription model status. Subscription models offer users premium tiered services and connectivity for a monthly fee or annual rate. These services offer consumers listening opportunities with all external advertising removed from the content as well as higher audio quality. Spotify and Pandora, as well as other interactive and non-

interactive companies (including the recent interactive streaming services market entrant Apple Music) offer their consumers various benefits and variety across numerous subscription options.

It should be noted that the consumer who pays for the right to access the various subscription services doesn't technically own the content in the same way as they would a music download or physical product. However, given the fact that many streaming consumers have invested considerable time in discovering new music and building playlists, as well as the right to download music through a paid streaming subscription, the individual may feel as if they have psychological ownership of the music product (Luck 2016). David Porter, CEO and Founder of 8tracks website, an online radio station, commented that *"I think ownership is access, you don't have to have music on your local hard drive to own it"* (Imam 2012). Interestingly, recent scholars note that consumer trends are shifting towards a "post-ownership economy" (Sinclair & Tinson 2017: 1).

Music downloads: Legal digital music download options did not begin to gain widespread consumer acceptance until Apple opened its iTunes full-service online store in 2003. The purchase of licensed digital music tracks and albums can be made through iTunes and other digital music retailers such as Amazon MP3. Single downloads have traditionally accounted for the majority of the digital revenue stream. At the time of the initial study, the Apple iTunes store was the dominant retailer of music downloads, accounting for 75 percent of sales in the global digital space with over 600 million users worldwide (Heneghan 2013). In a 2011 report, The NPD Group estimated that *"51 million U.S. consumers use iTunes and about 38.3 million purchase music with it"* (Peoples & Bylin 2011: 22). The music download market has declined precipitously in recent years, with a 20.5 percent decline in global revenue in 2017 alone (IFPI 2018: 6). Recent reports have suggested Apple Music is planning to shuttle the iTunes store in the first quarter of 2019. However, various press outlets have reported this information to be untrue (Dassanayake 2018).

Physical product: Physical music product (e.g., compact discs, vinyls, cassette tapes) represented 41 percent of all shipments within the U.S. music marketplace at the time of the initial study in 2013 (RIAA 2013). Physical sales of recorded music product have continued to decline globally, with a 5.4 percent drop in revenue in 2017. Interesting however, physical product still accounted for 30 percent of the $17.3 billion global music market. Overall shelf space for music product has declined and the number of retailers diminished due to store closings worldwide, although the markets of Japan and Germany are still reportedly robust (IFPI 2018). With physical sales declining, many traditional music sellers are diversifying their mix of music products by focusing on related categories. Numerous record labels are directing their efforts in this area towards the *"'superfan, a dedicated follower of a band or genre who is more likely to buy a physical copy of an album"* (Plambeck 2010).

One uptick in the physical marketplace is that the sales of vinyl product is on the rise. Vinyl sales made up 3.7 percent of the global market with an overall revenue growth of 3.7 percent in 2017 (IFPI 2018). Cassette sales have made a bit of a limited comeback, most recently with the limited-edition release of superstar Jay-Z's *4:44* album. Although cassette sales have mainly disappeared from the music marketplace, these physical products are reappearing as a merchandise sale, mainly due to the fact that the product can be personalized. The sales margin on a $7 cassette is estimated to be the same as a $20 LP album, which is an incentive (Jay-Z).

In summary, the initial study explored the following questions around the Artist-Fan Engagement Model as follows:

- R1: How is the "Response To Artist" variable related to the PSI factors of "Identification," "Affinity," "Similarity," and "Imitation"?
- R2: How is the "Response To Music" variable related to "Emotional," "Sensorial," "Imaginal," and "Analytical" music responses?
- R3: Is "Engagement" related to the "Response To Artist" and "Response To Music" variables?

- R4: How does "Engagement" drive whether an individual chooses to access or own recorded music product?

3   Methodology

When the initial study was run in 2013, research participants completed a 75-question survey, which took approximately 15 to 20 minutes in a physical environment of their choosing. Qualtrics Online Survey Software was used to distribute the survey through an anonymous link. A total of 1,576 participants accessed the survey. These respondents were recruited using two separate email correspondence lists supplied by a middle-sized teaching university located in the Mid-South region of the United States. The first study invitation was sent out via the college's monthly email newsletter to its 975 entertainment industry partners. The second invitation was sent to approximately 2,000 undergraduate students and recent alumni. In addition, interested participants either informally forwarded the anonymous survey link to their friends and colleagues, and/or posted the link on various social media sites. The survey was also distributed using snowball sampling due to initial low participation rates.

Pretest. The survey instrument had been pretested using several sections of students in upper-level business undergraduate courses at a large Southeastern university, located several hours away from where the initial study participants were recruited. One hundred and twenty-eight students completed the pilot study for extra credit, for an 84 percent participation rate. The pilot study respondents were approximately the same age as the college undergraduate group recruited for the initial study. Following the pilot survey's deactivation, the survey responses were reviewed to determine if the participants understood the questions correctly. Only two slight revisions were made, mainly to clarify categorizations listed in the music consumption section.

Survey. The survey used validated measures from previous studies in order to measure the variables within the Artist-Fan Engagement Model. The survey's question order was arranged so that the respond-

ent identified a song of their choice. The respondent then answered questions regarding their listening preferences to their song selection as part of the "Response To Music" variable. Next, participants listed the name of the artist who performed the song they originally identified. This forced an evaluation of an artist whom the respondent may or may not have had a preference toward as part of the "Response To Artist" variable. The survey design was laid out in this manner, as there was a concern that question order could become a confounding issue. Undue bias could have been created if the survey's questions had been ordered so that the participant first listed the name of an artist whose music they preferred, prior to listing the name of a song by that same artist. Other survey sections focused on other areas of interest, including "Engagement," "Purchase Intent," and "Consumption type/Purchase habits." The survey concluded with questions related to respondent demographics.

Analysis. The Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) software, Version 21, was used to analyse the survey data. After reviewing the initial survey responses, six hundred thirty-six incomplete surveys were listwise deleted from the final sample. These entries were deleted since it was important to have both a valid artist and song title tied to the actual survey response for analysis purposes. Most of these deleted entries fell into one of three categories: a) no inputted information, resulting in a blank survey; b) the song title was either listed as unknown, or just left blank; and c) no corresponding artist was listed in conjunction with the song. As a result, a total of 940 surveys were available for analysis, 836 of which were fully completed. The other 104 surveys contained incomplete survey answers and/or demographic responses, although the included responses could be tied both to an individual artist and song title. The end analysis found that 940 survey respondents had listed 806 individual song titles recorded by 568 music artists.

4   Research outcomes

Figure 2 highlights the correlations found among the variables incorporated across the Artist-Fan Engagement Model. Support was found for all of research questions, with all of the p values associated with the

sample data significant at .05, with the exception of "Unpaid Down-loads." One unexpected relationship surfaced as a result of executing the data, specifically, the moderately strong association between the "Response To Music" and "Response To Artist" variables, with (r = .42). This finding was generated when the original conceptualization of the Artist-Fan Engagement Model was revised in order to run the necessary statistical tests. While this finding was unexpected in terms of the study, anecdotally there has always seemed to be a connection between the artist, their music, and the audience. The relationship between these two variables has seemingly been a key feature in many music marketing campaigns over the years, especially when introducing new recorded music to fans of established musical acts.
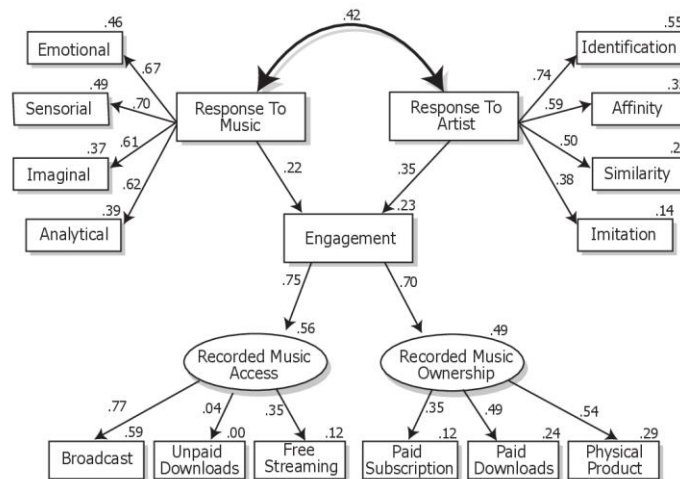
$\chi^2[119] = 2920.31; p = .000;$ n.s.

Figure 2: Revised artist-fan engagement model

Within the sample data, the research outcomes indicated strong correlations among the "Response To Artist" and its various facets in answer to the first research question: "Identification" (r = .74); "Affinity" (r = .59); "Similarity" (r = .50); and "Imitation" (r = .38).

These findings were consistent with previous studies (Shen 2009; Shen & Zhou 2011). In response to the second research question, all of the listening responses had strong associations to the "Response To Music" construct: "Emotional" ($r = .67$); "Sensorial" ($r = .70$); "Imaginal" ($r = .61$); and "Analytical" ($r = .62$).

Support was found for Research Question 3 as well. Both "Response To Artist" ($r = .35$) and "Response To Music" ($r = .22$) were determined to influence audience engagement. In both cases, there were moderately positive relationships between these constructs and "Engagement," although "Response To Artist" was stronger than "Response To Music." This finding was not unexpected since the "Response To Artist" variable contains the component of human interaction between the various parties (i.e., artist and fan).

In response to research question 4, "Engagement" highlighted strong positive correlations that surprisingly influenced both the "Recorded Music Access" ($r = .75$) and "Recorded Music Ownership" ($r = .70$) variables. The strong relationship between "Engagement" and "Recorded Music Access" was not unexpected, given the market shift of music consumption preferences toward streaming, especially with freemium streaming in widespread use. The strong relationship between "Recorded Music Ownership" and "Engagement" was unexpected, due to the fact that revenues from physical products and music downloads have substantially declined over the past few years.

5   Conclusion

The Artist-Fan Engagement Model is a complex model, with numerous "moving parts." Still, it is important to understand how the various theoretical elements of the model can be strategically applied within a music artist's overall marketing plan for recorded music product. As Tom Silverman, founder of both the Tommy Boy record label and the New Music Seminar, famously stated several years ago, "nobody knows where the music business is going, but I know one thing: it's going to be about fan-artist relationships and how you monetize that" (Halperin, 2011). And indeed, many artists are aware of *"the fundamental im-*

portance of the direct engagement with their audiences, of the resources that are required to build this relationship, and of the role of new technologies in enabling and developing it" (Bernardo & Martins 2014: 12). Many successful music artists have already found enormous success (whether knowingly or unknowingly) building upon the various facets of the "Response To Artist" and "Response To Music" variables within the relationship to their fan base.

The first question which the initial study sought to answer was how the "Response To Artist" variable related to the PSI factors of "Identification," "Affinity," "Similarity," and "Imitation." Given the strong relationships among its various facets: "Identification" (r = .74); "Affinity" (r = .59); "Similarity" (r = .50); and "Imitation" (r = .38), the marketing focus should be upon creating promotional and sales content to help draw potential fans toward engagement with the music artist. Narrative content (e.g., video interviews) that contains both the affective and cognitive elements necessary to support the music artist relationship with their audience would be helpful. Music publicist Ariel Hyatt has suggested one of the keys to success involving the relationship between music artists and their fan base is that *"consumers want more personal interactions and artists should engage fans before trying to sell to them"* (Cusic 2012). This parasocial relationship between the artist and their fan base can be utilized whether the recorded music is front-line, mid-line, or catalogue product. Pop artist Taylor Swift has been heralded across the media as a recording artist who enjoys this type of relationship with her fans. A writer for the *L.A. Times* wrote the following about Taylor and her fans:

"she has brilliantly created a level of conversation with her followers that most other entertainers can only dream of … Swift has made it abundantly clear that she is paying equal attention to what her fans are doing: their wants, needs, joys, fears and dreams, and she incorporates that awareness into an ongoing dialogue with them" (Lewis 2015).

Next, research question 2 focused upon the listening responses around the "Response To Music" variable. Specifically, there were quan-

tified relationships between "Response To Music" and its various facets: "Emotional" (r = .67); "Sensorial" (r = .70); "Imaginal" (r = .61); and "Analytical" (r = .62). These results suggest that when the music artist and their recording team (i.e., music producers, engineers, songwriters) are working in the studio, the songs they create from an Artists and Repertoire (A&R) perspective should build upon these four listening responses in terms of music creation. Jimmy Harnen, President of Nashville's Big Machine Label Group, spoke to this point, "Great music does a lot of things. It makes your toe tap, your heart pound, and your mind think, and as long as it touches your soul in one way or another, it's real" (Waddell 2013: 24). And, as Luck (2016: 57) has pointed out, *"we do not just listen to music; we experience it on a range of levels."*

The third research question examined how "Engagement" was related to the "Response To Artist" and "Response To Music" variables. Again, the research results did find support for these relationships: "Response To Artist" (r = .35) and "Response To Music" (r = .22), albeit both moderately positive correlations. It was not necessarily surprising that the respondents felt more inclined toward engagement with the artist, rather than the music, once a human connection between the two parties was established. What the results seemed to indicate is that the music is important, but the artist's connection to their audience is even more important. The individual's response to the artist helps drive the mediated parasocial relationship between both parties.

In research question 4, it was interesting to consider how "Engagement" influenced whether an individual chose to access or own recorded music product. "Engagement" was found to have surprisingly strong positive correlations that influenced both "Recorded Music Access" (r = .75) and "Recorded Music Ownership" (r = .70). The strength of "Recorded Music Ownership" was a bit surprising, even though the initial study was conducted during the time-period when streaming music was in its infancy, and digital downloads dominating the U.S. market (IFPI, 2012). It is expected, when the study is rerun, that "Recorded Music Access" correlations will be stronger than that of "Recorded Music Ownership,"

especially given the market shift towards streaming services, especially with the younger audience demographics.

In reviewing the findings from the eight survey questions that focused upon the "Recorded Music Access" variable, "Broadcast" (r = .77) received the strongest level of empirical support. This was not unexpected since the "Broadcast" variable was created by combining several measures related to an individual's consumption of music via radio, television, and YouTube access. It is true that YouTube is not a traditional broadcast medium in the same sense as radio or television. However, studies of consumers aged 13-24 reported watching 12.1 hours per week on YouTube, social media, and other online sources as compared to traditional television at 8.2 hours weekly. 67 percent of the respondents agreed that YouTube was a "must-have video source" (Spangler, 2016). Other study findings were a bit surprising, with a non-significant relationship between "Recorded Music Access" and "Unpaid Downloads" (r = .04). It is speculated however, that, with a respondent sample of music business students and music business insiders, social desirability may have been an issue. If these individuals were involved in illegal downloading of pirated recorded music, they may have not wanted to reveal this information in a survey, especially if they are employed, or want to be employed, in the music industry. It may also be true that many individuals were using legal streaming services such as Spotify and Pandora to consume their music, rather than BitTorrent piracy sites.

The relationships among "Recorded Music Ownership" and the various paid streaming, paid downloads, and physical product variables, were also examined. The correlation between "Recorded Music Ownership" and "Paid Subscription" was exactly the same as "Free Streaming" (r = .12). These results were surprising, given the expectation was that both outcomes were expected to be stronger in relation to streaming services. However, this expectation was complicated by the fact that only two questions were devoted to understanding the respondent's streaming consumption use, whether through the freemium or paid subscription model.

The correlation between "Recorded Music Ownership" and "Paid Downloads" was also found to be relatively strong ($r = .49$), which made sense, given that the paid download business model had not yet begun to decline at the time the research study was undertaken. "Paid Downloads" had been expected to have the strongest relationship to "Recorded Music Ownership" given digital music's popularity and ease of use at the time of the initial study. Then again, research has shown that 81 percent of the music on an individual's personal iTunes accounts never gets played (Motal 2011).

The correlation between "Recorded Music Ownership" and "Physical Product" ($r = .54$) was found to be the strongest among the three ownership variables. This was surprising, given that physical sales have been in a serious decline for many years. A 2013 Nielsen study discussed how content was becoming even more integral to the music marketing process, commenting "artists and retailers and providers are getting together and making really great packages of content with extra songs, live tracks, booklets, behind-the-scenes (video), things that enable fans to become more engaged" (Gunderson 2013). Perhaps the reason some study respondents reported such a strong positive correlation toward product ownership is that they were superfans of the music artist whose song they listed in the survey. Thus, these respondents may be predisposed to buy the music by these artists because they want to have actual ownership of the given music product, whether compact disc, vinyl, or cassette.

The music market has changed rapidly over the past five years since the initial study with the growth of the streaming market. David Bakula, Nielsen's Senior Vice President of Music Industry Insights, commented that *"The rapid adoption of streaming platforms by consumers has generated engagement with music on a scale that we've never seen before"* (Aswad 2017). This marketplace shift is key, given that many individuals, especially the younger audience, deal squarely in streaming access than music product ownership (AudienceNet 2017).

In conclusion, the initial study centred around the Artist-Fan Engagement Model, based on the above discussion, provides four main "takeaway" points:

#1. The music often introduces the artist to the audience through various promotional platforms (e.g., Spotify Weekly Discover Playlist). Once the fan is "in the know" about the act and his or her recorded music, the research indicates the focus switches towards mediated engagement with the artist's persona.

#2. Streaming platforms help generate music engagement between the artist and their fan base. The audience, especially those in the younger demographics, engage with the artist through video or audio streamed content. Engagement in the streaming sector between music artists and their fans are helping to revive the music industry with the rise of music revenues for the third consecutive year internationally, with growth in the streaming arena of 8.1 percent overall in 2017 alone (IFPI 2018).

#3. Physical product ownership still seems to be important. While physical music consumption in 2017, physical product sales still accounted for 30 percent of the global music market. As noted previously, global sales of vinyl record sales grew by 22.3 percent overall during the same time-period, accounting for 3.7 percent of the international music market in 2017 (IPFI 2018: 13). These findings seemingly cement the idea that superfans will still buy physical artefacts connected with their favourite artists.

#4. All of the variables discussed within the Artist-Fan Engagement Model are important consideration factors within an artist's music marketing plan around a recorded music release. The initial findings suggest that the Artist-Fan Engagement Model can be used to help the artist and their management team best think through how to cohesively approach the music marketplace.

Contribution. It is hoped that the findings from this initial study will help inspire interested academics and music industry professionals to join together to better understand the nuances of artist engagement in relation to music consumption. The blending of PSI and hedonic music consumption theory has components that can be practically applied by music industry professionals for marketing and monetization purposes. Additionally, the research findings can be used to help provide a strategic foundational basis from which a music artist's team can start to build or revitalize an artist's career across numerous components.

Limitations. There were several study limitations. First, this convenience sample was focused upon the responses of U.S. music industry executives and undergraduate college students who have a strong interest in working in the music industry. Thus, these results cannot be generalized to the greater public from this highly targeted Caucasian sample population that preferred pop and rock music. Ways to circumvent this limitation in future studies will be to post the survey on sites such as the U.S. social media platform Reddit, which in addition to containing news information, allows for surveys to reach a large and diverse audience. Finally, the initial study was conducted in early 2013, and the global music industry has shifted substantially from music downloads to music streaming in terms of overall consumption.

Future research. The current plan is to continue to develop the different facets within the Artist-Fan Engagement Model. This includes further exploration of psychological ownership within the "Recorded Music Ownership" variable. Questions related to Apple Music will be added within the "Paid Subscription" section of the survey, now that the organization is competing squarely within the interactive music subscription space as of June 2015 with a catalogue of 50 million songs (Apple, 2018). It has been reported that the company is second only to Spotify in the streaming market, with 50 million subscribers to Spotify's 75 million users (Purcell 2018). Other areas to explore include framing "co-creation" and "presumption" within the "Engagement" variable. Co-creation is defined as the "joint creation of value by the company and the customer" (Prahalad & Ramaswamy 2004: 8) and prosumption, as

"the intertwining of consumer production and consumption" (Bajde, Kos Koklic & Bajde 2015). Other questions of exploration include the question of how does reframing of "Engagement" variable with these new attributes affect the dichotomy of access and ownership variables? Following the update of the Artist-Fan Engagement Model, the study will be re-run to determine if the overall results are similar to those found in 2013 sample. Besides conducting an online survey to a diverse and global audience base, hopes are to triangulate the data using a mixed method approach including the use of individual interviews and focus groups.

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