

# **A new era of consumer marketing? An application of co-creational marketing in the music industry**

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## **Brief Bios**

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### **Abstract**

**Purpose:** This paper addresses the emerging post-millennium trends in co-creational marketing, in the context of how these trends apply to the recorded and live sectors of the music industry. Consideration of marketing as a broadened concept to include societal processes has implications not only for the marketing concept itself, but for the roles of the parties implicitly involved in the marketing process. Therefore, the standard and polarising marketing clichés of ‘firm and customer,’ ‘buyer and seller,’ and ‘producer and consumer’ may be replaced with a more contemporary marketing approach in which value can be created and shared by either party.

### **Design/Methodology/approach:**

Initially the paper provides a review of contemporary literature on co-creational aspects of marketing and a subsequent identification of typologies of co-creation practices. Conceptual frameworks pertaining to the relationships of these typologies are then proposed. An extensive review and analysis of journal articles, industry reports and news sources on music industry marketing was conducted. From this review and analysis, thirty examples of co-creational marketing were identified. The music industry was chosen as it constitutes a relevant and contemporary marketing context due to the existence of interactive technology and changing consumer preferences regarding their interaction with music intermediaries and against a context of digital piracy.

**Findings:** Five typologies of co-creational marketing were found to be relevant to the music industry. Key examples of co-creational marketing within the music industry are discussed and analysed in relation to the identified typologies and conceptual frameworks.

**Research limitations/implications:** The relevancy of co-creational marketing practices to the music industry is investigated, followed by consideration of managerial implications and future research directions.

**Originality/value:** The theoretical prospect of value co-creation through active consumer contributions to the marketing process is not revolutionary or new, but the implications of such a potential shift in power or influence has developed into a contemporary challenge for marketers.

**Key words:** consumer marketing, co-creation, marketing management, music industry

## **Introduction**

The conceptualisation of marketing as a societal process and the consideration of what constitutes marketing phenomenon has been at the heart of the long-standing debate on broadening the marketing concept. Kotler's (2000, p. 4) definition of marketing, at the turn of the century, as "a societal process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating, offering and freely exchanging products and services of value with others" illustrates an update in the age-old debate. This definition is significant for proposing a broadening of not just the marketing concept itself, but of the roles implicit in the parties involved in the marketing process. Therefore, the standard and polarising marketing clichés of 'firm and customer,' 'buyer and seller,' and 'producer and consumer' have been replaced with a more contemporary marketing focus in which value can be created and shared by either party. The theoretical prospect of value co-creation through active consumer contributions to the marketing process is not revolutionary or new, however since Kotler's millennial definition, there has been a growing focus on consumer value co-creation. Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2000, 2002, 2004a and b) first coined the term 'value co-creation', which has appeared in many academic papers and texts. Value creation and co-creation have especially featured in the development of Vargo and Lusch's Service-Dominant Logic theories (Vargo and Lusch 2004, 2008; Lusch and Vargo 2006) and have raised much debate since (Zwick et al, 2008; Gronroos 2008; 2011). It would appear that the concept of co-creation has developed into a contemporary challenge for both academics and marketers.

The emerging post-millennium trends in co-creational marketing are considered in the context of how these trends apply to the music industry, where constantly evolving technology has led to changing consumer preferences and behaviour. The purpose of the paper is to identify typologies of co-creational marketing and to analyse these in relation to their relevance to recorded and live sectors of the music industry. In so doing, the study will ascertain the value of co-creational typologies to the industry in relation to recognising any potential shift in power or influence and challenge for marketers.

The decision to incorporate both live and recorded music perspectives into this paper stems from the contextually distinct ways in which the relationship between music consumption and interaction is discussed in the literature (Hausman, 2011); and as there has been minimal academic discussion on co-creational marketing from these industry contexts, this paper aims to provide some insights through the contextual analysis and justification of original co-creational typologies and conceptual frameworks. This will be achieved through the review and discussion of extant literature relating to contemporary co-creational marketing practices and then with illustrative examples from music industry research papers and news reports.

### **A new era of consumer marketing**

Over the last decade many authors have acknowledged that the traditional demarcation between producers and consumers has become blurred and distorted as consumers assume increasingly active roles in the marketing process (Bloom, 2006; Cova and Dalli, 2008; Hoffbrand, 2007; Konczal, 2008). It is generally agreed that one of the main factors influencing this change is technological advancements in the digital age (Berthon, Pitt and Campbell, 2008; Christodoulides, 2009; Jeong and Jeon, 2008). In particular, some of the main technological drivers cited include the Internet (Akar and Topcu, 2011; Dhar and Chang, 2007) and web 2.0 technologies (Burmam, 2010; Daugherty, Eastin and Bright, 2008; Hardey, 2011). The other main influential factors are social functions which include the increase in consumers' desire to be interactive (Daugherty *et al.*, 2008) and the resistance to oppressive marketing controls (Cova and Dalli, 2008). The natural convergence of these technological and social factors over the last decade has resulted in an even more succinct consumer marketing catalyst in the form of social media (Cox, Burgess, Sellitto and Buultjens, 2009; Christodoulides, 2009; Gray, 2007; O'Connor, 2010; Smith, 2009) which has arguably shifted the boundaries of both marketing and consumer behaviour (Hardey, 2011). It is this synthesis of social communication and social production and the related rise in consumer participation of the marketing process facilitated by

these developments that has led to an era of 'Co-Creational Marketing' (Zwick, Bonzu and Darmody, 2008).

Co-creational marketing represents a radicalisation of the consumer-centricity that is a cornerstone of 'Kotlerite' marketing thought (Zwick et al, 2008). Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004) argued for a reconceptualisation of the market from a mundane site of exchange to a vibrant 'communication hive' (Tapscott and Williams 2006) where consumers can apply and enhance their own value and the market is a platform for participation (Terranova 2000). Simultaneously Vargo and Lusch's (2004; 2008; Lusch and Vargo 2006) much published and discussed Service Dominant Logic literature has also raised the profile of co-creational marketing. According to these authors, the customer is always a co-producer of value and all marketing can do is offer 'value propositions' or suggestions to consumers (Vargo and Lusch, 2004). This work has led to many debates about what value co-creation actually means. Gronroos (2006; 2011) argues that the service-dominant logic's premise that the customer is always a co-creator of value, leads to the logical conclusion that both the firm and the customer are involved in an unspecified, all-encompassing process of co-creation. As such the relative importance of the two parties, and their roles in processes leading to value for the customer, is difficult to establish (Gronroos, 2011, p287). This study focuses on customer co-creation of value in the context of the changing nature of marketing within the music industry.

### **Typologies of co-creational marketing practices**

Some academics have recently suggested that the facilitation of co-creation in consumer marketing necessitates the institutionalisation of control over both consumers and the market (Cova, Dalli and Zwick, 2011). However, Gray (2007) has argued that it is a perceived loss of control that has resulted in the apprehension of co-creational marketing practices from advertisers. Considering the importance of control within the marketing concept over the decades, and its inclusion in some of the seminal

marketing definitions (for example, Kotler, 1967, 1982), it is evident why some academics have acknowledged the sharing or conceding of this control as a paradigm shift in the fundamental principles of marketing (Fisher and Smith, 2011; Zwick *et al.*, 2008). The level of involvement between companies and consumers has also been cited as a central aspect in co-creational marketing practices (Pongsakornrunsilp and Schroeder, 2009). Banks and Deuze (2009) have suggested that this contemporary corporate desire for increased consumer involvement in both the creation and circulation of media content is becoming increasingly mandatory.

It appears that control and involvement are two distinct but interrelated variables which are implicit in co-creational marketing practices. The level of control and the level of involvement exerted by consumers in contemporary marketing campaigns will naturally vary and fluctuate according to the context of co-creational marketing being implemented. A preliminary review of the contemporary literature has resulted in the identification of five distinct typologies of co-creational marketing; viral marketing, sponsored User-Generated Brand (UGB) marketing, User-Generated Content (UGC) marketing, vigilante marketing and prosumer marketing. A brief overview of these identified typologies from the context of control and involvement levels and a comparative analysis follow.

### ***Viral marketing***

Viral marketing encompasses the strategic placement of an already-completed marketing message online in order to encourage or 'recruit' consumers to pass on to their like-minded peers (Dobele, Toleman and Beverland, 2005; Singh, Veron-Jackson and Cullinane, 2008; Subramani and Rajagopalan, 2003). This constitutes turning customers into what Phelps, Lewis, Mobilio, Perry and Raman (2004) describe as a 'marketing force,' in which the principal purpose is to generate brand awareness or 'buzz' (Ferguson, 2008; Ho and Dempsey, 2010; Subramani and Rajagopalan, 2003). The level of consumer control and involvement appear to be minimal and limited to referrals of pre-

constructed marketing messages. The marketer, alternatively, has complete artistic control of the message; however there is a loss of distribution control once consumers become involved through social media channels (Dobele *et al.*, 2005; Ferguson, 2008; Subramani and Rajagopalan, 2003). This aspect of ‘free-will’ referrals by consumers is perhaps a key benefit to viral marketing popularity due to the implications of natural selection and highly relevant targeting (Bampo, Ewing, Mather, Stewart and Wallace, 2008; Singh *et al.*, 2008). This typology also exhibits attributes of increased diffusion speed and reduced alteration likelihood (Bampo *et al.*, 2008) which may prove beneficial to marketers in terms of maintaining control whilst encouraging involvement from consumers. In practical terms, Dobele *et al.* (2005) have suggested the implications of cost efficiencies through viral campaigns – an aspect which may prove particularly significant to SME marketing agencies on reduced campaign budgets. However, Subramani and Rajagopalan (2003, p. 306) have warned that “success hinges upon the recognition of the strong need for influencers to be viewed as knowledgeable helpers in the social network rather than as agents of the marketer” – a view concurred by other academics who are concerned over the negative connotations of inauthentic word-of-mouth referrals (Phelps *et al.*, 2004; Stevenson, 2008; Subramani and Rajagopalan, 2003; Watts and Peretti, 2007). Sincerity is most certainly vital for this typology as Internet-savvy consumers are becoming increasingly suspicious of falsified viral marketing strategies. Due to the unidirectional aspects of consumer control and involvement, Singh *et al.* (2008) have suggested that this co-creational marketing typology may have a limited lifespan. Other academics have raised cautions regarding the reliability of viral properties of marketing messages (Watts and Peretti, 2007) or the potential misinterpretation of these messages as spam (Stevenson, 2008). Despite these criticisms, this co-creational marketing typology may prove to be particularly effective at stimulating trial and adoption of products and services whilst attaining a measurable scale for the extent and reach of marketing campaigns; Ferguson (2008, p. 179) has even proclaimed that “viral marketing has become the defining marketing trend of the decade.”



### ***Sponsored user-generated branding***

Sponsored user-generated branding has been described as “actively asking for consumer contributions through blogs, contests, voting, selected fan contributions or other forms of campaigns” (Burmam, 2010, p. 2). With this method, the consumer has more involvement in the marketing process through selected contributions and opinions, although the campaigns are still initiated and regulated by the organisation (Luetjens and Stanforth, 2007; Shenkan and Sichel, 2007). Although the increase in consumer control is limited by these organisational guidelines, this co-creational marketing typology may represent, to a certain extent, the creation of a consumer environment (Luetjens and Stanforth, 2007) in which the marketing message can develop and evolve. For the marketer, control is initially maintained by the structured specifications through which consumers are encouraged to participate in the marketing process.

Shenkan and Sichel (2007) have suggested that marketers are very willing to experiment with this co-creational marketing typology because of the ongoing ability to influence and leverage the consumer brand perceptions. However, in some cases the organisational involvement extends to incentivisation, which can lead to issues of inauthentic or plagiarized contributions from consumers seeking quick rewards (Lanyado, 2009). This could potentially lead to negative brand associations (Hoffbrand, 2007), and may require further financial investment from the marketer to reverse negative public relations. This is generally offset, however, by the benefits which include more integrated customer relations through consumers feeling that their opinions and actions are influencing the campaign (Rubach, 2007), and advertising spend is again reduced as more traditional advertising channels are no longer vital. Overall, it appears that consumer response to this co-creational marketing typology is generally more positive due to the increase in emotional involvement with the brand. This is summarised by Brown (2004, p. 65) who affirms that “conscripting the consumer is one of the most striking marketing trends of recent years.”

### ***User-generated content marketing***

User-generated content marketing incorporates “blogs, mash-ups, online reviews, peer-to-peer Q&As, video clips, social networks, Second Life avatars” (Gray, 2007, p. 23). The balance of marketing control and ownership over the communication content is now generally inclined more towards consumers (Akar and Topcu, 2011; Nutley, 2007). It has been suggested that this may constitute an advertising revolution (Berthon *et al.*, 2008; Luetjens and Stanforth, 2007) as advertising control is liberated from the marketer and the consumer is now perceived as the broadcaster. However, history has taught that revolution can result in anarchy unless order is restored, and indeed Daugherty *et al.* (2008) have cautioned that, with this co-creational marketing typology, greater organisational focus must be placed on understanding consumer motivations and actions in this tentative and contemporary marketing arena. Marketers do maintain some influence over UGC practices - arguably through its grounding in traditional marketing practices and values (Akar and Topcu, 2011). Some marketers seek to enhance this influence by developing an online presence in UGC spaces (Gray, 2007) as there is much opportunity for developing relationship-building activities with consumers. Another valid reason for a presence in these spaces would be for regulatory action – due to increasing issues with inappropriate content, illegitimate ratings and system manipulation (Nutley, 2007; O’Connor, 2010).

Despite these drawbacks, UGC marketing has been cited as a global phenomenon (Gretzel, Kang and Lee, 2008) on account of the associated shifts in how consumers are fundamentally obtaining and sharing information. By maintaining a presence in these spaces, marketers are also tapping into this vast information source (Tsai, 2007); although Rubach (2007) warns that the successful assimilation of a company presence into a UGC space will not constitute an immediate resolution to communication issues. Overall, this co-creational marketing typology has proven to be beneficial to marketers through cost-efficiencies (Nutley, 2007), and also to consumers through creative freedom and more targeted delivery platforms. Hardey (2011, p. 14) has summarised the impact of this typology by stating that

“social media and accompanying UGC have shifted the boundaries where marketing, consumer behaviour and research converge to occupy an information-led and transparent world.”

### ***Vigilante marketing***

This co-creational marketing typology can be described as “unpaid advertising and marketing efforts ... undertaken by brand loyalists on behalf of the brand” (Muniz, Jnr. and Schau, 2007, p. 35). Consumers assume complete artistic and logistical control and involvement in the marketing of a product or service, most often without the organisation’s knowledge or consent (Berthon et al., 2008). The organisational loss of control may constitute a significant risk as the consumers’ intentions may potentially be to fundamentally affect the perception or values of the brand (Berthon et al., 2008; Christodoulides, 2009). However, the majority of these consumers invest their time and effort into these vigilante campaigns because of their devotion to the brand and creative skills (Muniz, Jnr. and Schau, 2007). These attributes may prove beneficial to the marketer as these brand enthusiasts often display strong artistic and marketing abilities. Organisational control is limited to embracing and sharing these campaigns (Christodoulides, 2009) - much in the same way that consumers do for viral marketing campaigns, and organisational involvement in the marketing process is now virtually non-existent. As Berthon *et al.* (2008, p. 6) assert, “the creation of advertisements is no longer the prerogative of the organization or its designated ad agency, and the consequences are significant.”

### ***Prosumer marketing***

A prosumer can be defined as “a consumer who becomes involved in the design and manufacture of products and services so they can be made to individual specification” (Konczal, 2008, p. 22). In some extreme cases, prosumers can bypass the marketing process altogether in order to self-produce their own items (Kotler, 1986). This has potentially destructive effects for the marketer as this may result in a drop in sales on account of the lack of demand for the marketed product and the associated lack

of communication and relationship building opportunities. In the majority of cases, however, consumer involvement does not extend to the manufacture stage and therefore marketers maintain a level of control over the product and the price. Prosumers will still exhibit dominating levels of control and involvement akin to vigilante marketers – except in this instance their elevated creative influence is not targeted at the marketing process itself - rather the specification of the products and secondary activities such as pricing and customer services (Konczal, 2008). Although the concept of the prosumer was first identified in 1980 (Bloom, 2006), it has recently received a resurgence in the digital age (Humphreys and Grayson, 2008). Incorporating consumers into the product development stage of the marketing campaign may become increasingly commonplace and important in the future, especially in markets where research and development provides the competitive vantage point (Shenkan and Sichel, 2007). The contemporary significance of this co-creational marketing typology is encapsulated by Konczal (2008, p. 23) who states that “prosumers represent one of the fastest growing and highest value segments in today’s communications market.”

### **Alternative literary proposals of co-creational marketing typologies**

In addition to the five co-creational marketing typologies considered and discussed above it is also useful to consider alternative proposals of co-creational marketing typologies from other scholars to see where they fit within this framework and their advantages and disadvantages to help contextualise the typologies. Dobeles *et al.* (2005, p. 114) cite the drop-off of sales of new-release cinema tickets after the initial opening night as exemplary of ‘convergence marketing’ which they describe as “a very specific type of word-of-mouth communication about a brand or product that leads to explosive self-generating demand—or ruin.” This adheres to the typology of ‘viral marketing’ discussed above which also incorporates the elements of regenerating the marketing message to peers and the associated risks inherent in doing so. However, by limiting this convergence marketing to WoM communication of intangible messages (as illustrated in the example of cinema tickets drop-off due to verbal opinionated

messages to peers), Dobele *et al.* do not consider the potential implications for tangible regeneration of the marketing message in the digital environment as acknowledged in the ‘viral marketing’ co-creational typology.

In terms of the UGC space, Burmann (2010) proposes a typology of co-creational marketing in the form of ‘Stimulated UGC’ marketing in which the creation of this content is motivated by brand management and therefore becomes more brand-associated. However, this proposed typology incorporates two potentially contradictory aspects of co-creational marketing – the *creation* of the content against the *brand motivations* of this creation from the marketer. It therefore raises the question of whether a marketing typology could be appropriately classified as *user-generated* if the motivations behind it are so heavily influenced by brand sponsorship. The literature review of UGC marketing above shows that there is much general consensus among contemporary academics that true UGC marketing is sufficiently differentiated from these branded associations, therefore providing adequate justification for the demarcation of this ‘Stimulated UGC’ marketing into the typologies of ‘Sponsored UGB Marketing’ and ‘UGC Marketing’ discussed above.

### **Future implications for typologies of co-creational marketing**

For viral marketing practices, Ferguson (2008) believes that in future marketers will place a greater emphasis on achieving high returns on investment into these campaigns, and that will ultimately lead to an assimilation of more successful viral marketing techniques and loyalty marketing efforts. Stevenson (2008) has also suggested that evidence exists relating to the positive evolution prospects of viral marketing; this is possibly due to the measurable nature of the extent and reach of this typology. For UGC marketing, it has been postulated that this market will expand greatly in the near future – in terms of both size and importance (Daugherty *et al.*, 2008; Gretzel *et al.*, 2008), and that success in this market may depend on determining key motivational factors relating to consumption and creation

attitudes. Hardey (2011) has also recently stated that effective management of UGC marketing practices in the current climate may constitute a significant differential advantage in the future in terms of understanding and predicting consumer preferences and market research directions. For vigilante marketing practices, it appears that it will be consumers who will ultimately dictate its future development (Christodoulides, 2009), and therefore marketers should co-ordinate their organisational efforts into managing and optimising this marketing typology as opposed to attempting to curtail it (Berthon et al., 2008). For prosumer marketing, Shenkan and Sichel (2007) have predicted that as consumers become increasingly interested in the development process of products and services, marketers must again embrace this consumer preference and actively encourage closer collaborations in the buyer-seller relationship.

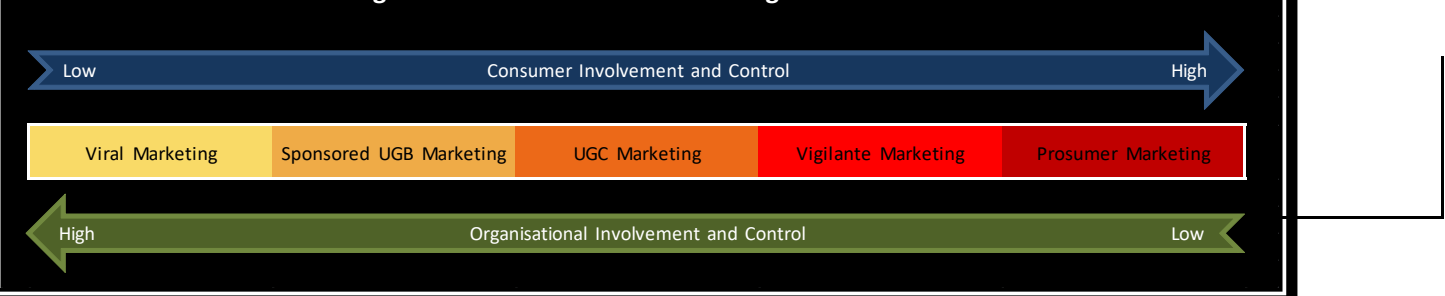
### **A conceptual framework for co-creational marketing**

Table 1 has been formulated to summarise the key discussion points relating to the distinct co-creational marketing typologies, and to illustrate any cross-sectional trends. Although it indicates how some of these types of consumer marketing originated over thirty years ago, this paper highlights relationships between them which collectively contribute towards post-millennial trends in consumer marketing. These relationships are based on theoretical assumptions that the level of control is directly proportional to the level of involvement for both the consumer and the organisation in each of these typologies of co-creational marketing. This overview illustrates how these typologies relate to each other through incremental correlations between the consumer and the organisation in terms of involvement and control.

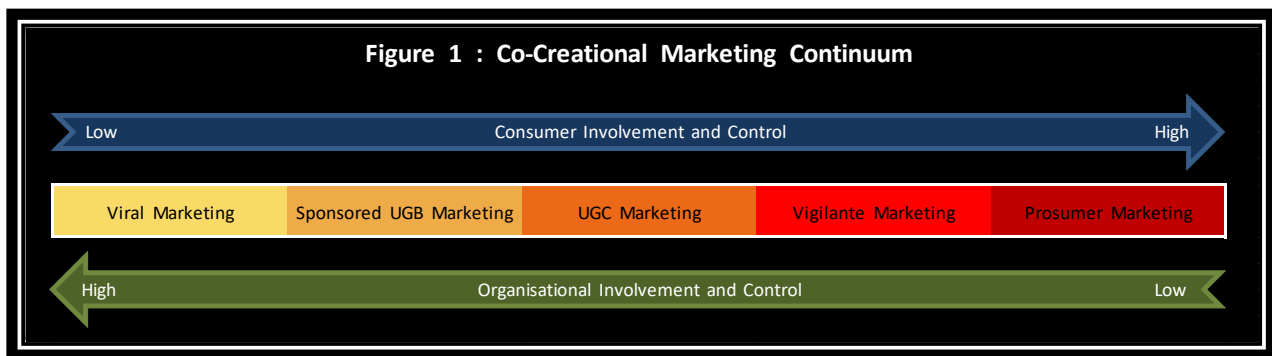
**Table 1 : Comparative Summary of Typologies of Co-Creational Marketing**

	<b>Viral Marketing</b>	<b>Sponsored UGB</b>	<b>User-Generated Content</b>	<b>Vigilante Marketing</b>	<b>Prosumer Marketing</b>
<b>Origins/ Authors</b>	Steve Jurvetson – 1996Dobelet al 2005 Singh et al 2008 Subramani & Rajugoplan 2003	Burmann 2010 Luetjens & Stanforth 2007 Shenkan & Sichel 2007	Grey 2007 Gretzel, Kang & Lee 2008 Akar & Topcu 2011 Nutley 2007	Muniz & Schau 2007 Berthon et al 2008 Christodoulides 2009	Alvin Toffler – 1980 Konczal 2008 Bloom 2006 Humphreys & Grayson 2008
<b>Alternative Terminology</b>	Buzz Reaching the Tipping Point Convergence Marketing	Stimulated UGC	Consumer-Generated Media Consumer to Consumer eMarketing Electronic Word-of-Mouth marketing Consumer-Generated Content	Homebrew Ads Folk Ads Open Source Branding	Co-production
<b>Consumer Control / Involvement</b>	Minimal Control - Marketing Process Dictated by Organisation Involvement Limited to Referrals	More Control and Involvement through Creation of Consumer Environment  Control Involvement Limited by Organisational Guidelines  More Involvement through Organisational Incentives	Owned and Controlled by Consumers Consumer has Become 'Broadcaster'. Advertising Liberated from Firm  Involvement through Blogs, Mash-Ups, Online Reviews, P2P Q&As, Video Clips, Social Networks, Second Life avatars	Maximal Involvement for Purposes of Intrinsic Enjoyment, Self-Promotion or to Change Perceptions Involvement includes Unpaid Advertising and Marketing Efforts Maximal Control through Crafting Ads and Broadcasting them Consumers Gain Control of Brand Values	Highly Involved in Design / Manufacture of Products / Services Control over Individual Specification Rising Control over Pricing & Customer Services  Extreme Prosumers Produce their own Goods / Services
<b>Organisational Control / Involvement</b>	Maximum Control of Marketing Process  Involvement Includes Encouraging / Recruiting Consumers to Refer Message	Control Largely Maintained through Regulations to Consumer Contributions Some Control Lost to Consumers  Involvement Lessened by Consumer Contributions	Minimal Control UGC Influenced by Marketers  Some Involvement through Building Presence in UGC spaces	Managers' Role Shift from Control to Facilitation of Sharing Extensive Loss of Control of Brand Values	Organisations plan & cooperate with consumers
<b>Benefits</b>	Natural Selection Process Reduced Redundancy - Communication More Targeted Speed of Diffusion Reduced Likelihood of Message Alterations Incurs Little Expense Voluntary (Rather Than Paid Testimonial) May be Viewed More Favourably by Recipient More Effective Targeting by Knowledgeable Referers Extent and Reach Measurable Stimulates Trial, Adoption & Use of Products / Services	Drives Down Spend on Traditional TV Ads Shows Customers that their Views Matter	Profound Impacts on how Users Obtain / Share Info Platform for Successful Digital Brands Cheap and Plentiful Delivers what the Audience Wants Potent Source of Information	Consumer Skill in Creation of Communications "Consumers Acting as Self-Appointed Brand Promoters Consumers have Firm Loyalty for Product / Service	One of the fastest growing and highest value segments
<b>Issues</b>	Bad News Travels Fast Generally Unidirectional with Limited Life Span Creation of Unfavourable Attitudes Towards Products Reduces Effectiveness of Knowledge-Sharing Acts Creation of Changes / Shifts to Core Brand or Message Can be Seen as Spam Reliably Designing Viral Messages Difficult Predicting Referers Difficult	May Encourage "Fake" Reviews gleaned from Other Reviews	Risk of Alienating Advertisers Inappropriate Content UGC must be Rigorously Policed Questions about Legitimacy of Ratings Easy to Potentially Manipulate System Not an Instant Panacea to Comms Problems	Potential Change in Brand Values Amateur Campaigns Decrease Brand perceptions	Level or degree of co-operation that is feasible
<b>Future Predictions</b>	Merging of Successful Techniques with Loyalty Marketing Viral Marketing will Continue to Evolve		Continued evolution of User-Generated Content IT Technology will become more usable	Vigilante Marketing will grow in prominence and effect Managers must consider its effects in the future	Marketers will incorporate users more into product-development process

Figure 1 : Co-Creational Marketing Continuum



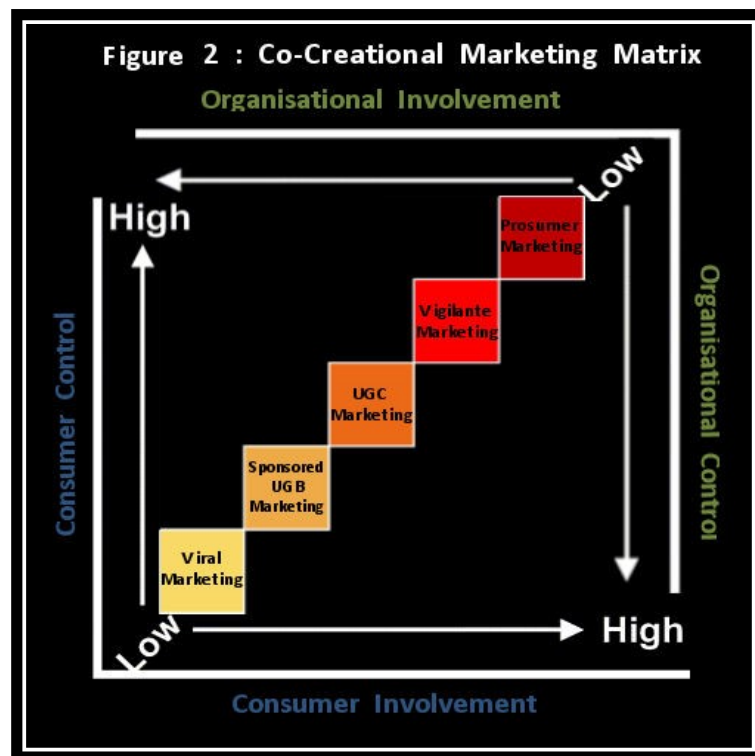
Specifically, with each transition from viral marketing towards prosumer marketing, the level of involvement and control rises for the consumer and falls for the organisation, with an assumption that the rise in involvement and control for the consumer will always directly correlate to a simultaneous fall for the organisation and vice versa. This is perhaps indicative of a bi-directional continuum (see Figure 1) in which the relationships between the identified typologies are visualised from the perspective of both the consumer and the firm.



In the marketing literature, Moreau and Dahl (2005) have suggested that *consumer creativity* can be represented by a continuum. Their discussion focuses on the middle section of the continuum, whereas other academics have concentrated on the ‘extreme’ end of consumer creation realisation (Berthon *et al.*, 2008). However this paper attempts to analyse the relationships between distinct co-creational marketing typologies from both a consumer *and* an industry perspective to achieve a more holistic perspective. This raises the question of which conceptual framework would be most appropriate to test these hypothetical relationships and perspectives. Perhaps the use of a continuum as a framework for analysis may only be appropriate for already-proven academic theories in which substantial evidence already exists to support the definitive placement of features within this pre-defined



spectrum. Due to the exploratory nature of this theoretical study, combined with the complex and potentially bi-directional relationships between the constituent typologies and perspectives, the use of a continuum as an analytical framework may therefore be too constrictive and limiting (as often the empirical findings that fall outside of the expected norms of a study may prove most significant in the analysis stage). Therefore, the theoretical framework for co-creational marketing in this study has been reconceptualised as a matrix in which the five typologies are positioned (see Figure 2 below).



This reformulation as a matrix adds value firstly through the clear representation of the proposed co-creational marketing typologies in terms of their consumer/firm relationships. It also highlights all of the areas (in the black areas of the matrix) where examples of co-creational marketing may exist, and where the relationship between consumer/firm control and involvement are not directly proportionate. This therefore raises the questions of whether co-creational marketing examples in practice exist within the proposed typologies or elsewhere within the matrix, which examples are most effective in execution, and which areas of this matrix are under-populated and may represent important directions

for future co-creational marketing strategies. The placement of prosumer marketing on the matrix relates to the more extreme cases mentioned previously, in which consumers become immersed in both the design and manufacture stages of product development. The over-simplification of the co-creational marketing process in the figure is acknowledged, however by focusing on the relationship between the distinct typologies in the context of the variables, control and involvement, this paper presents a fresh perspective on co-creational marketing in the context of the music industry.

### **Methodology for assessing co-creational marketing in the music industry**

The music industry was chosen to investigate the five typologies of co-creational marketing model because it has a naturally high level of consumer interaction, and has also endured recent changes in marketing as a result of the development of digital technology (Bhattacharjee, Gopal, Lertwachara and Marsden, 2006; Bonner and O'Higgins, 2010; Huang, 2005; Kunze and Mai, 2007; McKenzie, 2009; Wilkinson and Thelwall, 2010). Content analysis was chosen as a methodology as it provides a useful method for conducting reviews of printed materials in a given field of study (Cullinane and Toy 2000; Pasukeviciute and Roe 2005). The specific literature to be analysed was drawn from music industry publications, academic articles, books, conference papers and on-line publications. Content analysis allows patterns to be derived in the presentation and reporting of information and it requires the codifying of qualitative and quantitative information into pre-determined categories (Guthrie et al 2004; Pasukeviciute and Roe 2005).

In this study a systematic literature search of academic journal databases and music industry news publications was carried out. Initially the literature search focussed on Business Source Premier, Emerald and Google Scholar databases. This search included various combinations of a range of key word and phrases including: 'co-creation', 'marketing', 'consumer', 'involvement', 'control', 'music', 'music industry', 'prosumer', 'UGC', 'interaction', 'viral', 'creativity' and 'vigilante'. Following this,

the study identified and reviewed the abstracts of over 200 papers. Industry research papers, news reports and commentaries were also reviewed. This led to the identification of over 60 relevant papers and publications and a review of these entire articles and printed materials was carried out. Regarding the news publications, the results from the first stage of research highlighted a number of key news sources including 'Advertising Age', 'Music Week', 'New Media Age', 'Billboard', 'Campaign (UK)', 'Precision Marketing' and 'Marketing Week'. Given the topical nature of these news publications as well as the fast turnover rates of articles, regular searches were conducted on the prospective websites during 2011 to collate any relevant and contemporary reports of interest to this study.

Further academic journal searches were also conducted at three month intervals during 2011 in order to identify recent and applicable literary sources. The categories that emerged and were used for the analysis were based upon the five typologies of co-creational marketing behaviour developed from the literature reviews in the first section of this paper. Content analysis was used to conduct a systematic search of the occurrence of words, phrases, ideas, themes and concepts that could be interpreted (Krippendorff 1980; Cullinane and Toy 2000; Guthrie et al 2004) as viral marketing, sponsored UGB marketing, UGC marketing, vigilante marketing or prosumer marketing in marketing and music sector marketing related materials. Each of the five typologies represented a category and all the relevant articles, industry reports and commentaries were reviewed for each category. From this review and analysis, thirty examples of co-creational marketing were identified. Using the knowledge regarding the distinct co-creational marketing typologies, the identified music industry examples were analysed and evaluated in terms of consumer/organisational involvement and control, and positioned in the Co-creational Marketing Matrix according to their characteristics. The findings are presented in Table 2 and will now be discussed sequentially within the context of each co-creational marketing typology.

**Table 2 Co-creational marketing matrix for the music industry**

<b>Consumer Control</b>	<b>High</b>		C3: 'Pay-What-You-Want' Model (Radiohead)		C4: Fan Powered Store (Bleep.com)	<b>Prosumer Marketing</b> P1: Fans Contribute to Song Lyrics (Jason Derulo) P2: Fans Attend Rehearsals / Songwriting Sessions (Gabby Young)
	<b>Medium - High</b>				<b>Vigilante Marketing</b> VG1: Fan-Created Music Videos	I6: Fan-Funded Model (Pledge Music) I7: Interactive Audio Adverts (Last.fm) I8: 'Mash-Ups' / Remixes (YouTube and iTunes)
	<b>Medium</b>			<b>UGC Marketing</b> U1: MP3 Blog Feedback U2: Sharing of music opinions / products through social networks (Facebook, Twitter)		
	<b>Low - Medium</b>	C1: Unrestricted Copy / Share Model C2: Streamed Live Events (Virgin Radio)	<b>Sponsored UGB Marketing</b> S1: Focus Group Discussions (MTV) S2: SMS Music Video Selection (MTV) S3: Store Location (Rough Trade) S4: Bespoke Music Radio Station (Gracenote and We7) S5: Collaborative Playlists (Apple) S6: Collaborative Artwork (OK Go) S7: Channel Partner Behaviour S8: Live Event Photos/Videos (Kiss)	I2: Fan-Organised Gigs (Xbox)	I3: Initiative Marketing Campaigns (Face The Music) I4: Online Rep Networks (Fatsoma)	I5: Group Member Design (Gorillaz)
	<b>Low</b>	<b>Viral Marketing</b> V1: Interactive Music Videos (Arcade Fire) V2: Interactive Webcam Feature (Flying Lotus) V3: Price / Download Congruency Model (Amie Street) V4: Viral Music Videos (OK Go) V5: Viral Online Games (EMI)		I1: Interactive Social Network Game (Robbie Williams)		
		<b>Low</b>	<b>Low – Medium</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Medium - High</b>	<b>High</b>
<b>Consumer Involvement</b>						

### *Viral marketing in the music industry*

Halpern (2005) writes that the element of recommendation and word-of-mouth communication is not only a fundamental marketing tool, but also a vitally important aspect of a music marketing campaign. The reasons for this may lie in the fact that initial awareness is a key driving factor in an artist's early career due to the proliferation of new music available through digital channels. Or they may lie in the social complexities of music consumer groups, as suggested by Garrity (2002), as the targeting of the 'coolest kid in the group' to influence others may remain a key priority for the record labels. The first example of a viral marketing practice identified in the recorded music sector relates to interactive music videos (see V1 in Table 2). This technique has been utilised by the Canadian indie rock band Arcade Fire in the online music video for their single 'We Used to Wait' (Forde, 2010a). By letting consumers incorporate Google Street View images of their paternal homes into the online video as the music plays, the band is able to maintain and project the thematic consistency of the song. Although this constitutes low levels of consumer control and involvement, this is perhaps overshadowed by the enhanced emotional attachment between each consumer's memory recall and song content.

Another example of viral marketing within the recorded music sector is interactive webcam features (see V2 in Table 2). Through image recognition technology, fans who have purchased the album 'Cosmogramma' by the American hip-hop artist Flying Lotus can access exclusive mp3 track downloads by holding their album up to their webcam (Forde, 2010b). The novelty aspect of this action, combined with the incentives for additional music not available to the general public, may be perceived by fans as adding extra value to their album purchase. Amie Street (which was taken over by Amazon in September 2010) incorporated an interesting example of viral marketing through its price / download congruency model (see V3 in Table 2) (Bhattacharjee, Gopal, Marsden, Sankaranarayanan and Telang, 2009). In this example, the congruency model led to a price increase in accord with demand for the item. The download price of music tracks increased in accordance with

the number of times it was purchased, thereby increasing awareness of rising artists and encouraging early purchases of new releases. Viral music videos (see V4 in Table 2) are a successful marketing technique employed extensively by the American alternative rock band Ok Go (Fitzgerald, 2010b) and their associated cult following has been enhanced by the distribution of these videos on UGC websites such as YouTube. Viral online games (see V5 in Table 2) are another related marketing technique used by the London-based record label EMI in conjunction with the album releases of some of its most successful global music artists such as Kylie Minogue and Iron Maiden (Forde, 2010g). The inclusion of features such as leader boards and user-friendly email forwarding may have substantial positive implications for the success of these viral marketing campaigns.

### ***Sponsored user-generated branding in the music industry***

In the past, the music television channel MTV has demonstrated multiple examples of sponsored UGB marketing of recorded music. It has offered music fans the opportunity to openly discuss recorded music products and services through its year-long focus group sessions (see S1 in Table 2) (Chaffey and Smith, 2008). It has also created shows featuring music videos selected by the fans through text messaging (from a controlled menu) and including text comments on the screen (see S2 in Table 2) (Chaffey and Smith, 2008). The music retail store Rough Trade has exhibited a unique method of offering music consumers more involvement and control by assisting in the decision of where to open additional store branches (see S3 in Table 2) (Cardew, 2010). A more contemporary example in the digital sector is providing consumers with the structured online facilities to build their own bespoke digital radio stations with customisable features (see S4 in Table 2) – this constitutes a sponsored UGB practice and has been the subject of experimentation by some digital music companies such as Gracenote (Forde, 2010d) and We7 (Forde, 2010j). Apple Inc. has recently launched a similar campaign in the form of collaborative playlists (see S5 in Table 2) for their social networking music service Ping (Forde, 2010j). The option for anyone to rate, review or share these playlists represents a

new dimension in terms of consumer marketing. The aforementioned band Ok Go have upgraded their co-creational marketing campaigns from a viral to a sponsored UGB typology by recruiting fans to submit collaborative creative work (see S6 in Table 2) relating to the place in which they live (Fitzgerald, 2010a). This marketing technique is perhaps comparable to the viral campaign by Arcade Fire mentioned above; however, the levels of consumer control and involvement are further enhanced now by the creative freedom given to the consumer. In the live music sector, channel partner behaviour (see S7 in Table 2) from music fans provides another example of sponsored UGB marketing, with a heightened emphasis being placed on treating the audience of live events as a partnership (Cluley, 2009). Beaven and Laws (2007) have emphasised the elevated levels of control and involvement of consumers at live events by warning that the non-rationality of their actions may impact on long-term loyalty. At live music events, technological innovations are also facilitating enhanced audience participation through digital photos taken at concerts. Some bands, such as the American hard rock band Kiss, have launched smartphone apps to encourage fans to send their photos to the big screen at live concerts (see S8 in Table 2) (Forde, 2010e), whereas others, such as the American alternative rock band Pixies, encourage fans to upload them to their website after the live concert in order to create a multimedia touring archive (Forde, 2010h). The opportunities for increasing music fan interaction at live events through smartphone apps is virtually endless and is only likely to increase further in future as mobile technology becomes increasingly efficient and user-friendly. Carter (2009) even suggests that this involvement may extend to other related activities at music festivals such as mobile alerts relating to queue sizes at nearby festival bars. The marketing implications of these related activities are significant in terms of overall music consumption experience at live music events.

### ***User-generated content marketing in the music industry***

Baym and Burnett (2009, p. 434) have proclaimed that “voluntary fan effort can be seen throughout the music industry, and speaks to the fundamental changes that global industry is experiencing as the

music business increasingly shifts to digital formats.” According to Bhattacharjee *et al.* (2009), the posting of songs on MP3 blogs by music consumers (see U1 in Table 2) is becoming increasingly accepted by record labels and artists as a positive influence in terms of honest feedback from passionate fans. However, the implications of this feedback from fans may prove more far-reaching as it is read by other consumers and may well influence them also. Dickinson (2011, p. 33) argues that “people read music blogs to find out about music they otherwise wouldn't hear, so regular readers trust the blogger's taste.” This viewpoint highlights an interesting potential correlation between trust and consumption preferences through music discovery on blogs and may represent a future area for marketers to target. Indeed Levine (2007) argues that music blogs are playing an increasingly important role in the marketing plans of record companies. However, there are potential challenges facing consumers who utilise music blogs, either for participatory or observatory purposes. For instance, the co-founders of a new digital music service entitled ‘Splash.Fm’ have suggested that part of the motivation for establishing their business was derived from their difficulties in ‘keeping up’ with individual music blogs (Peoples, 2012). Considering the broader perspective, the market saturation of well-established music blogs such as Pitchfork, Stereogum and Brooklyn Vegan may actually be overwhelming consumers with a proliferation of options regarding how they participate in these blogs (Bruno, 2011).

A further example of UGC marketing in the music industry which is partially correlated with blogs, but which perhaps offers a smoother interface for its management and options, is the consumer sharing of music opinions and products through social networking channels (see U2 in Table 2) (Peoples, 2011). On the strength of consumer preference for creating music-related content on social media sites through the sharing of music products (such as songs, lyrics or YouTube videos), as well as music discussion (opinions, comments, news events), Facebook is now currently in discussions with digital music services to form collaborations in order to enhance and expand this experience by incorporating



most-played song widgets and greater ease of sharing (Sisario and Helft, 2011). Twitter took similar steps by embedding the Twisten music player into the website which scans Twitter messages for song titles and automatically links them to the player (Bruno, 2009). These two recent advancements from the two most popular social media channels effectively bring this example of co-creational marketing down the continuum from a UGC marketing typology to a Sponsored UGB marketing typology. This is highly interesting as it raises the question of whether this retrospective marketing manipulation is actually conducted in order to provide consumers with ever-more options (which echoes the criticism of Bruno, 2011), or whether it is a thinly-veiled marketing ploy to regain more control and involvement for the marketer.

Another way of perceiving this move from Facebook and Twitter to introduce Sponsored UGB attributes into a UGC co-creational marketing typology is that in essence they are creating a *hybrid* of these two typologies. This then raises further questions as to the mutually beneficial potential – and feasibility - of creating a hybrid typology of co-creational marketing in terms of value for both the consumer and/or the firm. It appears from the literature review that virtually no other academic studies have identified and addressed multiple co-creational marketing typologies in terms of their inherent relationships and hybrid potentialities, so this may represent a starting point for future empirical research investigations of hybrid theory.

### ***Vigilante marketing in the music industry***

In the recorded music sector, some passionate music fans have dedicated their time and creative efforts to creating bespoke music videos for tracks of their favourite artists (see VG1 in Table 2). These are sometimes widely available on UGC websites such as YouTube. Garfield (2010) has suggested that, although they are often successful at enhancing record sales for artists, record labels generally do not appreciate the loss of control and involvement and there is a lack of guidelines on the acceptability of

this practice. In the context of this co-creational marketing typology, Simon (2006) refers to the music fans as ‘social broadcasters’ and suggests that their extensive use of UGC practices may actually lead to the production of both new music products and commercial opportunities. To an extent, this may be considered a *prosumer marketing* practice in which the consumer becomes actively involved in the development of the product itself. It is therefore evident that there may be a strong correlation in the recorded music sector between vigilante and prosumer marketing. The correlation may prove highly significant as it demonstrates another potential opportunity for a co-creational marketing hybrid which could be addressed through future empirical research. The implications of this link may become more apparent in the future in relation to both commercial opportunities and potential intellectual property issues of these two co-creational marketing typologies.

### ***Prosumer Marketing in the Music Industry***

Instances of this co-creational marketing typology are significant as they involve music fans contributing directly to the actual ‘product’ of the music. This could potentially have intellectual property (IP) implications due to the nature of artistic contributions to a creative project. For instance, it raises the question of when fan contributions entitle him/her to a song-writing credit and the associated royalties associated with this. Perhaps on account of this, examples of prosumer marketing in the music industry are sparse. American R&B singer-songwriter Jason Derulo has bypassed these IP issues by recently launching a campaign initiative in collaboration with American Idol and Coca-Cola in which he has encouraged his fans to contribute lyrics towards the writing of a song (see P1 in Table 2) (Blessed, 2012) to be performed exclusively on the American Idol show. However, there are also occurrences of artists attempting to incorporate prosumer marketing into their own song-writing. Just over two years ago it was reported that British pop band Gabby Young and Other Animals had offered fans the opportunity to actually attend rehearsals and song-writing sessions and contribute to the writing of songs (see P2 in Table 2) (Sherwin, 2010). Although these contributions did not extend

to lyric or music creation, depending on how much the fans were willing pay (ranging from \$65 - \$10,000), the contributions ranged from offering thematic ideas for songs to singing the songs. Interestingly, the exclusion of lyric and music creation contributions also appears to be influenced by IP issues to avoid song-writing credits and suggests that the potential for developing future prosumer marketing in the music industry may be limited on account of this.

### **Relevance of co-creational marketing to the music industry**

The relevancy and significance of the proposed co-creational marketing continuum (Figure 1) to the music industry is insinuated by Baym and Burnett (2009, p. 437) who say that “spreading the word about new music is enacted along a spectrum that ranges from very low to very intense investment. Together these fans create an international presence far beyond what labels or bands could attain.” The relevance of the different typologies of co-creational marketing to the thirty examples of co-creational marketing within the music sector are shown in Table 2 and will now be discussed.

The fit between the music industry examples and the typologies of co-creational marketing appear to peak at the Sponsored UGB Marketing stage, then begin to wane as the levels of consumer involvement and control increase. This demonstrates that in the current market climate the vast majority of instances of co-creational marketing within the music industry are subject to elevated and equal levels of control and involvement from the firm. This is perhaps to be expected due to the contemporary and experimental nature of co-creational marketing, however it also is indicative of managerial desire to maintain market stability through the equilibrium of these medium-high levels of control and involvement. Also notable is that twelve out of the thirty examples of co-creational marketing do not fit into any of the typologies, thereby demonstrating that the fit between consumer involvement and control is not always equally proportional in co-creational marketing.

Table 2 illustrates that the level of consumer control was only proportionately greater than the level of consumer involvement in four of the co-creational marketing examples related to the recorded and live music sectors. The first example relates to the unrestricted copy / share model for recorded music (see C1 in Table 2), in which consumers are actively encouraged to share or copy downloaded music without restriction or persecution (Chung, Rust and Wedel, 2009). The second example relates to the streaming of live music events (see C2 in Table 2) – a recent technological development used by Virgin Radio (Brooks, 2006). The co-creational marketing element here lies in the camera angles which the music fans can alternate between. The third example refers to the ‘pay-what-you-want’ model (see C3 in Table 2), an innovative technique used by the band Radiohead in terms of conceding pricing control to the consumer (Nill and Geipel Jnr., 2010; O’Flaherty, 2008; Wierda, 2010). This experimental co-creational marketing practice has been described by some as revolutionary (Trakin, 2008) and by others as nothing more than a gimmick or ‘honesty box’ stunt (Kotler, Keller, Brady, Goodman and Hansen, 2009). The fourth example consists of a fan-powered store (see C4 in Table 2) which has been launched by the founder of Bleep.com (Music Week, 2009a). This is significant due to the high levels of consumer control relating to the marketing and selling of music by fans of the artist. These four examples are significant as they demonstrate how the consumer is provided with freedom of control at a specific stage in the marketing process – whether this is at the pre-sales pricing stage, the sales process stage or the post-sales consumption stage. If observed holistically, three of these examples demonstrate only a slight deviation from the identified typologies in terms of elevated consumer control, whereas the Radiohead example (see C3 in Table 2) illustrates a more extreme deviation.

Table 2 also illustrates that the level of consumer involvement was proportionately greater than the level of consumer control in nine of the co-creational marketing examples relating to the recorded and live music sectors. These results are significant as they provide an insight into attempts by marketers within the music industry to offer music consumers greater involvement in the marketing process,

while endeavouring to maintain an element of control over the campaigns. The first example relates to an interactive social networking game (see I1 in Table 2) devised by the British popular music artist Robbie Williams (Forde, 2010i), in which fans become involved through competitive ‘tweeting’ of song lyrics. The second example relates to fan-organised live music events (see I2 in Table 2), in which brands such as Xbox have experimented with offering fans the opportunity to engage with the event management side of the live music experience (Farber, 2009). These co-creational marketing practices are perhaps highly controlled – although this may not necessarily be apparent to consumers because of the range of social networking activities to enhance the involvement element. An example with a higher consumer involvement level is the Face The Music initiative (see I3 in Table 2) (Williams, 2010), in which a student’s proposed marketing campaign for a music exhibition was awarded a national roll-out. Another example with a similar consumer involvement level is the online representative network (see I4 in Table 2) used by social ticketing company Fatsoma, in which tickets for live music events are actually sold virally by the music fans (Masson, 2010).

The success of these online rep network campaigns may be attributable to the more precise user group targeting, and the heightened consumer involvement beyond a mere viral marketing campaign. The incentive of designing a band character (see I5 in Table 2) which the British hip-hop band Gorillaz offered their fans (Forde, 2010c) was a unique and effective way of offering high involvement to fans while retaining control of the end result. Another innovative co-creational marketing technique in terms of enhanced consumer involvement is the fan-funded model (see I6 in Table 2) as used by the UK-based digital music company Pledge Music (Peoples, 2010). This is perhaps the most dangerous element in terms of consumer involvement, as the fans are asked to provide the financial capital to support the marketing efforts of the artist. Interactive audio adverts (see I7 in Table 2) are a co-creational marketing technique used by Last.fm (Forde, 2010f) in which music fans are given extensive creative involvement in the real-time mixing of an audio track, albeit in a controlled environment. Fan

remixes of existing audio tracks (see I8 in Table 2) have been a popular and commonplace past-time for music enthusiasts for some time now (Martens, 2001), and in more recent years has been actively encouraged through websites such as YouTube (Forde, 2010k) and iTunes (Neddleton, 2008). The implications of this are potentially positive, with Bockstedt, Kauffman and Riggins (2006) suggesting that this facilitates the blurring of the consumer / artist demarcation.

In considering these seven examples holistically, Table 2 shows that the majority of them demonstrate only a slight deviation in terms of elevated consumer involvement in the marketing process, however there are now three examples of more extreme deviations (see I3, I4 and I5 in Table 2). This suggests that marketers may be more willing to concede greater involvement to music consumers in co-creational marketing, while also acknowledging that they always strive to maintain high levels of control for the purposes of having a stable marketing campaign.

### **Managerial implications: Contribution of co-creational marketing to the music industry**

Many music experts have acknowledged that the music industry has been suffering from a year-on-year fall in record sales over the last decade (Kubacki and Croft, 2004; Lawrence, 2010; Liebowitz, 2008; Oberholzer-Gee and Strumpf, 2007; Sinha, Machado and Sellman, 2010; Stevans and Sessions, 2005). The contribution of co-creational marketing towards reversing this trend is attested by Styvén (2010) who suggests that the enhancement of consumer involvement in terms of value, identity aspects and artist connections may help sustain record label sales. Maier (2005) has even suggested that combining the potentially illegal practice of file-sharing with the co-creational practice of viral marketing may succeed at turning fans into evangelists while generating sustainable income for the record labels. The importance of the consumer involvement aspect of co-creational marketing is also stressed by Daugherty *et al.* (2008) who assert that music consumer preferences towards interactive

media has developed into a contemporary challenge for marketers to integrate their offerings with those created by consumers.

Co-creational marketing practices may represent a contemporary challenge for the consumers themselves. Issues of social relevance have been highlighted by Simon (2006) as incidental to maximising the opportunity for the creative community of fans to accept the challenge of participating in social broadcasting on behalf of their chosen artist. The control aspect of co-creational marketing also contributes significantly to the music industry, as concurred by Bockstedt *et al.* (2006) who propose that the success of new music technologies and services is dependent upon power sharing between artists and consumers in the digital age. By considering consumer control in a wider context, Kilby (2007) has suggested that although modern-day consumers are often able to leverage control in co-creational marketing practices, there is scope for marketers to offer innovative ways of interacting with their brand through customer relationship management within the digital population.

Indeed, the co-creational framework and examples presented in Table 2 may contribute to future music marketing campaigns by highlighting underdeveloped areas of co-creational marketing such as UGC marketing. This is reflected by Dhar and Chang (2009) who propose that UGC practices should be considered seriously by record labels. These record labels who have historically wielded the monopolistic power as the sole gatekeepers of artists' success are now under pressure, as well-placed music fans now possess the ability to 'break' an artist (Baym and Burnett, 2009). This has been well documented in recent popular music press, with UK bands such as Arctic Monkeys achieving initial success without a record label deal through the co-creational marketing efforts of their strong and dedicated online fan base.

The co-creational framework in Table 2 may have benefits for future management of music industry consumer marketing campaigns in other ways. The fact that more than half of the thirty examples of co-creational marketing fitted neatly within the proposed typologies supports the strength and appropriateness of the typologies proposed and the concept of the co-creational marketing matrix (see Table 1). The discussion of the effectiveness of these eighteen examples of co-creational marketing from the five typologies in terms of the music industry further reinforces the value of considering the inherent elements of control and involvement – for the consumer and the firm – in terms of their balance and relationship to the marketing campaign; and that long-term stability and sustainability of these contemporary consumer marketing campaigns may best be achieved through aiming to position them within these typologies. The examples provided could be utilised in the industry by companies in order to provide an insight into the implications of various co-creational campaigns and may assist in informing their decision over which level of control and involvement to incorporate into their proposed campaign.

The co-creational marketing framework for the music industry also provides useful implications for the industry through its identification of examples which deviate from the proposed typologies. These represent the most experimental – and often controversial – examples of co-creational marketing within the music industry and some of the more extreme examples around the outer edge of Table 2 may represent more short-term PR campaigns for established artists. For example, the ‘pay-what-you-what’ model by Radiohead (see C3 in Table 2) would not have been so effective and successful if conducted with a lesser-known band with a non-global following. Similarly, the group member design campaign orchestrated by Gorillaz (see I5 in Table 2) is another example of a creative co-creational example which would not have been feasible with an up-coming band as it related specifically to the iconic imagery of their world-renowned animated brand. However, the vast majority of these deviational examples are positioned close to the proposed co-creational marketing typologies and



provide the most potential for future campaigns in which companies wishing to experiment with contemporary or creative co-creational marketing campaigns where they intend to facilitate heightened and disproportionate control or involvement for the consumer. The existing examples on Table 2 which depict a concentration relating to elevated consumer involvement suggest a potential trend which could be developed further in future consumer marketing strategies.

Lastly, the proposed co-creational marketing matrix framework could prove useful for the music industry in terms of providing direction and structure for future hybrids of co-creational marketing typologies. Justifications for a co-creational marketing hybrid are provided in the above discussion in which strong correlations have been identified between vigilante and prosumer marketing typologies, as well as Sponsored UGB and UGC marketing typologies. Further justifications for a hybrid of co-creational marketing typologies are perhaps suggested through the deviational examples – the vast majority of which are positioned between the proposed typologies (see Table 2) and therefore indicate substantial links which could be addressed through a hybrid marketing campaign.

This all raises the question of what the implications and potential benefits of a hybrid co-creational marketing campaign would be. Well firstly it could potentially draw out the synergistic attributes of two distinct co-creational marketing typologies in order to enhance consumer options and flexibility regarding their role in the marketing process. This could prove instrumental in the recorded music industry in which the digital landscape is constantly shifting and therefore future marketing campaigns may require this additional level of flexibility to remain relevant and interesting to consumers as their consumption preferences develop. Another important potential implication of a hybrid co-creational marketing strategy would be to facilitate a transcendental link from one typology to the next. As mentioned previously, in the recorded industry this may arguably already have been conducted by social media channels in order to ‘reign back’ consumers who were experimenting with UGC

marketing. As was evident through the campaigns of Facebook and Twitter, by inciting the consumer back into the Sponsored UGB typology space, the marketer was able to offer greater options and experiences for the consumer – whilst simultaneously regaining greater control and involvement of the marketing process. Therefore, technological factors may prove significant for the creation and management of a hybrid co-creational marketing campaign as consumers are becoming increasingly creative in their willingness to participate in the marketing process but lack the digital expertise to maximise the potential of this process in the digital environment in which they are immersed.

## **Conclusion**

The examples and analysis presented in this paper have shown that consumer marketing for the music industry has indeed entered a new era, one in which consumer control and involvement will drive future marketing campaigns. Research into other service industries would provide a valuable insight into how co-creational marketing can be developed or enhanced. For instance, some of the examples of co-creational marketing for the live music sector – such as consumer involvement through interactive text/photo/video elements with the event screens or after-event website – could be translated to other entertainment genres. The possibilities for certain live interactions are practically endless as stand-up comedy shows are already beginning to incorporate interactive elements such as encouraging the audience to text jokes/photos/suggestions to the screen to be commented on by the comedian.

For the music industry, the findings of this paper provide a valid justification for empirical study into the implications of co-creational marketing practices for consumers and producers. From a positive perspective, ascertaining the success of the studied typologies in terms of increased record sales for the recorded music sector would provide an invaluable insight into how exactly these typologies of co-creational marketing practices may contribute towards the future sustainability of the music industry

in the digital age. The live music sector remains largely unaffected by certain digital influences such as piracy, although with recent technological innovations regarding mobile phone video recording, after-show DVD sales of live events may be affected by leaked amateur footage appearing on UGC websites such as YouTube or Facebook. Therefore, research into how the aforementioned typologies may contribute towards the increase in ticket sales would also be advantageous. For instance, it may be advisable for live music event management to encourage more experiential co-creational marketing from performing artists regarding audience interaction (Hausman, 2011). From a negative perspective, empirical research could also investigate issues of ‘double exploitation’ which are arguably prevalent within co-creational marketing practices (Cova *et al.*, 2011; Zwick *et al.*, 2008). For although this may not initially appear to constitute an issue for the music industry on account of music enthusiasts’ heightened willingness to participate and immerse themselves into the marketing process of their favourite artists, it has been suggested that some of the UGC or vigilante activities carried out by fans may be considered ‘professional labour’ (Baym and Burnett, 2009).

It may also prove necessary to investigate aspects of a demographic demarcation with regard to the generation gap of music consumers and the associated preferences towards involvement and consumption. It is generally acknowledged that the youth generation has accepted and embraced digital music consumption at a much faster and more efficient pace than the older generation, thereby indicating that the same trends may be prevalent for co-creational marketing practices which have many roots in the digital music sector. This viewpoint is supported by Long (2008), who suggests that the recent launch of multi-platform services from BBC Three and E4.com with a greater UGC content may be aimed at reaching the youth demographic. Other writers such as Goldie (2006) believe that the incitement of the youth generation to participate in co-creational marketing practices is forging an ever-increasing gap between the consumers and the music industry itself, and that ultimately the record labels are suffering on account of this.

There are opportunities for further research into the implications of co-creational marketing practices on the music industry as well as research into the generational distinction between consumer preferences towards both digital music consumption and co-creational marketing practices. Recent marketing literature advocates that consumers, both from the youth generation and older generation are becoming increasingly marketing-savvy and weary over insincere marketing techniques. However, co-creational marketing practices within the music industry continue to be received positively by consumers and benefit the industry as music artists continue to seek new and innovative ways of developing a personal connection with numerous fans.

This study has focussed on the nature and scope of co-creational marketing in the music industry. It has identified examples of where viral, sponsored UGB, UGC, viral and prosumer marketing occurs. In the proposed continuum and matrix frameworks developed from these identified typologies, this paper has provided contributions to contemporary research through the exploration of the relationships between these typologies in terms of control and involvement from a consumer/industry perspective. By applying this to the digital and recorded music sectors, trends and correlations have emerged regarding the extent to which the proposed typologies can successfully be used in the industry as a framework for future consumer marketing campaigns, as well as the use of deviation examples to guide experimental campaigns relating to more established artists or bands. Given that this is such a contemporary area for research, this paper provides initial tentative steps through the development of a theoretical framework. This study could be used as a starting point for further empirical research into various aspects of future co-creational marketing campaigns. These aspects include new areas for investigation such as the hybrid implications which have been discussed but are still under-researched and would benefit from further primary research.

A further important aspect for future research is the investigation of the impact of co-creational marketing campaigns on other sectors of the music industry such as classical, jazz or folk genres, as well as other distinct creative industries such as film, fashion or gaming. Many of the examples discussed in this paper have significant overlaps with these other creative industries and therefore a comparative study of the use of co-creational marketing within several different industries would constitute another direction for potential future research. With regard to the future implications of co-creational marketing for the music industry, these are summarised by Nill and Geipel, Jnr. (2010, p. 47) who state that “a new balance between sharing and owning that shifts power from intermediaries and established stars to consumers and aspiring artists will not translate “to the day the music died.””

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