

# Idea Refinement

Below are some ways in which to refine and build upon initial ideas that may help you formulate pitches, share with others, or simply anchor them closer to reality.

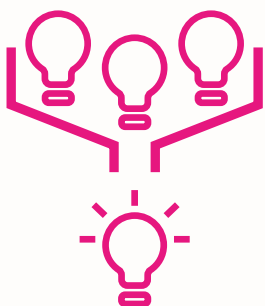
## What are you trying to achieve?

Whether you are creating trance music, composing classical works, setting up a record label, or looking at other creative opportunities, it is important to consider who you are doing this for and what results you would like to achieve. As a first step, treat the way you approach your work as though it were a simple product or a suite of products you are trying to market to a specific audience. Not only will this help you tailor your marketing, this approach can be really useful to help clarify your aims, goals and overall aspirations for your creative ideas. For example, if you were to launch a new smartphone, you would need to take your time to consider all the relevant aspects involved such as the design, product development and market research even before a single piece was manufactured or sold.

Below are some points and questions that will help focus your project/music/ideas, and create a set of guidelines, benchmarks and parameters for everything you do. Having a plan to follow keeps you on track and motivated. Knowing what you are doing next prevents procrastination and fear setting in. On a side note, although it is a good idea to set your sights high, bear in mind there is a difference between arrogance or even lofty ambitions. Balancing realism and optimism is key to your success when completing the tasks below.

## Mission statement

- What do you want to achieve with this project?
- How do you want to be portrayed, i.e. do you create song-based music, merchandise for bands, sustainable ticketing solutions etc?
- In what format do you want people to experience your music or business, i.e. recordings, scores, physical products?
- In a couple of lines what describes you and your music or business? Try not to use words like cool/trendy/jazzy, etc. Really think about it! This can be useful when others ask you what you are doing, or when putting together press releases.



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## List artists or businesses whose success you would like to emulate and why?

- Think about the venues they play.
- How are these artists or businesses presented to their fanbases/consumers and how do they engage with them? These don't have to be examples that are similar to you and your ideas, etc., just those you feel have achieved the things you would like to achieve, e.g. what values do they represent that you would like to be associated with?
- What do they sell, i.e. CDs, singles, downloads, streams and how many? Do they sell out the venues they play? Do they sell a lot of merchandise generally?
- What labels are they signed to or which agencies represent them?

## Aims/aspirations that contribute to your mission statement

Be realistic when thinking what similar businesses or artists may be doing, but do not be afraid to aim high. Consider all aspects of your potential business, e.g. all of the products and places your project could be utilised or performed.

Aims and aspirations could include:

- Places you would like to play, i.e. main stage at Bestival, Royal Albert Hall.
- Specific businesses utilising your products.
- Achieve a Top five album or single (In a given chart).

- Endorsements from industry leaders, celebrities etc.
- Are there any TV programmes you would like to be featured on, i.e. synchronisations such as having your music on a John Lewis advert or on the end credits to the next James Bond film, etc.
- 100/1000 sales or users.
- Blogs, magazines and other media outlets that you would like to feature in or be reviewed by.
- Further investment.

## What is your key target audience?

Consider the following to help you define your target demographics:

- Age group.
- Jobs/careers/students/location.
- What radio station/programmes do these people listen to?
- What do they wear and where do they shop?
- What kinds of things do they do?
- How do they buy/consume music or other products?

These questions are all just example suggestions. Feel free to go much further with your own analysis, and this may happen as your project begins to take shape. Your initial set of answers may also change over time as your project develops. You can always update them to reflect your new ambitions or parameters.