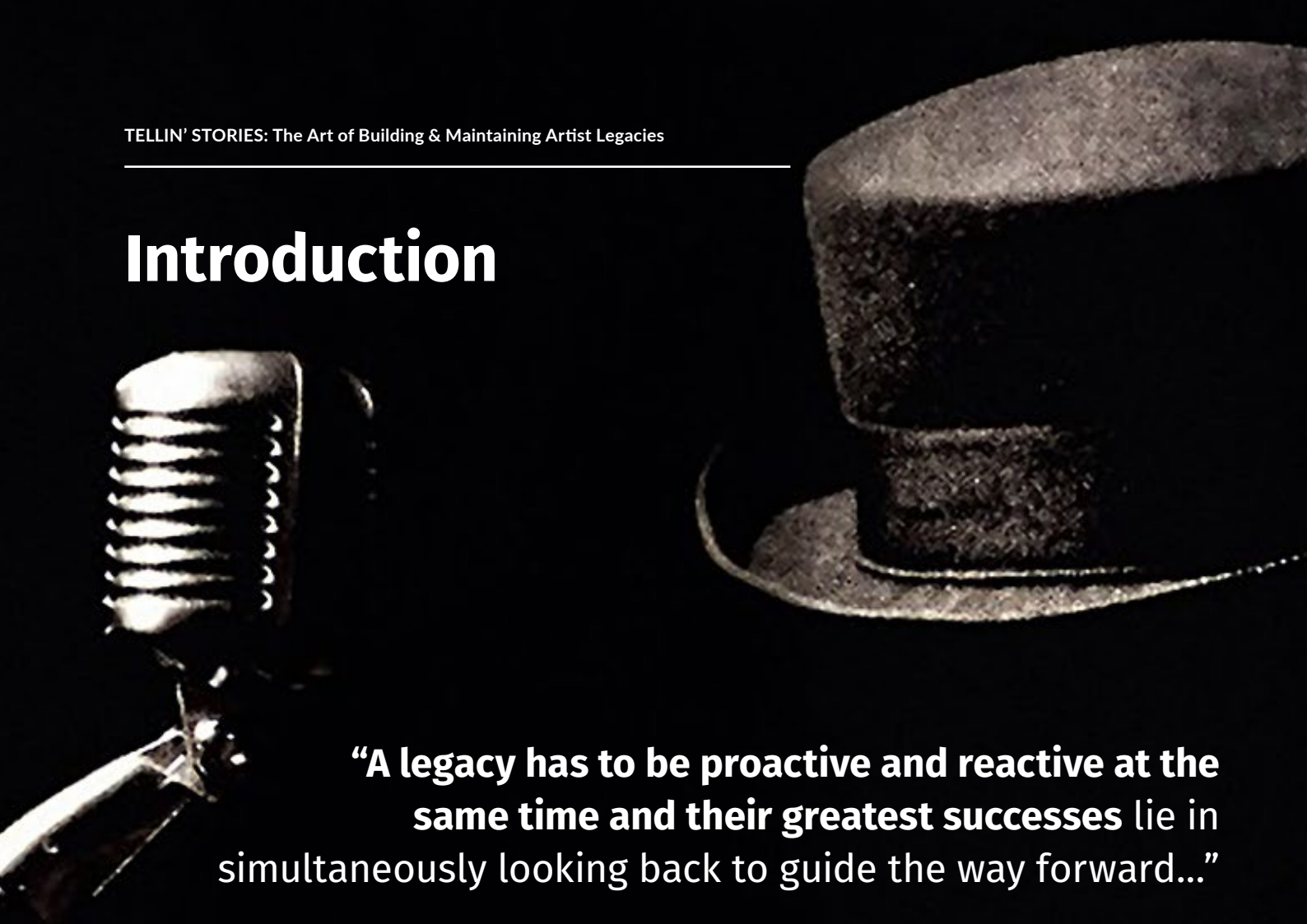


TELLIN' STORIES

*The Art Of
Building &
Maintaining
Artist Legacies*



Introduction

A vintage microphone is positioned on the left side of the page, and a top hat is on the right. The background is dark, and the lighting highlights the textures of the microphone and the hat.

“A legacy has to be proactive and reactive at the same time and their greatest successes lie in simultaneously looking back to guide the way forward...”

Legacies in music are a life's work – constantly evolving and surprising audiences.

It does not follow, however, that just because you have built a legacy in your career that it is set in stone forever. Legacies are ongoing work and they have to be worked at, refined and maintained. Existing audiences have to be held onto and new audiences have to be continually brought on board.

Equally, it does not follow that everything an artist and their team does will add to or expand that legacy. Sometimes it can have no impact and

sometimes it can have a detrimental impact. It is a high-wire act and a bad decision can unspool a lifetime of work, an image becomes frozen or the artists (and their art) are painted into a corner.

When an artist passes away, that work they achieved in their lifetime has to be carried on by the artist's estate. Increasingly they have to be worked and developed just like current living artists. Streaming and social media have made that always-on approach more straightforward, but every step has to be carefully calculated and remain true to the original vision of that artist.

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Legacies can be carefully planned but sometimes something happens – a song goes viral on TikTok, a video finds a whole new life on YouTube, a track roars back to life due to an algorithmic quirk on Spotify – and the artist or their estate have to be acutely attuned to their possibilities and nimble and decisive in their responses.

A legacy has to be proactive and reactive at the same time and their greatest successes lie in simultaneously looking back to guide the way forward.

The BPI's *Tellin' Stories: The Art Of Building & Maintaining Artist Legacies* session in July 2021 heard from experts from all parts of the legacy industry to better understand how complex this business is and what lessons can be learned.

A music legacy, at its very peak, is defined by the past, the present and the future moving in lockstep.

Filing systems: the art of archive management

MUSICIANS GENERATE A LOT OF STUFF. Staggering amounts. Seemingly insurmountable amounts.

The central pillars of all this, of course, are the audio recordings – those that are released during their careers, but also demos, alternative takes, live performances and unheard recordings that are stockpiled in their vault or, increasingly, on their hard drives. Plus there are the videos.

Then come the assorted physical items used in the creative process and in performances – notebooks, instruments, merchandise items, stage clothes and more.

On top of this – and growing at an exponential rate – are the multitude of digital assets that are created on a daily basis via tweets, Instagram posts, TikTok uploads, NFTs and Discord discussions.

All of these can define and expand upon a legacy, but capturing everything and indexing it properly can feel Sisyphean as ‘content’ becomes a catch-all term for everything associated with a musician’s creative life.

Detailed and deep archives have clear cultural importance – especially when they are donated to academic institutes

and libraries for research purposes, as shown in the case of Count Basie’s archives, which now reside in Rutgers–Newark’s Institute of Jazz Studies or the Vladimir Horowitz archives at Yale University School of Music.

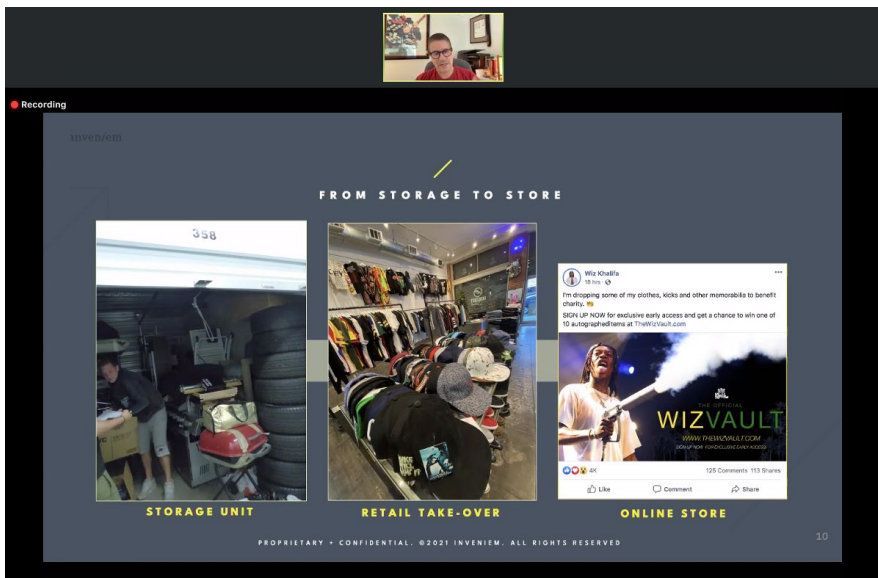
They also have huge economic value, symbolised most when Bob Dylan sold his 6,000-item personal archive – including notebooks, draft lyrics and letters – in 2016 to the George Kaiser Foundation and the University of Tulsa in Oklahoma. The sale price was estimated at between \$15 million and \$20 million. The archives will open to the public in May 2022 at the Bob Dylan Center in Tulsa and this follows the lead of huge exhibitions in recent years from acts such as David Bowie, The Rolling Stones and Pink Floyd.

Increasingly, these items also have marketing value for acts – where anniversaries can be celebrated and social media’s insatiable appetite for all forms of content can be met. These items can shape the storytelling around musicians (covered later in this report), but in order to do that the archive has to be properly archived. If the archive is disorganised or lacking, any project that wants to use the assets here will be equally disorganised or lacking.

Brad Mindich is the CEO of archiving specialists Inveniem who work with a wide range of music clients, including

inveniem

your past is your future®



they should view where they are and where they want to go,” he explained.

The company employs master’s degree-level archivists and curators, but he prefers to describe the team as “treasure hunters and storytellers”.

Inveniem works as a full-service company so it can provide resources for archiving as well as working on strategies to put the assets in the archive to work.

Def Leppard who launched their career-spanning Leppard Vault website – which they called the “first ever digital rock’n’roll museum” – in January 2021.

A number of Inveniem’s clients cannot be revealed as their archives are for personal use, but Mindich talked about several of the consumer-facing archives, such as Def Leppard’s, with which Inveniem has been involved.

He said the company’s tagline of ‘Your past is your future’ is how they sell the importance of an archiving strategy to clients.

“It allows us to frame this for clients so that they really recognise the value of what they’ve created over time and how that translates into how

It is, he noted, never a given that musicians know exactly what is in their archive or, equally, what they can do with it: an education process is essential for artists of all sizes and ages.

“These are typically the questions that we ask clients,” he said. “What do you have? Where’s everything? What do you want to do? It will not be surprising that this is usually how the client answers: they have no idea. Even if they think they do, as you start to ask more probing questions they say, ‘I think this guy might have this or we might have the storage area here or I might have a box of hard-drives sitting in my office and, and, and...’”

He suggested that sometimes shocking clients with cautionary tales – such as a storage unit packed with basketball player Kobe Bryant memorabilia

Filing systems: the art of archive management

selling sight unseen for just \$350 that was eventually sold back to his estate for considerably more than that – is the best way to get them to understand the scale of what they have to deal with and the pressing urgency to get everything organised.

Especially for physical items, special care and attention has to be paid here to prevent them being damaged or deteriorating over time.



“Our whole thing is that our execution has to be flawless and our client service has to be exceptional,” he said. “[This includes] the data needs, the taxonomy, the access, building the custom technologies which we do for all of our clients, and then executing, whether it’s archiving or preservation or whatever it happens to be.”

He gave the example of Wiz Khalifa to reveal how the archiving and cataloguing process works – showing photos of his lock up where items related to his career were stacked alongside an old washing machine and car tyres.

“We took everything, we archived it, curated it, photographed it, documented it, put it into an internal database and then sat there with Wiz’s management to try to figure out how to introduce these things into the market, because Wiz had no idea he had any of these things,” Mindich explained.

From there they created a pop-up store to sell some of the items as well as building the online Wiz Vault and tie-in store. Additionally there was a charity component built into the offering.

Having fan involvement – and drawing on the engagement power of UGC (user-generated content) – is also a critical component in making these initiatives work. Plus online archives can just be there for marketing purposes and a way

to reward fandom rather than being purely about monetisation.

“For Wiz, he wants to sell stuff, but for Def Leppard it’s really a lot about engagement,” explained Mindich. “We created a fan engagement initiative called Show Us Yours And We’ll Show You Ours where we asked fans to share their Def Leppard memorabilia on Instagram. In exchange for that we then shared with them original artefacts directly from the band that fans had never seen like the tour books, the laminates, backstage photos, itineraries, things like that, which fans got really excited about, as you would expect because they’ve never seen it.”

This culminated in a competition where one fan won an original *Hysteria* T-shirt from 1987 that was framed and engraved for them.

“It was just a really good, feel-positive, exciting, engaging way to connect artefacts, stories, fans, socials together and celebrate this particular band’s legacy and their artefacts,” he noted.

The Leppard Vault also makes use of audio and video snippets, notably from past interviews or TV appearances.

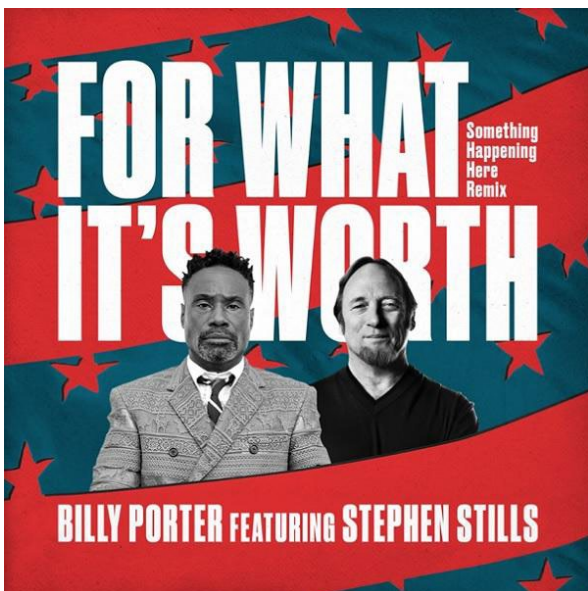
“This is really an entire ecosystem that connects, in almost a museum-like way, the artefacts, audio, video, stories, socials, e-commerce, all of that,” said

Filing systems: the art of archive management

Mindich. "It's not a store, even though there are a few things for sale: it really is a museum experience. So this becomes the central point for Def Leppard and a lot of things that they want to do to engage fans and share their history."

He closed on some other examples of ways to use archive material in new contexts. The company has curated the items on the wall at Interscope's main offices relating to its long history (showing that labels also need to understand and use the power of their own archives), it has pulled together the Jason Aldean exhibit at the Country Music Hall Of Fame and worked with the Frank Zappa estate to pool the items used in his hologram tour and documentary, as well as feeding into merchandise lines.

Drawing on the Stephen Stills song *For What It's Worth* (released in late 1966 by Buffalo Springfield), they built a site tied into the most recent US presidential election to encourage people to vote.



"We created a whole site to celebrate that and connect it with when we all vote – and we did lyric shirts with his handwritten lyrics to support social justice campaigns," he said. "It was a different way of looking at an artist's history and what they have created to engage with fans and really celebrate their legacy."

A different take on the archive was offered by Andy Linehan, Curator of the Popular Music Collections at The British Library in London. This collection covers a dizzying range of items, stretching back centuries, and has been used in a number of different ways not only by researchers but also musicians and record companies.

The collection is split between what Linehan called "published material" (i.e. items such as records or wax cylinders that were once commercially available) and "unpublished material" (i.e. items related to music that were never made for sale and have often been donated to the library).

The collection covers the entire history of recorded sound stretching to over 1.1 million items – made up of 3,912 wax cylinders, 251,140 shellac records/78rpm, 108,429 7-inch singles, 81,410 12-inch singles, 37,155 cassettes, 252,187 LPs and 381,738 CDs.

"The shellac collection as you can see here is huge," he said, showing a photo of just some of the shelves they have filled with them. "We store them in the basement underneath the building at St Pancras. We also keep the sleeves they come in. These are very useful to people who are looking for authentic reproductions and people who are interested in graphic design."

The bulk of the collection is made up of LPs but he noted that it is entirely reliant on donations. Unlike with bought magazines, journals and newspapers in the UK (where the publishers are legally obligated to send a copy of each issue to the British Library), this does not apply to sound recordings.

"While we try to collect everything issued in the UK, we don't have any legal enforcement to do so," he said. "So we rely very much on the donations of individual record labels and creators. So if you are watching this and wonder whether your output of your company is in the archive already then do feel free to contact me and make sure that we are collecting your material."

Filing systems: the art of archive management

He singled out (pun clearly intended) the historic and cultural importance of the Library's 7-inch collection as they capture stories and histories that might be missed elsewhere.

"These are particularly interesting to me because when you're trying to trace the development of a certain genre of music or an artist's career, it's very likely that for a lot of them who were operating in the 20th century, their first releases will have been on this medium," he explained. "There are so many little gems that you can discover on labels that have long since disappeared in our collection of 7-inch singles."

He added, "Cassette is a great format for people who are just starting out – easily reproducible and sellable at gigs."

by members of the public where they may have recorded concerts or radio broadcasts that were never made available commercially, adding greater depth and context to the archives in general and specific artists in particular.

There are all manner of curios in the collection.

"We have all sorts of formats that we have to get sound off things – like lacquer discs [i.e. acetates], which are one-off recordings before the tape era," he said. "We have an extensive engineering sound department that restore and conserve recordings for us. We also generate some of our own recordings by recording at festivals, we run oral history programmes, basically trying to fill in gaps where we think there are sound recordings or people with

opinions or stories that haven't been told that we can collect and make available to people. We collect Pop videos from the 1980s and 1990s."

While the items are accessible (by appointment) to researchers, they can also have a public-facing role, with Linehan mentioning exhibitions the Library has created on Punk as well as music related to the Windrush era.

This is a hugely significant collection and shows the importance of

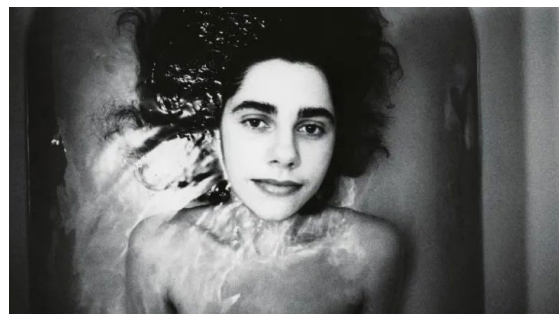
archiving and having a central point for items that otherwise would be lost.

This goes beyond just musical history; this is cultural history and the importance of its expansion and preservation cannot be stressed enough.



To explain the importance of this he showed a photo of a cassette by On A Friday (who changed their name to Radiohead when they signed to Parlophone). "This was a tape that they recorded while they were still playing school and college gigs around Oxford before they got to their [current huge] levels of success. It's great to have that in the archive." He also showed a photo of PJ Harvey's first (and handmade) demo tape. She personally donated one of the only 10 that were made to the Library so that it would exist in the archive.

He also revealed there is a concurrent "unofficial" audio archive – what he termed the "non-commercial recordings". These tend to be sent in





CEO Richard Averitt

Starchive Interview

Starchive Q&A

Starchive describes itself as a “command centre for the creative economy”, helping individuals and companies organise, digitise and manage their archives. Its major music clients include Bob Dylan, Carly Simon, Billy Joel and Leonard Cohen as well as the WFMT Chicago radio archive and the New York Philharmonic. Its founders did not present at the Tellin’ Stories... event, but we spoke to CEO Richard Averitt and senior adviser Jay Berman about archive management and how it feeds and contextualises legacies.

- **How did Starchive start and what is its mission statement?**

- **Richard:** In 2012, my co-founder Peter Agelasto was introduced to Jeff Rosen at the Bob Dylan Music Company. Jeff felt like there needed to be a platform and a solution that was as easy to use as iTunes but that could hold his audio, his video, his imagery, physical assets like boots and guitars and leather jackets, so that he had a single repository in which he could query Bob's 50-year life and career and curate collections of assets for everything – from a box set to a bootleg series to a request for licensing deals from Martin Scorsese for a new film.

He was frustrated in that the more we rolled into digital it actually became more and more of a fragmented environment. Video was over here, audio was over there and there were hard drives. He knew intellectually what he had but he had no way to really look at it.

Because of my background in photography, I immediately saw Peter's vision for what he

was trying to do. It's a hard and quixotic problem; we've been on it now for seven years.

- **You work with huge artists with huge legacies. How should younger artists prepare their archives for the future?**

- **Richard:** Let's assume you believe your career will matter if you're any artist. You may not be bullish enough to think you'll be the next Bob Dylan, but you have a tribe around you. The beauty of the modern digital economy is that we all now have ways to circle our tribes around ourselves in a million different platforms.

If you assume that your fans care about you, and you're going to grow your fanbase over time, then what you now know is that we live in an attention economy. That attention is driven today, almost exclusively, by media assets – audio, video and imagery, or all of those combined. You have to feed the content beast to stay relevant and top of mind.

What your fans really want is an authentic connection.

That authentic connection is driven by you opening up a bit more to the less polished and less refined parts of your life in the ways that you're comfortable with. Starchive helps you do that in ways that you're in control of.

- **For artists today, much of the content they produce lives on third-party social platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and TikTok. How can that be archived and managed?**

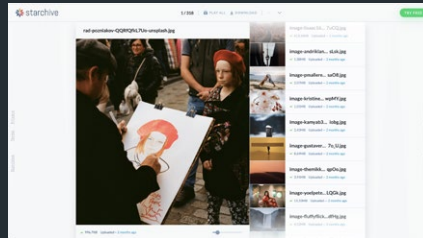
- **Richard:** With most of the things that get put out in social media, the social media platforms are actually transforming that asset into a much smaller optimised thing for their platform; so the original often gets discarded in that process. Or you're also creating variations: you're putting filters and things on that are unique to that app. But you actually don't have a copy of the thing that your fans reacted to.

We make it easy for you to download all of that stuff right out of Instagram, Facebook or wherever. Our thinking is

that you want to be in control of your assets because trying to go back and search, you can't search for anything on Instagram. Starchive makes that kind of curatorial work very easy. Now you're in this position to repurpose that content in any way that you want – whether it's a package deal, whether it's a new post, whether it's a retrospective, whether it's an NFT, whether it's an Andy Warhol-like filter-based series of the same image that was your most popular Instagram photo ever.

Your fans eat that stuff up. We are the workbench or the command centre for you to tap into what I like to describe as 'content yield'. Most of our platforms are of the now; they're very ephemeral. That means that we produce a lot of things that we only get a tiny bit of value out of in the long tail. Content yield is this huge opportunity as a creator to go back and squeeze more juice out of all of that creativity that you've already expended life, passion and energy around.

- **How do you help to add context to the items – digital or physical – in an archive?**
- **Richard:** Say you have two pairs of boots – they're exactly the same make and in about the same condition – and we're selling them both, one on eBay for \$40 and one at auction at Christie's for \$400,000. What's different about them is that one pair were my boots and the other were the boots



Dylan wore on stage the day that he went electric. What's interesting about that is you start to recognise the story is actually where the value is. The context is the thing that gives the physical asset meaning.

Digital artefacts [need context]. We're creating this vast, cultural digital myth where we're going to actually lose context around our things. That is a great loss to humanity in addition to being a personal loss to our own stories, whether we're a celebrity or not.

- **Most artists are about forward propulsion. How do you persuade them to dig into their past and properly organise it?**
- **Richard:** I don't know that Bob Dylan will ever look at Starchive. I wish he would! He would enjoy it, but he is notorious for saying, 'That was yesterday.' But Jeff Rosen has a mandate for Bob Dylan, and that is making money – which Jeff Rosen is maybe the best in the world at. Jeff Rosen is constantly combing through the seemingly endless body of work that Dylan has created and ideating on new ways in which to tell that story and to feed the public's passion for Bob Dylan.

For legacy artists, it's

now about the economic opportunity. Do they care enough about their life's work to hand it off to someone as they age out? Where's it going to go? Is it going to go to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame? Is it going to go to a research institution or university? Are they going to sell it? What do they want to do? Most people actually, in the waning years of their life, really start to think about their legacy. Those are the moments where it comes into play for those folks.

- **What advice would you give to a musician who is only now preparing their archive?**
- **Richard:** There is that line about the tree: the best time to plant a tree is 20 years ago and the second best time is today. Artists are making all of this stuff that's so valuable and important to us individually – but also commercially and culturally. What Starchive aims to do is make it super easy for you to have a place where you hold it, take advantage of it, remember it and are able to share it again or capitalise on it – either economically or just culturally.
- **Jay:** It is less costly if you start out with it; and it's more costly if you have to go back into history and try to do it. Legacy artists, in many cases, can afford to get an archivist to do this. If you're a young artist and you have an audience that is yours, you ought to be thinking of them in those terms.

Inventory stories: maximising and marketing deep catalogues



REPUTATIONS AND LEGACIES IN MUSIC ARE PRIMARILY BUILT ON THE RECORDINGS. Of course, the song composition underpins everything, but it is the records themselves that echo through the ages deepest and longest.

Heartbreak Hotel, A Day In The Life, (I Can't Get No) Satisfaction, I Heard It Through The Grapevine, Life On Mars?, Like A Prayer, Rehab, Crazy In Love and *Vossi Bop* are all phenomenal songs; but it is the original recordings by Elvis, The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, Marvin Gaye, David Bowie, Madonna, Amy Winehouse, Beyoncé and Stormzy that are the things that cut through most and from which legends spring forth.

In all of these records the artists involved had all pulled off the greatest trick of them all – they had bottled lightning.

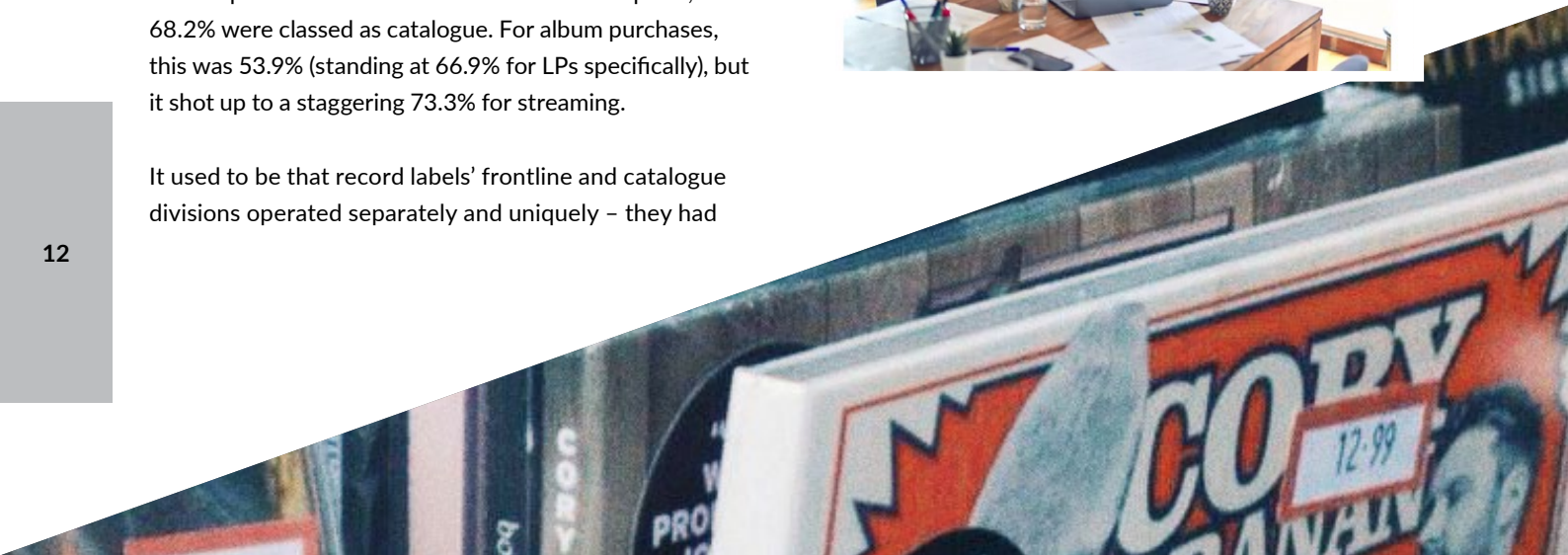
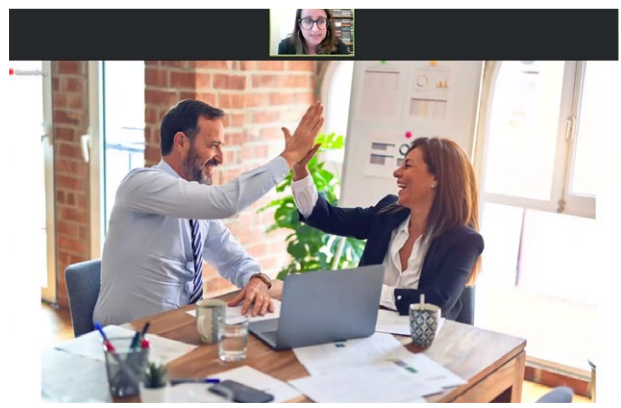
Streaming has given new impetus to catalogue and enabled it to reach whole new audiences in ways that were impossible even 15 years ago. The entire history of recorded sound has, pretty much, now been made available on-demand. The BPI reports that catalogue albums (i.e. any title that is over 52 weeks old as per the Official Charts Company's measurement criteria) dominated UK consumption in 2020. Across all album consumption, 68.2% were classed as catalogue. For album purchases, this was 53.9% (standing at 66.9% for LPs specifically), but it shot up to a staggering 73.3% for streaming.

It used to be that record labels' frontline and catalogue divisions operated separately and uniquely – they had

different remits and, as a result, very different dynamics. That was a legacy of the purely physical world, but digital in general and streaming in particular has enabled a new symbiosis to exist between these previously distinct departments.

Catalogue can be used to build anticipation for a new release for an artist and equally a frontline release can be used as a catalyst for renewed interest in an act's earlier work: the two no longer operate like church and state.

Julie Sandrin, Director of Digital Marketing at Sony Music Commercial Group (the label's catalogue arm) presented on how Sony has been driving greater collaboration between its frontline and catalogue divisions on major releases, a practice it pioneered with P!nk's *Beautiful Trauma* album in 2017.



Inventory stories: maximising and marketing deep catalogues

Within Sony (which is slightly different to the Official Charts Company's classification system), all repertoire older than 42 months falls into Commercial Group's purview.

"For years you had, on the one hand, frontline labels who would release new music and, on the other side, you would have catalogue labels who would release box sets and compilations," she explained of the former organisational structure at the company. "They were entirely different products, different marketing strategies and different audiences. But now, with the success of streaming, every label has to build an engaged audience who we want to devote their time and attention to our artists."

This shift is all tied to wider digital considerations whereby artists only run one set of social channels and labels operate only one CRM database – so pooling resources and marketing efforts is born both out of necessity as much as convenience.

"That means that all labels have to work together on their artists' social strategy," said Sandrin. "We all want to promote on the same channels to the same audiences."

Another concern is having a coordinated strategy on real-time bidding for digital ad spend and ensuring that

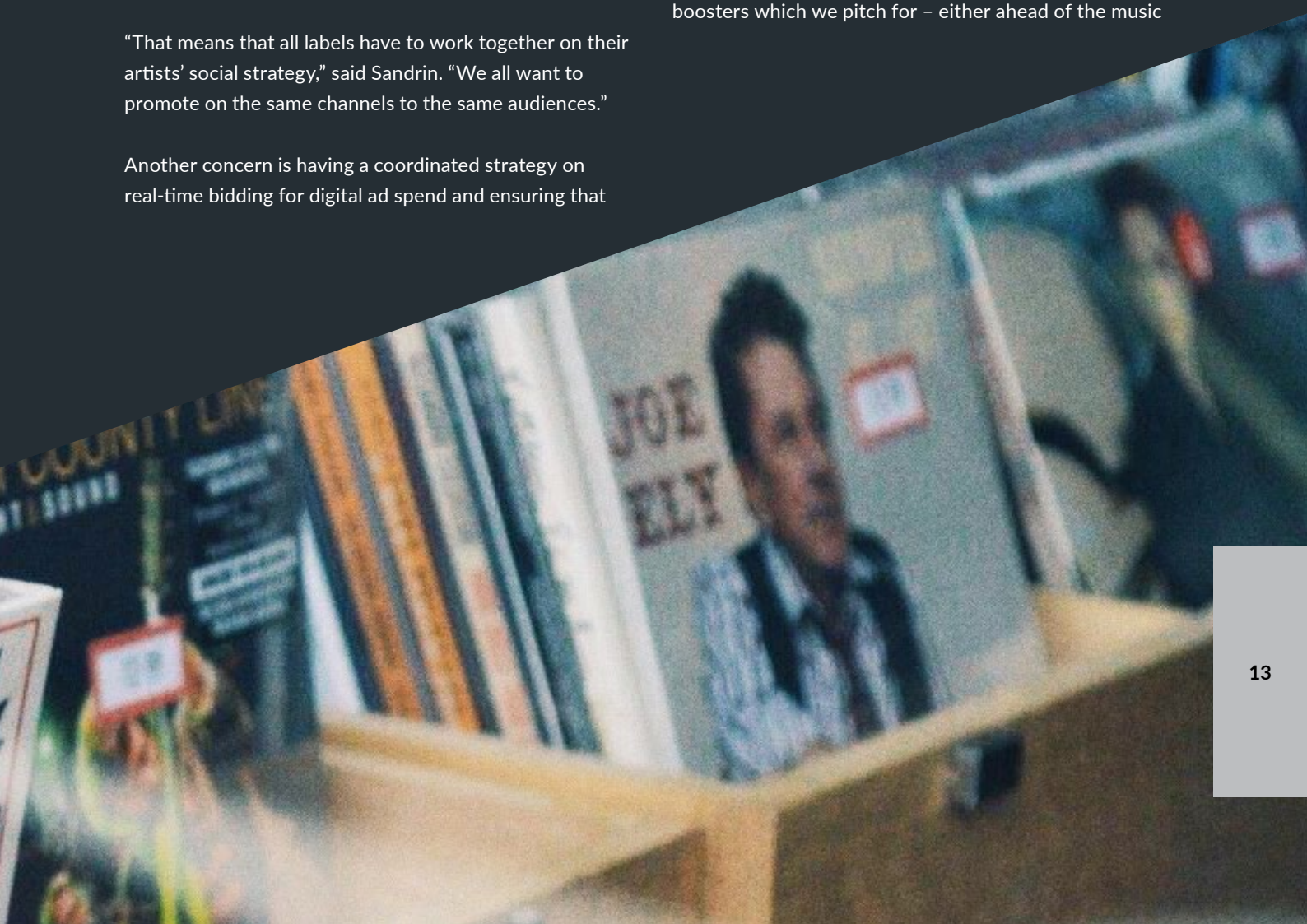
different departments are not accidentally bidding against each other.

"We need our ads to not compete against each other," she explained. "That means we need a very joined-up approach to both our organic and our paid activity."

A recurring theme in the presentations on archiving was that artists are hesitant to look back, preferring to focus their efforts on their latest pieces of work. It is never a given, then, that an artist with a new album to promote will want to get involved in ways to resurface their past albums.

As far as Commercial Group is concerned, the first priority when working alongside the frontline labels is to secure DSP support across an act's entire body of work – new and old.

"For example, Apple Music have got excellent catalogue boosters which we pitch for – either ahead of the music



Inventory stories: maximising and marketing deep catalogues

coming out or during the new music campaign if there's a gap where we can insert our catalogue activations," said Sandrin. "We also deliver regular content to our artists' YouTube channel; so we'll dig into their archives or we can even commission new content or lyric videos that will boost the YouTube channel subscribers and benefit new music videos as they're released."

Where frontline and catalogue collaboration is most visible is in driving audiences to an act's 'best of' playlists on different DSPs where new tracks can be added to established hits and deep cuts.

"We know frontline labels are very focused at driving streams of singles, but if they drive to the playlist, it has the whole catalogue and if we drive to that playlist and they are adding new tracks to that playlist, it also benefits frontline labels and the new music," Sandrin said of the processes here. "So we feed off each other."

Outside of DSPs, social channels also offer huge opportunities to cast the spotlight on catalogue tracks.

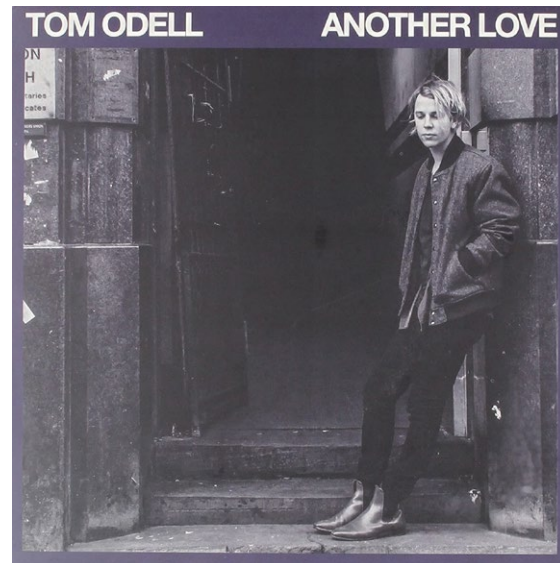
She talked through the example of *Another Love*, a track from Tom Odell's debut EP in 2012 (which was also the third single from his 2013 debut album). In April 2020, it was donated for use in an advert for the Marie Curie cancer charity which gave it a boost; but then it started trending on TikTok at the start of 2021 after being used years earlier in TV series *The Vampire Diaries* (a form of delayed virality).

"TikTokers made the song their own and there were loads of different trends on TikTok," she explained. "In April, Tom introduced himself to this new audience who had discovered the song via trends and the posts got huge engagement. His followers really shot up. As a consequence, the streaming consumption of the track also saw a huge spike."

At this stage, Columbia (as the frontline label) was gearing up for the release of his album *Monsters*

in July and their efforts started to intertwine with those of Commercial Group.

Another Love was re-pitched to radio as part of this.



"We know it can be extremely challenging for artist managers to agree to us doing this, especially when there are new singles that are being pitched to radio at the same time," said Sandrin. "We were very happy that both artist and management were on side for this. We also pitched the catalogue to DSPs when it wouldn't come in the way of any pitch for any of the new singles."

A renewed emphasis was put on his YouTube channel, including making a lyric video for *Another Love* which helped to grow his YouTube subscriber numbers.

"Columbia's online activity drove to his top tracks playlists on Spotify rather than to each individual single, and they dropped new tracks at the top of the playlist as they were released," she said of how the frontline label adapted its strategy. "We worked together with management on content strategy across the socials that would appeal to fans that already existed but also to all the new fans who discovered him through the trend [on TikTok], all the while seeding in information about new songs coming out."

Inventory stories: maximising and marketing deep catalogues

Most interestingly – showing how new releases and older tracks can work together – the company created a mashup of *Another Love* and *Lose You Again* from the new album, showing how the past and present can literally intertwine.

“We’re really happy with the results so far this year,” said Sandrin. “*Another Love* has done 25 million streams in the UK and *Lose You Again* is also doing really well.”

Focusing purely on catalogue – specifically the career-spanning box set – Dan Walton (Product Manager) and Michael Neidus (Global Commercial Manager) from Demon Music Group talked through campaigns for two very distinct artists: one a hugely influential cult artist; and the other a major global star.

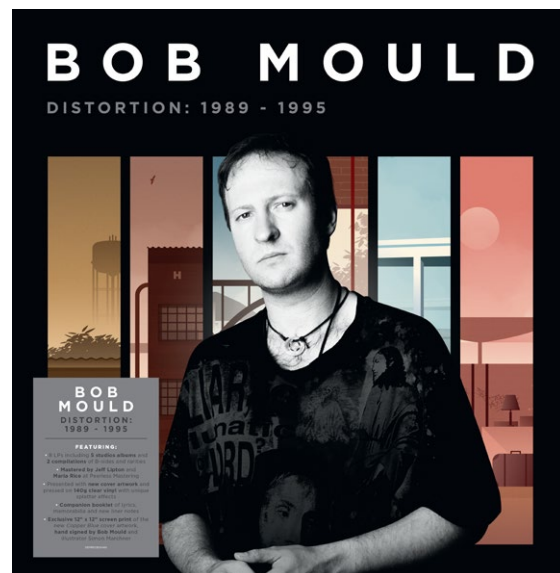
Walton opened with the overview of *Distortion 1989-2019*, a retrospective on the post-Hüsker Dü career of Bob Mould that was released in October 2020.

“Across the period, there is a hugely diverse body of work, from Folk Rock to Punk to Electronica and Disco,” he said of the thematic challenges underpinning the project. “So we wanted to find a way to create a consistent and unified way to present the material.”

With a project like this, it has to simultaneously appeal to hardcore fans by offering something new as well as more casual consumers who need an entry point into an artist’s career – but not in a way that can be overwhelming.

“We had conversations with the artist to discuss how they saw the project and about how best to represent their legacy,” he said on how they angled it. “It is important to Bob to tell the definitive story of his work.”

The timespan covered 18 studio albums, but the box set also added in four live albums and a compilation, *Distortion Plus*, that gathered together B-sides, collaborations and other rarities.



Mould himself was against including demos and alternative takes, believing what had been publicly released were the definitive versions. In total, the release spanned 295 tracks, many of which were controlled by labels other than Demon meaning they had to license them from multiple parties. The cleared tracks were then remastered.

Where this box set diverged from others of a similar scope was in how it used (or, more specifically, did not use) the artwork from the original releases. The artwork came from different designers and eras and so there was no overarching visual aesthetic. To address this, Demon worked with Mould and illustrator Simon Marchner to create new covers for each of the 22 albums in the collection so they had a consistent look, all of them taking their design

Inventory stories: maximising and marketing deep catalogues

cues from song titles and lyrics. (The cover of Sugar's *Copper Blue* album, for example, was reworked to include an illustration of the Hoover Dam, the title of one of the tracks on that album.)

In total, the box set had 24 discs and came with a 72-page book that had new liner notes, rare shots of Mould, photos of memorabilia and testimonials from famous fans such as Fred Armisen, Shirley Manson and Richard Thompson.

Alongside the CD box set were four different vinyl box sets zooming in on particular eras, pressed on 140g splatter vinyl. A limited-edition version (restricted to 750 copies) was offered to independent retailers as an exclusive and came with a screen print that was signed by Mould and Marchner.

These high-end sets were clearly aimed at the superfan and collector, but three cut down versions (a four-CD set, a two-CD set and a two-LP set) were curated by Mould and targeted at more casual consumers or those looking for an entry point release.

Carrying on the theme, Mould's US tour later this year will be named Distortion. "After the reissues

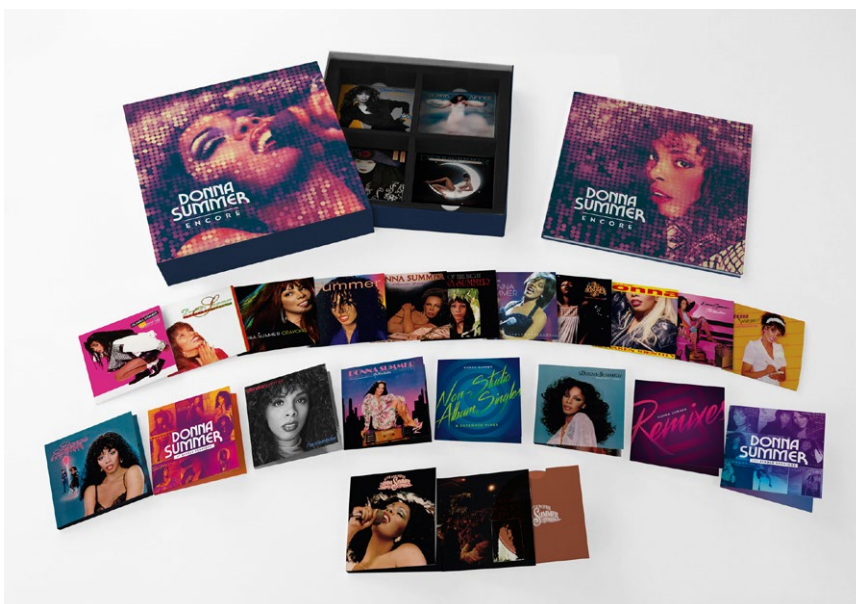


campaign we're looking at ways to continue the series into next year with more products," said Walton.

Neidus used his presentation to focus on *Encore*, a deluxe 33-disc box set that collects together Donna Summer's 17 studio albums plus an extra eight discs of rarities and tracks that did not appear on any album release. (Some of the albums are double discs which include 7-inch versions, 12-inch versions and remixes, thereby bringing the total discs to 33.) The set was made up of 329 tracks in total.

"Donna's catalogue over the years has sold about 113 million units," he said by way of set up. "A variety of her albums are owned by different companies and about 11 years ago we started the conversations with Donna and her singer-songwriter husband Bruce Sudano about looking after a part of her catalogue, which is from the 1980s onwards after she left Casablanca Records."

He said this is the first time all of her albums have been released in a collection. "As you can imagine something like that doesn't take a short time to do," he said. "The best part of six years later it finally came to market."



Summer passed away in 2012 and so Demon worked closely with her estate on the release. They decided to focus only on material that had been officially released during her career.

"What we wanted to do was focus on what made Donna a spectacular, iconic artist – not things that hadn't been out before or had been leaked," he said. "It was about what actually made her famous and that everyone knew."

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Building her social media profile was a key part of the project.

“Her Facebook following has doubled in the seven years since we’ve been working more with her catalogue,” he said, “but her profile on Spotify has actually shot up to 6.5 million monthly listeners and about 4 million of them probably had never heard of Donna before last September.”

He noted that Kygo’s 2020 remix of her 1979 global hit *Hot Stuff* helped open the door for new generations of fans to discover her and her music.



All the releases were remastered to ensure there weren’t any fluctuations in the audio levels across all the albums. “We had to make sure that everything was EQ-ed at the same level, bearing in mind that the production values go from 1974 right up to the mid-noughties,” he said.

Each CD was housed in a mini replica of the original album sleeve and the set came with a 40-page hardback book.

“The book also opened with a 1,000-word foreword from [producer] Giorgio Moroder,” said Neidus. “We also included tributes from industry legends – producers, artists, songwriters,

collaborators – including Nile Rodgers and Bootsy Collins.”

He revealed that the set has sold over 3,000 units – with an average retail price of £140 in the UK and \$200 in the US.

When talking about catalogue, the default thinking tends to be around artists, but labels themselves – especially those with a long and powerful track record in a particular genre – must also be understood as critical to the catalogue ecosystem.

Labels like Motown, Stax, Trojan, Warp and Ninja Tune have effectively become genres in their own right. Tied to this thinking, Aaron Talbert, VP of Sales & Marketing at long-standing Reggae, Dancehall and Soca label VP Records, outlined just how his company is marketing its entire catalogue under the VP umbrella.

The label dates back to 1979, springing out of the Randy’s Record shop in Kingston, Jamaica (and subsequently the VP Records shop in Queens, New York).

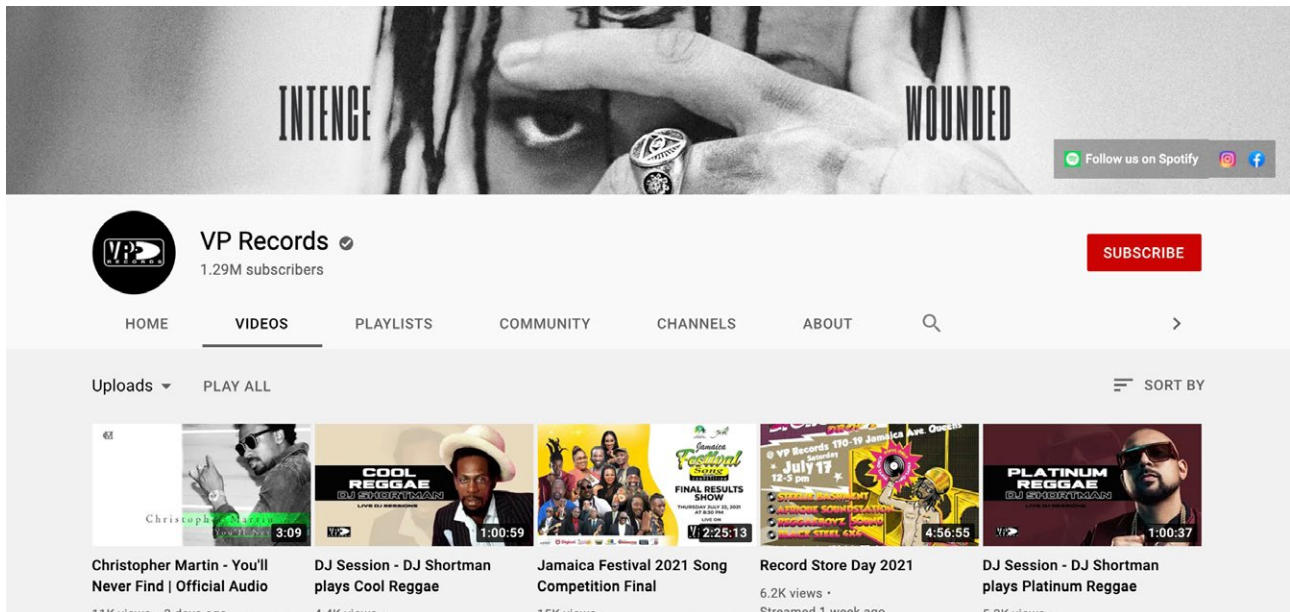
It works with both frontline acts as well as its growing catalogue. Talbert opened by discussing the label’s Spotify playlist page.

“What we found is that with sub-genres, third-party playlists and really utilising all of the platforms to drive the streaming is going to be important – platforms as well as context,” he said of the streaming strategy here.

He explained that the company is operating upwards of 50 different playlists now so it has a broad coverage; but the big challenge for everyone in the catalogue world remains drawing in new (and younger) listeners.

“We’ve got a lot of fans who are streaming music who are younger than our sweet spot in terms of the Reggae music audience,” he said. “Part of it is an education process.”

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YouTube is also an important platform to extend the label's reach and to build its brand. The official YouTube channel has over 1.2 million subscribers.

"We've been putting a lot of drive behind this as a way to reach our consumers – Reggae being a global audience and this being the one mainstream and free platform," Talbert said. "We've had a lot of focus on that and a lot of great things have happened."

He noted that Love From A Distance, a two-hour livestream by Reggae star Beres Hammond in March 2021, drew an audience of 100,000 viewers as it was happening. It now has over 1.4 million plays.

He also talked about how animated videos can be used to hook in younger consumers and give a new lens on old tracks.

Tied to this is the importance of audience segmentation to ensure new fans are brought on board and existing fans are super-served. He used the Greensleeves imprint as an illustrative example.

"The Greensleeves line for us has tended to be much more about the collectors and obviously it's more UK-centric because that's where the brand

came from," he said. "As we really put a focus behind that, this 10,000 followers is really an effort that's only been about three months or four months in the building. That's one of the segmentation points."

He added, "For the VP audience, we're based in the US. We've been at this Spotify thing longer and obviously, like all companies that are doing new releases and catalogues, the new releases tend to get the lion's share of attention."

In terms of social media impact, he said that Twitter has powerful reach but it tends to be based around particular artists rather than entire labels.

He ended on a point about direct-to-consumer commerce and how acts can be used to help push the label identity and brand.

"For the Beres Hammond livestream show, we did a tour T-shirt," he said. "It was a virtual concert and that was the joke – to do a tour concert T-shirt. We backed it up on our direct-to-consumer website, VPreggae.com. On VPreggae.com we are selling a wide range of products so that D2C focusing on the genre helps it to stay strong with our community of Reggae fans; but also when people want to discover Reggae, it gives them a good entry point."

Comeback for good: how to plot the perfect return

ACTIVE ARTISTS TOGGLE BETWEEN FRONTLINE AND CATALOGUE RELEASES, BUT ACTS CAN ALSO TOGGLE BETWEEN BEING ACTIVE AND BEING INERT.

Peter Robinson from *Popjustice* gave an enormously entertaining 10-step guide to planning the perfect comeback.



“There has been some talk today about building legacies and things like that,” he said. “But I say: why wait to see whether you build a decent legacy until you’re six feet under or have your feet up on the beach? What’s the point in doing all that if you can’t hear people telling you how brilliant you are?”

The steps are as follows:

#1 Say It Right

He opened on the semantics between a “comeback” and a “reinvention”. He said to qualify as a comeback, you have to have been inactive for at least five years. A reinvention, on the other hand, should happen “in the standard run of your actual career” and typically involves a change in image or sound. (“Maybe you’ve rethought your hat or your hair.”)

The screenshot shows a presentation slide with a dark background. At the top left, it says 'Recording' with a small icon. The main title is 'RULE 1: SAY IT RIGHT'. Below this, there are two columns: 'COMEBACK' and 'REINVENTION'. Each column has a small image and a list of bullet points.

COMEBACK	REINVENTION
	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More than five years away from pop (preferably 'in wilderness')• Some sort of split/rupture• 'Something has happened'	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Within five years (ideally three, we're all busy people)• New sound/new look• Optional: hat/hair rethink



Comeback for good: how to plot the perfect return

“Ideally there will have been some sort of end point to the previous part of your career; maybe a bit of a rupture,” he argued about what defines a comeback. “Also, in the meantime, maybe something has happened. I’m not saying what, but something. Something so there is a bit of a story to come back from.”

#2 You Can’t Mistake My Typography

He used the example of the return of The KLF in 2017. It was part of a five-day event in Liverpool that included a book launch, an inquest into why they burned £1 million in 1994 and the launch of a funeral business.

“They touched on loads of little details that they had in their career before,” he said, pointing out how they used an ice cream van (previously used on the single sleeve for *Justified & Ancient*) and beaten up speakers (from their *The White Room* album cover).

“Most importantly, they use the same font, and it’s the font that I use for the titles in my presentation as a little bit of continuity,” he said. “The same font, it’s a great font, instant recognition from fans. Although Portishead did use that font once and I got quite angry because every time I saw a Portishead fly poster I thought the KLF were back. Eventually they did come back but the point is: don’t go messing with your fonts and if possible, don’t go messing with your logos.”

#3 If You Wannabe A Comebacker You’ve Got To Get With (Some Of) Your Friends

“Basically, if you want to come back, it would be nice if you had all your members in place, but you don’t necessarily need to,” he said.

The Spice Girls’ “battering ram approach to Pop” was such that they could return in 2019 without Victoria Beckham. “There were enough flashing lights and shouting to sidestep the fact that Posh was absent,” he said.



He also gave the example of Busted who came back as part of pop supergroup McBusted (Busted + McFly) but without lead singer Charlie Simpson.

“That meant that for the second part of their comeback Charlie was, ‘Oh, I’ll have a bit of that,’” he said. “So they got another tour out of it and an album with Charlie. The point is if you get enough right about the comeback – the timing and the tunes and the raking up of nostalgia – it can cover up for a missing member.”

Masters of this are Take That. They returned in 2006 as a four piece, without Robbie Williams.

“Robbie, also thought, ‘I’ll have a bit of that,’ joined for a bit and then left,” he explained. “Then, another member left, now they’re down to three. Although actually the last Take That album may have been a Gary Barlow album so maybe they are down to one. Who knows?”

4 (Don’t Fear) The Dumper

Because of social media and the unpredictability of memes and viral hits on TikTok, no one can fully disappear today.

“A career that’s tailed off doesn’t necessarily mean you can’t stage a comeback or reinvention,” he proposed. “If you leave it long enough, people will have forgotten about that dismal last album. This is screamingly obvious, but if the song is good enough you can turn it around.”

Comeback for good: how to plot the perfect return

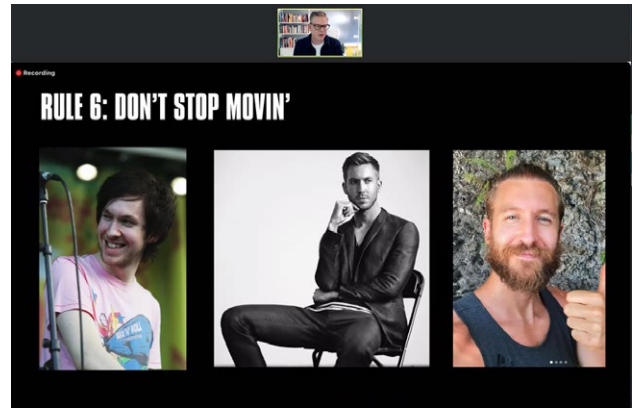
To illustrate this, he showed a screenshot of a Wikipedia page covering Cher's singles in the 1990s. Many charted modestly around the world and then the release of *Believe* in 1999 completely bucked that trend.

"Number ones all around the world, platinum records, job done," he said. "So, well done Cher for that. Very good. Basically the dumper is not forever and you can come back from it; people will forgive, and possibly even forget, the fact that your last album didn't do that well."

#5 Future Nostalgia

For this, an act has to factor in the age of their average fan when they split up and how old those fans are when the act returns.

"If your fans were 10 at your peak, they're not going to be ready for a comeback when they're 16," he said. "They're going to find the whole episode of their fandom deeply uncool and deeply embarrassing. Give it a couple of years, though, and things start to change. By their late teens and early 20s, the idea of seeing the same band that they saw when they were 12, but in a context where they're now old enough to get very drunk and have a great time, puts the whole thing in quite a different light."



#6 Don't Stop Movin'

Calvin Harris was the case study here, looking at different eras of his career over the past 15 years. He has changed at every step – both visually and musically, happy to change his sound when it started to be copied by others.

"We're all different people, but sometimes pop stars aren't allowed to change; but he's been allowed to change," said Robinson for the reinvention of Calvin Harris. "It isn't just like a visual thing with him. Sonically, he has gone through so many different stages of his musical career and it seems to be that he has this idea to basically set the trend, then whenever someone else jumps on he bins it off [...] Calvin Harris is very good at doing



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something, doing it well, everyone else is doing it, he's already moved to something else. Lovely."

#7 Head & Hat

This was focused specifically on a reinvention strategy for active artists.

"Artists who are considered the kings and queens of reinvention, often it is basically just they got a new haircut for a few years," he suggested. "This is a tricky area. It's a danger zone."

He gave examples of acts he felt had changed strong looks and had lost momentum as a result.

"There's a question here obviously of where wigs fit in, but I'm afraid that it's far beyond the scope of this discussion."

#8 You've Got To Go There To Come Back

"You cannot make a comeback if you haven't actually been anywhere," said Robinson, noting that in the always-on social media age and streaming world it is very difficult to disappear completely as the algorithms of those platforms need to be constantly fed.

"Whether it's a reinvention or comeback, you really can't be tweeting from Tesco one day and then unveiling your amazing new sonic and creative universe the next day," he said. "The examples I've got here are Lorde and Ed Sheeran and both of these

people have quite a sceptical approach to social media. It feels like they've been away because they basically haven't been on social media.

"Lorde still isn't on social media and her single's been out for weeks. She hasn't tweeted about it. Fair play. Ed Sheeran on the other hand went from not tweeting at all to the point where he's re-tweeting people with their cats. So, two different approaches to promo, but the point with both those is they've gone somewhere and then they've come back."

#9 Leave Right Now

Quoting the single sleeve for *History* by The Verve, he argued that "all farewells should be sudden".

He said, as a fan, that he wants "a proper split" when an act calls it a day.

"I don't want people to fade out," he said. "I want drama. Pop is all about drama."

The ideal time to split is at the absolute peak of your success as it means that when you return there is "a sense of unfinished business" underpinning your reappearance.

"It's maybe easier creatively for you to think you want to finish something off," he said. "It's worth noting also that a proper split is an art form in its own right. I don't want to see a screenshot of a Notes app statement as a split. I want a press conference. I want a pop star looking sad. I want someone saying, 'Unfortunately the rumours are true...!' So have a good split and have a better comeback. That is my theory on that."

#10...

"And in keeping with the idea of quitting when people least expect it, I'm ending on point number nine. You weren't expecting that, were you? So I'm ending on point number nine. I will see you again in five years and not a day sooner."



Down through the years: marketing the estate and the legacy



THE MARKETING OF LEGACIES IS COMPLEX and is often a tricky balancing act between appealing to superfans (without being condescending to them) while creating entry points for potential fans (without overwhelming them).

As with frontline acts, pushing the legacies of living artists and those who are no longer around has to be an ongoing project today: the old days of using anniversaries as the main (or even total) marketing hook are long gone.

Yet in being always-on there are risks that inferior content is put out or bad paths are travelled down and these can cause serious damage to a legacy and a reputation that has been carefully built up over years and decades. One ill-conceived step here can undo a lifetime's work.

For legacy artists, they are often still around and active so can (and should) have approval or visibility on marketing plans so they can say if it fits their visions and aesthetic or not.

For deceased artists, however, this is even more complicated and risky as the estate has to act on their behalf and not do things the artist would never have countenanced when they were alive.

Music business writer and Music Ally contributor Eamonn Forde talked about some of the techniques used by music estates to keep artists in the public consciousness, drawing on the research and interviews that make up his forthcoming book, *Leaving The Building: The Lucrative Afterlife Of Music Estates* (published on 19th August 2021 by Omnibus Press).

"Estate management has become more complex over the past 20 years – but also more powerful," he said. "In popular music, death can see an artist elevated, celebrated and validated in ways they never were in life. It also becomes the catalyst for a renewed interest in them and their art."

He traced the origins of the modern and industrialised estates business to August 1977 after Elvis Presley died.

Down through the years: marketing the estate and the legacy

There were, however, standout examples that pre-date the death of Elvis and that helped shape the foundations of the business that was to follow.

Blues guitarist and singer Robert Johnson died in 1938 in relative obscurity but the 16-track *King Of The Delta Blues Singers* album was released by Columbia in 1961. This created a whole new legacy and cult around him, bringing him a level of fame and sales that he never saw in his lifetime. The same process happened decades later with both Nick Drake and Eva Cassidy in the late 1990s and early 2000s. The artists might be different, but the process is the same.

Otis Redding's recording of (*Sittin' On*) *The Dock Of The Bay* was unfinished when he died in a plane crash in December 1967. Within a matter of weeks, however, it was completed, released and became the first posthumous number 1 single in US chart history. This set the template and paved the way for tracks being "completed" by other musicians – most significantly *Free As A Bird* in 1995 when the remaining Beatles added to a John Lennon demo from the 1970s.

He argued, however, that the multi-functional, multi-revenue source and enduring estate business began with Elvis, growing beyond the reissues of his albums to encompass: "the opening of his home at Graceland in June 1982 as both a shrine and a cash register; remixes (notably Junkie XL's reworking of *A Little Less Conversation*, which was a global number 1 in 2002); the orchestral albums *If I Can Dream* in 2015 and *The Wonder Of You* in 2016 which added the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra to Elvis hits and deep cuts); the Netflix animated series *Agent King* which is currently in development; and no end of mass merchandise, ranging from dolls to CBD [cannabidiol] pet products under the Elvis Presley Hound Dog brand."

This has been so commercially successful that the Elvis estate has appeared every year in the *Forbes* posthumous rich list since it began in 2000. It was listed at number one for eight of those years and has never dropped outside the top five.



He said that the failsafe technique of reissuing albums or greatest hits around key anniversaries is no longer viable in music estates which are much more complex machines today.

"Rather than operating around anniversaries, posthumous catalogues have to be worked like front-line releases – and the power of playlists and streaming have enabled that to happen," he said. "Now when an act dies, the playlist can be made immediately and monetised, whereas before you had to wait weeks to get new product made and shipped into the stores."

He warned of the dangers of digging too deeply in the archives and putting out substandard material, illustrating this with the story of the sister of opera star Maria Callas pushing for her unreleased final album to be put out in the 1980s.

The executive in charge of her catalogue vetoed it, saying it would do incalculable damage to her legacy because her voice was far from its peak. It was never released.

Down through the years: marketing the estate and the legacy

“Just because something is there in the vault it should not follow that it gets released,” Forde said. “You need to be thinking about the long-term cultural and legacy implications. One bad move can derail an estate and kill a legacy.”

He talked through some of the major ways estates can market a deceased artist.

The biopic

“Some estates become too hands-on,” said Forde. He felt this over-involvement could be detrimental to the quality of the finished film.

La Bamba (on the life of Ritchie Valens) in 1987 was a pivotal biopic as it was a success at the box office as well as spawning a hit soundtrack album.



But there are many good ones out there that can give new audiences a way into the artist. Other standout ones include *Sex & Drugs & Rock & Roll* (on Ian Dury), *Ray* (on Ray Charles), *Walk The Line* (on Johnny Cash), *The United States Vs Billie Holiday* and *Bohemian Rhapsody* (on the career of Freddie Mercury).

The growth of streaming platforms like Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Hulu and Disney+ have meant many more biopics are being commissioned with major ones on Elvis, Aretha Franklin and Whitney Houston in production now, making this an area of huge opportunity for estates.

The documentary

“This is a more considered telling of the story but it absolutely hinges on a properly maintained archive,” said Forde, saying the estate needs to collaborate with the documentary maker to tell the story in as rich and as deep a way as possible.

He named *Miles Davis & Birth Of The Cool* (2019), *Biggie: I Got A Story To Tell* (2021) and *Poly Styrene: I Am A Cliché* (2021) as good examples of this in motion.



“These can create a new narrative around an act or give them a place in the spotlight as all estates are constantly fighting against the slide into irrelevance,” he argued.

The jukebox musical

The first big example of this was *Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story* in 1989 but the true blockbuster was *We Will Rock You* which started in 2002 and, after a modest start, quickly did incredible business.

“Unlike in biopics and documentaries, nuance does not work here,” he said of how they need to be pitched. “They need to appeal to not just the super-fans but also the regular theatre-going audience.”



Down through the years: marketing the estate and the legacy

The house as a visitor attraction

This is only something a few acts can do but they become treated like holy places of worship as fans get to see where a major star lived.



Graceland, for example, remains the cornerstone of the Elvis business and is now the second-most visited house in the US (after the White House).

Paisley Park is a relatively recent addition and one where the Prince estate is still trying to figure out how to balance what to make public and what to make private. Mostly visitors get to see where Prince worked but not where he lived.

On the unofficial side, the Handel Hendrix In London house is not endorsed by the Hendrix estate but it directly contributes to the Hendrix estate business.

The hologram and AI

“This is unquestionably the most controversial development in estate and legacy management,” said Forde.

It started with Tupac at Coachella in 2012 and there were other one-off holograms such as Ol’ Dirty Bastard at Rock The Bells in 2013 and Michael Jackson at the Billboard Music Awards in 2014.

They have now become touring entities for holographic versions of Maria Callas, Ronnie James Dio, Frank Zappa, Roy Orbison, Buddy Holly and Whitney Houston.

The hologram companies argue they let fans ‘see’ acts that they never saw when they were alive and



they work as a driver for streams, record sales and merchandise by keeping an act in the public eye and earning – just as living artists do.

The scrapped Amy Winehouse hologram – due to public backlash as well as some rights issues – suggests that not every hologram is going to work.

“But more sinister than this is the move into AI,” suggested Forde. He gave the example of a TV show that created a hologram version of Turtleman from South Korean Hip-Hop group Turtles and had him perform *Start Over* by Gaho, a track originally released in 2018, a decade after his death.

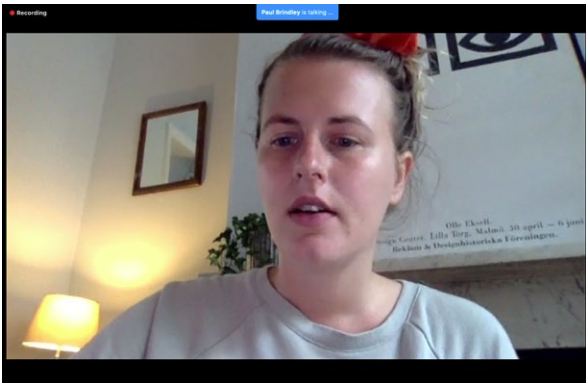
In early April 2021, ‘new’ songs by Kurt Cobain, Jimi Hendrix, Amy Winehouse and Jim Morrison were released as part of the Lost Tapes of the 27 Club project, using AI to hint at the kind of music each of these artists could have made had their lives not been cut short.

“The moral and ethical issues here are complex and will trigger highly emotional responses,” said Forde. “But they show how far the legacy business has moved – partly out of necessity and partly out of desperation.”

He concluded by saying that estates have to walk the line between appeasing existing fans while also inducting new generations of fans. As such, estates have to become experts in what he termed “grave to the cradle” marketing.

Marlen Hüllbrock, Head of Marketing Services at Music Ally, outlined her 10 tech marketing tactics for legacy artists.

Down through the years: marketing the estate and the legacy



She opened by mentioning the deal earlier in 2021 where the Beach Boys sold a controlling interest in their catalogue and brand to Iconic Artists Group. This will involve a wide range of marketing initiatives including a move into VR, AR, CGI and natural language processing alongside more traditional projects like a documentary and touring exhibition.

“This is a sign of how people are looking forward with legacy or catalogue artists, what technology is emerging and how they can use it to delight their existing fans and also reach new audiences,” she said.

She worked through key platforms and strategies in turn.

TikTok

The estates of artists such as David Bowie, Freddie Mercury, George Michael and John Lennon have all recently joined TikTok, in part to reach younger audiences and licensing their music for use within videos on the app. TikTok challenges and the power of memes can come into play here and become amplified if actual recordings can be at the heart of them.

“David Bowie had a challenge focused on his iconic looks, which makes a lot of sense because the makeup community on TikTok is huge, so that was the perfect challenge for him to launch,” said Hüllbrock. “Queen leveraged the duet feature on TikTok where they challenged users to duet on a

snippet of one of the band’s iconic performances. And George Michael’s team posted a lot of different content, repurposing the assets that they have. For example, interview snippets, short parts of music videos where they added text overlay and behind-the-scenes info, and also some more meme-like content.”

The website

She drew attention to the Neil Young Archives for which he charges a subscription fee to fans to give them access to an enormous range of content, most notably his meticulously kept recordings.

“He has made this the centre of all of his digital activity, where he has even left some of the social media platforms so that he can encourage fans to follow him on there and then also drive revenues from that,” she said.



She also discussed anniversary sites such as Alicia Keys' Memories Of A Minor (where fans could reminisce about her *Songs In A Minor* album on its 20th anniversary) as well as One Direction's 10 Years Of 1D website which has an interactive timeline of videos, voice notes, lyrics and photos as well as a feature to create personalised Spotify or Apple Music playlists.

Video

YouTube is a key platform for almost all artists but not all of them have videos at the optimum quality. There is an ongoing process where acts are remastering their videos at 4K such as U2 and The Spice Girls, adding them on a rolling basis as a way

Down through the years: marketing the estate and the legacy



to spark repeat visits to their channel from fans. Universal Music Group (UMG) is also remastering huge chunks of its back catalogue of music videos in partnership with YouTube.

“There are a couple of YouTube features that you can use to make this launch of remasters a bit more exciting, such as turning it into an event with a YouTube premiere, where you can get fans to come together, even if the artist is no longer active, so that they can have a shared moment,” she said.

Acts like Elton John and The Rolling Stones have been focusing on YouTube as a way to put out concert recordings from their past and new additions like the singalong feature have been used to push The Beatles' *Yellow Submarine* film and also for the 25th anniversary of Oasis' (*What's The Story) Morning Glory?* album.

Playlists

“Playlists are one of the key formats in the streaming era,” said Hüllbrock. “There's also a lot

of potential to use them to introduce new fans to the legacy artist's catalogue or to remind their core fans of some of the hidden gems on the albums.”

She looked at how this standard asset could be revitalised and discussed how Pink Floyd created an evolving playlist on both Spotify and YouTube, with the track listing evolving and being added to on a daily basis. This included adding rare tracks that had only previously been made available on box sets, working as a hook for fans to follow them.

The way in which Norah Jones had “her back catalogue sliced and diced into playlists” was also highlighted, notably how she built them around different moods and activities such as *Kitchen Jones*, *Pick Me Up Jones*, *Morning Jones* and *Late Night Jones*.

Podcasts

“If there's one thing that the world of legacy artists has covered, it's amazing stories about an artist's career, about the albums they made and about the shows

Down through the years: marketing the estate and the legacy



they played,” proposed Hüllbrock. “This dovetails perfectly with the current trend around podcasts that we’re seeing on many streaming services.”

She mentioned podcasts by Robert Plant and David Gilmour where they were the hosts as well as a New Jack Swing-themed one that was created by UMG.

Gaming

“This certainly isn’t something that’s only restricted to younger artists who have grown up with consoles,” she said, pointing to Queen, Linkin Park and Green Day as being among long-standing acts moving into this world and licensing their music into a variety of games.

The celebrity shout-out platform

This is a relatively new development, led by platforms like Cameo, where famous people sell shout-out videos to fans. TikTok is currently testing this and could set itself up as a rival.

“It is something that a lot of fans really, really value,” she said. “It’s not only revenue for artists as these videos are often shared on social media afterwards; so it can actually be a spur for people to stream these artists’ music as well.”

Fitness

This sector obviously saw a boom during the pandemic as people turned to home fitness. Peloton is a market leader here and draws heavily on music in its classes. It has workouts based around the catalogues of individual acts – including The Beatles and Bob Marley – while Sony Music has commissioned exclusive Elvis Presley remixes



for the service. “This really hints at the potential for collaboration around legacy artists that go beyond just simply licensing the existing music,” said Hüllbrock.

NFTs

“This is a very complicated topic with a lot of hype and a little bit of a backlash around it as well,” she said mentioning acts like Lionel Richie, Jay-Z, Mick Jagger and Dave Grohl all recently launching NFTs. There both NFT evangelists those who do not see it as a viable undertaking. “It is really important that you are thinking about the right strategy around this NFT and not just jumping onto the idea without actually looking into this,” she cautioned.

AI

Marlen drew on the example of Nile Rodgers working with tech startup Forever Holdings where he was filmed answering over 350 questions about his life and career. This was turned into “the world’s first interactive voice portrait” so fans could interact and ask the AI Nile questions.

Dolly Parton has also done interesting and prescient things here, notably stockpiling vocals for unreleased songs that can be completed after she has passed.

“This is something that we think could also be interesting for AI – pairing these vocal tracks with AI-generated music, for example,” concluded Hüllbrock. “Of course there’s always need for caution to not do anything that tarnishes an artist’s legacy. But that shouldn’t stop you from exploring what this technology is capable of and where it might be going.”

Socially minded: how social media is creating opportunities but also increasing the demand for content

THE IRONY OF SOCIAL MEDIA FOR LEGACY MANAGEMENT is that it has offered more ways to connect with audiences (old and new) but it has exponentially increased the need for content to be fed into it. As with frontline releases, legacy management is now an always-on business.

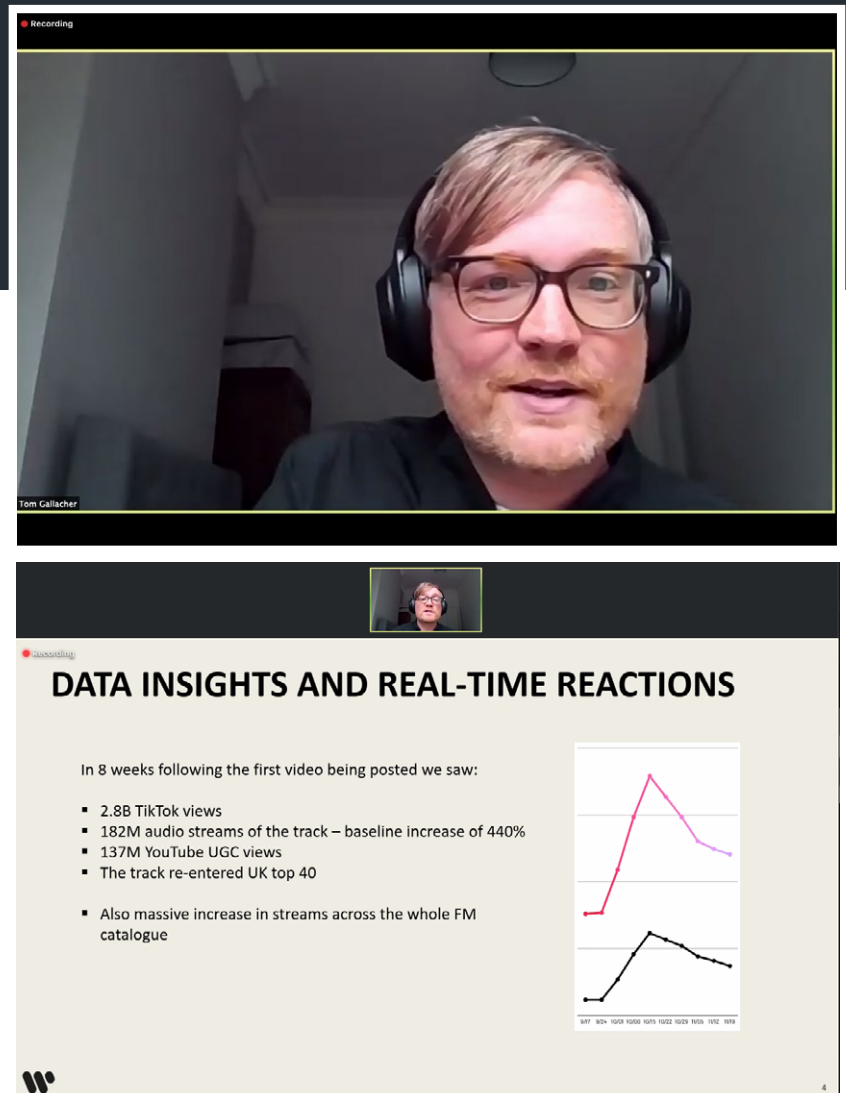
Prior to the emergence of global social platforms – significantly Facebook from 2010 onwards (the year it passed half a billion users) – legacy management was primarily based around anniversaries, reissues, synchronisation and all the old tricks of “legacy media”.

What social media has enabled – for better and for worse – is the viral moment: that thing that cannot be manufactured, that takes on a life of its own and can disappear just as quickly as it appeared. Different platforms become hotbeds for vitality at different moments – from *Gangnam Style* on YouTube to Grumpy Cat initially on Reddit and President Trump’s “covfefe” typo on Twitter – and music can often be a huge beneficiary here.

This was illustrated nowhere more clearly than the TikTok video in October 2020 posted by @420dogface208 (better known to his family as Nathan Apodaca). In it, he was skateboarding to work (his car had broken down),

drinking cranberry juice and miming along to *Dreams* by Fleetwood Mac. From there, everything exploded. The video went far beyond TikTok. Band members Mick Fleetwood, Stevie Nicks and Lindsey Buckingham threw their support behind it. And the song returned to the charts off the back of an enormous spike in streams.

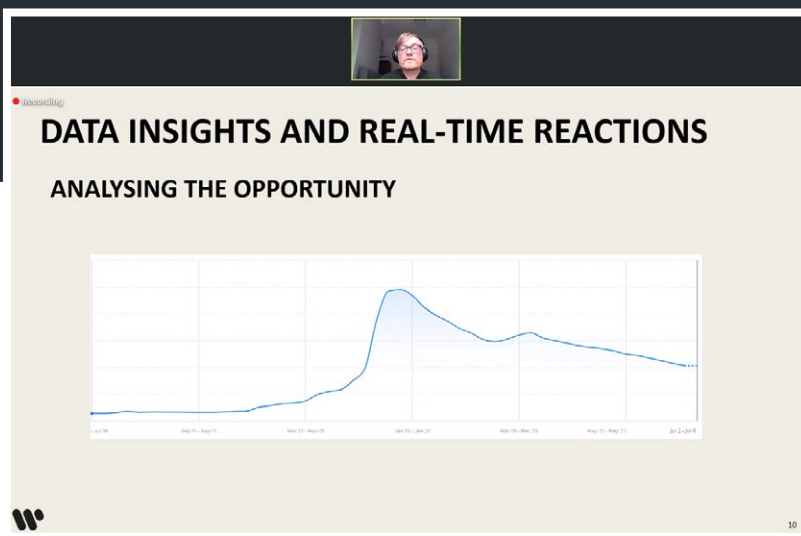
Tom Gallacher, Director of Digital Marketing at Rhino UK (the recorded music catalogue arm of Warner Music Group) talked about the impact of this particular moment and how data insights can guide real-time reactions for



The screenshot shows a Zoom meeting with Tom Gallacher in the main window and a smaller window of another participant. The slide displayed is titled "DATA INSIGHTS AND REAL-TIME REACTIONS" and lists the following data points:

- In 8 weeks following the first video being posted we saw:
 - 2.8B TikTok views
 - 182M audio streams of the track – baseline increase of 440%
 - 137M YouTube UGC views
 - The track re-entered UK top 40
 - Also massive increase in streams across the whole FM catalogue

The slide also features a line graph with two lines: a red line showing a sharp peak and a black line showing a more gradual increase and then a decline. The x-axis is labeled with dates from 10/17 to 11/12.



was appearing on as many relevant playlists as possible. He noted that, in the eight weeks after the video appeared, there were 182 million audio streams of *Dreams*, a lift of 440%. Additionally, there were 137 million UGC YouTube views and the success of this track had a knock-on effect for the band's broader catalogue.

"It meant that people were not just listening to that one track; they were going in and exploring the catalogue and listening to other tracks," said Gallacher.

He admitted this is all wonderful serendipity for anyone working in catalogue but that, because of its huge success, it has now become a category type all of its own.

"This is an example of an almost perfect combination of different factors which don't often come together in such a way," he said. "But it has now created this moment; this idea that everyone wants a *Dreams* moment. So we have to look at how we find them and how we then capitalise on them."

As this all stems from UGC it is, inherently, unpredictable, unexpected and cannot be stage managed from the off.

"So how do we find these trends?" he asked. "How do we know which ones to back? And then what do we do with it once we spotted it? To do this, we've developed a system that allows us to monitor these trends, evaluate the opportunity and react accordingly."

music companies to be able to capitalise on a viral moment (or not) before the window of opportunity slams shut.

"I'm sure the two reasons why we all get into the Rock 'n' Roll business are data insights and real-time reactions," he joked at the start. "So buckle up!"

He noted that, by the end of 2020, the *Dreams* clip and related content had been viewed 3 billion times on TikTok alone.

"For us, this is the perfect example of us spotting a trend and jumping on it," he said. "We worked with the artists. Mick, Lindsey and Stevie also all got involved in the trend and created their own videos."

It quickly went off-platform and was picked up on by traditional media, with Mick Fleetwood being interviewed on the BBC and other major news outlets about it.

Rhino swung into action with its DSP strategy to maximise the number of streams of the track, ensuring it

Socially minded: how social media is creating opportunities but also increasing the demand for content



He continued, “The most important thing is spotting the trend. Here it’s key to look at data from a number of different sources. The platforms obviously have their own analytics tools, which are great for granular insight; but it’s important to be able to marry social reaction with streaming data to create that bigger picture.”

He mentioned that Warner uses a number of internal tools as well as external ones and those built into platforms themselves, notably Chartmetric, Spotify for Artists and Crowdtangle. “Having this wider view is vital when it comes to assessing the opportunity,” he noted.

Of course, everyone would love a runaway moment like TikTok/*Dreams* but, even when all the pieces fall in what look like the right place, it does not always follow that a viral moment has an off-platform impact.

Gallacher proffered the example of the *Shaxicula* trend last year, based around a mashup of tracks by The B-52’s, Britney Spears and Rob Zombie. It quickly took off and there were 700,000 different

videos created using it, resulting in over 100 million cumulative views of videos created around it.

As Warner controls *Love Shack*, the B-52’s track used in the mashup, they looked into the impact but found it was a very different story to that of *Dreams*.

“The assumption would be that you would see a corresponding spike in streams,” he said. “But when we dug into the data, we could see that while there has been an increase, it was hardly explosive – and actually the biggest spike on the graph is actually New Year’s Eve when we’d traditionally expect to see a spike around that track anyway.”

He said it is important to have perspective here and understand that sometimes tracks are not translating beyond the viral moment itself. Labels then have to decide if it is worth the time, effort and cost to build a campaign around a viral moment if it is simply not triggering a corresponding uplift in streams.

He turned to a third example to illustrate a different point about the dynamics here.

Socially minded: how social media is creating opportunities but also increasing the demand for content

Rhino started to see an uplift in streams of *Babooshka* by Kate Bush and they immediately started to do the digital forensic work to understand why this was.



“When we dug into it, there was no clear, single, identifiable use of the sounds,” he said of the first major obstacle they ran into. “The videos that were under the hashtag were under a variety of different types. There was no particular clear trend to get behind.”

Just because something has a viral moment, it does not follow that it can be endlessly capitalised on. Plus, as viral moments can happen for tracks all the time, standing out and lasting the distance can become incrementally harder.

“As people are constantly uploading new content at a ferocious rate every minute of every day it means that the amount of potential moments could be overwhelming – so you have to work out and pick the right ones for the right time,” he suggested. “When you do spot something that is flying and there is an uplift in streams, it’s important to start backing the winners and react to amplify that trend. The most obvious way to do this is on-platform. If the artist is willing to lean in and get involved, then that’s the best way to do it. With Fleetwood Mac, we had the great example where the three principal

artists just got involved. With Kate Bush, that was a slightly different story, so we had to look at other ways to try and make that into a moment.”

If the artist behind the track, as with Kate Bush, does not want to get involved in the campaign, there are other ways to maximise the opportunities. TikTok creators, for example, can be recruited to push the original viral moment to their followers and these can be recruited through influencer agencies or through TikTok Creator Marketplace.

“The key thing to do is to then boost it with ad spend,” he suggested. “You work out what you want to get from it, where you want to drive people to, what you want to do. Is it purely a case of getting more eyeballs on the trend to try and build it? Do you want to try to drive people to a playlist? Do you want to try to build numbers on the trend?”

Getting the DSPs involved is critical and using the growing awareness around the track to pitch for playlist support.

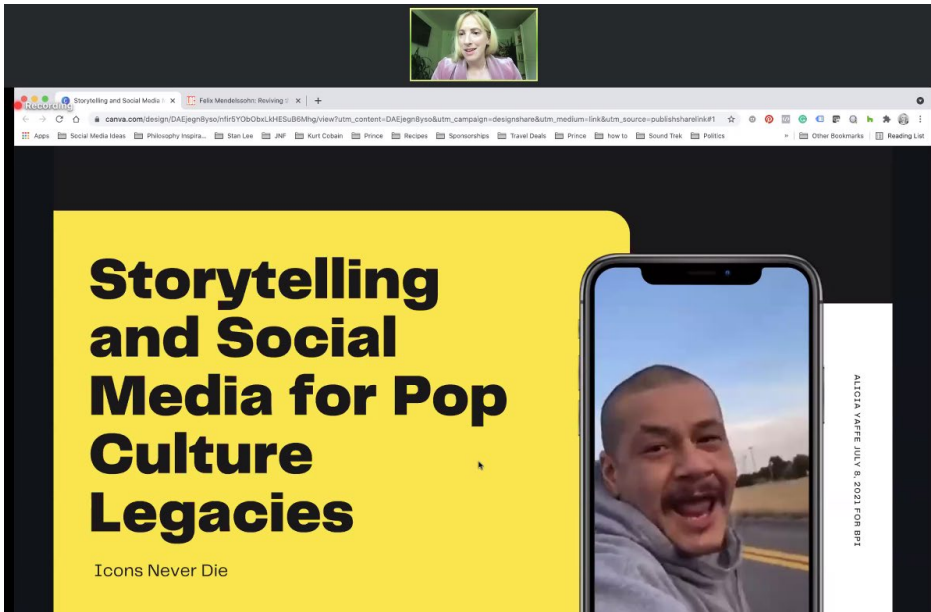
“All the streaming platforms are keen to feel that they’re culturally relevant and are supporting things which have got wider impact beyond their own streaming platform,” he proposed.

“Being able to flag those moments and then use the data that they provide, such as through Spotify analytics, feeding that back to them means that you can gather a whole lot more playlist support which then result in longer-term plays.”

Tying it all up, he outlined his key takeaways from these particular examples as well as others Rhino has worked on over the years.

“Closely monitor your catalogue to identify potential trends; assess the worth of each moment and work out which ones are really worth chasing; work with artists and managers to find out what’s right for them, because the key thing is making sure

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She stated that in the days of physical formats, there were limitations on what could be re-issued because of the costs involved. This meant only a select few acts could be promoted in this way and reach new groups of fans.

“Now those limits are absolutely gone,” she stated. “In a digital world everything is available and

something feels authentic; if you can't work with the artist, work with the creators; then use results to drive conversations with commercial partners and wider media to make this into something that is not just a TikTok thing but something that really translates into streams.”

While Gallacher talked about being nimble enough to jump on a social media trend, his US colleague Alicia Yaffe focused on the ongoing social media management for legacy artists and artist estates, breaking down the quotidian work they have to do and how long-term strategies can be developed.

Yaffe is SVP of Catalogue Development & Marketing at Warner Music Group, based in LA. Prior to that she was the founder and CEO of digital marketing company The Spellbound Group where she worked with the estates of major artists including Michael Jackson, The Doors, Janis Joplin, Charlie Parker and John Lee Hooker.

She opened by suggesting that legacy and catalogue marketing has changed significantly in recent years and the most significant shift within that is that “legacy marketing is now artist development”.

discoverable, forgotten classics are one video, one meme, one licence away from being re-discovered.”

As with current artists, the estates of deceased artists have to be sure they are present on every platform (social and DSP) of note.

“You have to be there in order to be discoverable, be relevant and capitalise on the potential revenue that the social media environment provides,” she explained.

The core thesis of her presentation was the power of storytelling and how that can be used to make artists relevant to new audiences. This, however, is where one has to tread very carefully. Social media teams should not speak for an artist who is no longer alive or try and have them say things they never would.

“With your storytelling on social media, the most important thing is that you remain authentic to your artist's voice,” she said. “That means if your artist has passed, like Jim Morrison or Janis Joplin, you never want to put words in an artist's mouth.”

This storytelling also needs to be adaptable to the platform it is being presented on.

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“You have to be where the fans live and tell the story of the art in a way that is most appropriate for that platform,” she said. “You’re not going to put up a post the same way on Facebook, which is very often going to be speaking to a previously existing fanbase, as you are on TikTok or Instagram, that may be speaking to younger fans that weren’t there the first time and that are trying to understand the hype or may come across a photo and want to know more about that.”

Storytelling now, she said, is visual and the marketing here has to reflect that – especially as it is the most direct way to reach and connect with younger audiences.

“Video is everything,” Yaffe stressed. “I think everybody knows that from YouTube to TikTok to Triller; it’s all about making sure that you are telling your story in a way that’s visually compelling, that captures people quickly, is authentic to who your artist is and isn’t just trying to capture trends that people are making, which they’ll do themselves.”

She gave some examples of this thinking in action. An animated video for the Donny Hathaway track *This Christmas* was created for the Christmas market in 2020 as well as to mark its 50th anniversary.

“It’s really a love song wrapped up in a Christmas song that speaks to a very specific audience that is

both niche and universal,” she said. “The story was not only about the importance of *This Christmas* in the broader holiday canon, but the fact that this was the first music video that was ever made for Donny Hathaway. We had 250% growth on the expected return for streams throughout the holiday period.

“We got the song back on the Billboard top 40 for the first time since this release and the album from which it came, *A Donny Hathaway Collection*, ended up at number 39 on the charts on the week of release as well. More importantly, it helped connect the song and Donny back to the community that surrounds him and brought in a lot of new fans.”

All of these platforms are, she suggested, critical in building new fan groups and maintaining existing ones that can be addressed on a rolling basis.

“The platforms allow for communities to build and coalesce around your artists’ art so that those bonds are strengthened, so that they’re going to then act as influencers that share your songs further and broader,” she explained. “You can use that to create the broader myth of what you’re doing [...] Being able to tell the story of your artist continuously keeps them front of mind so that you get that impulse stream and that impulse listen in addition to the passive listens, in addition to the streaming radio listens, in addition to the playlist listens.”

She ended by noting that “Rock ‘n’ Roll is all about creating myths” and that this should guide the marketing strategy here.

“You have the various archetypes and all you can do is take your artist’s creation and release it into the world,” she said. “You can build it through the imagery that you control. Then you have to let your fans do the storytelling for you and build the legend and encourage it and lean into reaction videos, TikTok dance-alongs, unexpected viral moments like Nathan Apodaca and more. So let the platforms do the work.”



Key takeaways

- ✓ Archives are more valuable than many presume and the archiving process needs to start as early as possible
- ✓ Archives can be monetised but they are powerful resources to draw on in every part of marketing an artist, where new contexts can be found for old items
- ✓ The officially released and unofficially released material offer two ways into the archive and really should be understood as the same thing rather than two distinct entities
- ✓ Digitising archives is critical but so too is archiving everything that is pushed out digitally, particularly on social channels
- ✓ Streaming means that catalogues can be marketed both like new releases and alongside new releases: each can (and should) support the other
- ✓ The box set gives a whole new legitimacy to a career and offers a multitude of lenses through which to understand a legacy and cast it in whole new lights
- ✓ Box sets are not just for the superfan – a cut down version can also be used as entry points for new fans
- ✓ Spotify, YouTube and other platforms are making catalogues not only more accessible but also more relevant than ever
- ✓ Artist comebacks can – at their best – be art forms in their own right, making peace with the past and pointing new paths for the future
- ✓ No artist today ever truly goes away so the comeback is always within reach
- ✓ Estate management today is more complex than it ever has been but also more powerful

- ✓ Death can see an artist elevated, celebrated and validated in whole new ways
- ✓ There are many moving parts to an estate but each one has to be handled with sensitivity and care as bad decisions can kill an artist's legacy
- ✓ Legacy artists and the estates of dead artists need to work across as many platforms and channels as possible as, without them, they face the steep slide into obscurity: they constantly have to battle against the risk of being forgotten
- ✓ The serendipity of social media is complex to understand and harder still to harness
- ✓ Virality can never be planned for and will not wait for you – so you have to be always ready to move
- ✓ A viral moment on one platform is never a guarantee that it will carry across to any other platform
- ✓ If the artist does not want to (or cannot) amplify a viral moment, there are others (such as influencers) who can fill those gaps
- ✓ If you are not on every platform, you are compromising your discoverability
- ✓ Storytelling is the most effective way to stay relevant and reach new audiences
- ✓ Video is everything and all marketing needs to prioritise it like never before
- ✓ Legacy marketing is in the myth-building business so embrace it.

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