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The Impact of Information Technology on the Music Tour Management. Case Study: Master Tour Software

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Laurea University of Applied Sciences

The Impact of Information Technology
on the Music Tour Management.
Case Study: Master Tour Software

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The Impact of Information Technology on the Music Tour Management. Case Study: Master Tour

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This Bachelor's thesis aims to identify the influence of information technology on a music tour management. This thesis research consists of the literature review which discusses the changing business model of the music industry, the statistics of global revenue and the reasons of growing demand for touring. Furthermore, two approaches of tour advancing are presented, namely traditional and modern. Where traditional approach includes an extensive amount of paperwork, the modern approach is based on software programs which allow tour managers to complete the whole tour advancing in one application.

Master Tour application was chosen as a case study for this research due to the reason that it is currently the leading software available on the market. In order to gather empirical data for the analysis, a qualitative research method was used to obtain in-depth understanding of the research problem. Two expert theme interviews were conducted which showed the results of user satisfaction, as well as the software's advantages and disadvantages.

In addition, the study also discusses the possible reasons why the process of adaptation to new technologies is going slowly. For example, geographical factors can play a role since the music market development may vary in different countries.

The results indicate that despite the Master Tour software covers all necessary elements of tour production, it still cannot fully replace the traditional approach. The missing gap between theory and practice was identified in regards to using applications in tour managers work. This research can be valuable both for current and future tour managers as it introduces the detailed analysis of traditional and modern approaches of production.

Keywords: Information Technology, Music Tour Management, Managing Skills

Table of Contents

1	Introduction	6
2	The Changing Business Model of the Music Industry	7
	2.1 Statistics on Music Artists Income	7
	2.2 The Value Gap in Revenue Payout	11
3	The Virtue of Touring	12
	3.1 Touring History	13
	3.2 Payments and Commissions	15
4	Music Tour Management	15
	4.1 The Difference Between an Artist's Personal Manager and a Tour Manager ...	15
	4.2 Tour Manager's Work Description and Qualification Requirements	17
5	Pre-Production Phase	18
	5.1 Traditional Approach Of Tour Advancing	18
	5.2 Modern Approach Of Tour Advancing	20
6	Touring Phase	21
7	Methodology	22
	7.1 Qualitative Approach and Data Analysis	22
	7.2 Research Limitations	23
8	Results	23
	8.1 Respondents' Background Information	23
	8.2 Communication Improvements	24
	8.3 Tour Management Software	25
9	Conclusion and Reflection	27
	Tables	Error! Bookmark not defined.
	Appendices	32

1 Introduction

The rapid development of information technology has a direct influence on every industry as well as on human interaction. Today, tourists, for example, can plan the whole trip staying at home: book a desired type of accommodation, buy tickets online, search for activities at a place of destination and so on. It also positively affects socio-economics development as the integration of new strategies is occurring faster and more effectively. However, this research mainly focuses on the impacts of IT on the music industry in general and the tour managers role in particular.

Touring is an inalienable part of artists job and it involves a complex tour production. In order for musicians to smoothly travel from one show to the next, the road crew accompanies the band on tour and help them manage the shows. The crew members and its amount may vary depending on the band size - the bigger the band is, the more people are hired for a touring party. However, as a rule, the crew consists of a sound engineer, a lighting designer, technicians and a tour manager. Despite the fact that most of the crew are responsible for the technical aspects of the show such as sound and lights, a tour manager is the person who is accountable for a successful operation of the whole tour.

The Bachelor's thesis aims to identify how IT affects the work of a tour manager and how communication evolves with the technology development. The author of this research will analyse and compare two approaches of tour production: the traditional method which is based on Excel and Word documentation, paper tour books and spreadsheets with the modern approach based on the usage of applications and software programmes.

There are currently many tools available for tour managers to simplify the process of production, however many still rely on traditional but proven methods of advancing a tour. Thus, this research will also focus on the problem: why the process of adaptation to new technologies is going slowly? In order to understand this, two expert theme interviews with professional tour managers have been conducted to collect empirical data for the analysis.

Master Tour application has been chosen as a case study for this research. Firstly, because this is currently one of the most well known and widely used software available on the market and secondly, both interviewees had an experience using this particular application. The theoretical part will cover the detailed description of application features and the interviews will show the results of user satisfaction, advantages and disadvantages, as well as suggestions for future improvements.

In addition, the research will also cover the latest changes which have occurred within the music industry driven by technology development. Although it is not directly related to a tour manager's work, it is not possible to draw a complete picture without understanding the industry's fluctuations.

The motivation for choosing this topic derives from the author's personal interest towards the music industry. During the studies at Laurea UAS the researcher had completed an internship in Fullsteam Agency as a Production Manager Assistant which has helped the student to develop necessary skills and competences required in this business. In addition to this, the researcher had taken several online courses to obtain the theoretical knowledge of the music industry.

This project can be valuable for current and future tour managers to understand the changes in the touring industry, as well as for the author with the purpose of future career development.

2 The Changing Business Model of the Music Industry

For the last few decades it has become a significant transformation of the music industry, which affected not only musicians but also record companies, booking agents, promoters and other parties involved in the business. If in the past the working formula for success was to record an outstanding CD - sell a couple hundred thousand copies - and finally go on tour to promote the record, but today due to the IT development the industry has switched to a different model.

2.1 Statistics on Music Artists Income

As shown in Figure 1, album sales had been the main income for the artists both for mid-level bands and for larger acts. In regards to touring, bigger bands had been receiving some supplemental income from it, whereas smaller bands had been going on tour to stimulate additional album sales rather than making money from it. This formula generated income not only for musicians but also for record labels, managers, promoters and others to be involved. It should be noted that there are also many other revenue streams, such as for example mechanical royalties, public performance royalties, synch licences, sheet music sales and merchandise sales. (Future of music, 2017) They are excluded from consideration as they fall beyond this research.



Figure 1. The Sources of Music Artists Income. (Future of Music 2017)

However, this business model had lasted until an era of paid music downloads has entered the market. According to the Recording Industry Association of America, in 2006 the total retail value from CD sales made up \$9.4 billion in the USA and by 2016 physical copies sales have dramatically decreased to \$1.5 billion, which means that in a decade CD sales dropped by 84%. (Recording Industry Association of America, 2017) On one hand, due to technology innovations, the music industry has switched the course to online services oriented on market, and now listeners could have bought an album by downloading it from platforms such as, for example, iTunes and Amazon, without having to buy a physical copy of the album. However, these innovations, on the other hand, have notably encouraged piracy. Listeners argued that artists would still get their salaries whether the album sales are high or low and that music should be free. Along with music consumers, radio, film and television companies did not want to pay for music as well and have always fought to use music freely in their products or to pay low fees to the artists. Music attorneys, in their turn, have started to offer artists legal protection of their music, they also negotiated the highest possible revenues and handled various contracts and agreements to help musicians survive in a digital era. (Forbes, 2017)

As it can be seen from Figure 2, in 2005 music downloads started to steadily increase, reached its peak in 2012, and since then, digital sales are continuously decreasing. It is accounted that by 2021 total digital downloads will fall by 93 percent and the era of music downloads will come to its end. (Digital Music News, 2017)

iTunes & Amazon Paid Music Downloads (2005–2021)

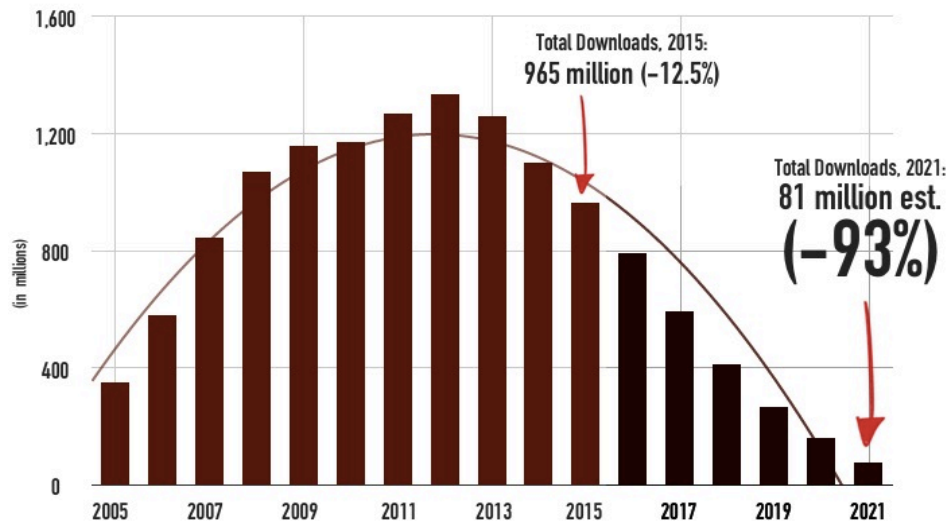


Figure 2. Music Downloads Statistics (Digital Music News, 2017)

According to the Global Music Report, even though digital sales were rising from 2005 until 2012, still the global revenues of the industry were dramatically declining. Only in 2015 after almost two decades of continuous downfall, the music industry has started to recover. For the first time, digital revenues have overtaken physical formats with 45 per cent and 39 per cent of total revenues respectively which is indicated in Figure 3. (Global Music Report, 2016)

GLOBAL REVENUES BY SEGMENT 2015 (US\$ BILLIONS)

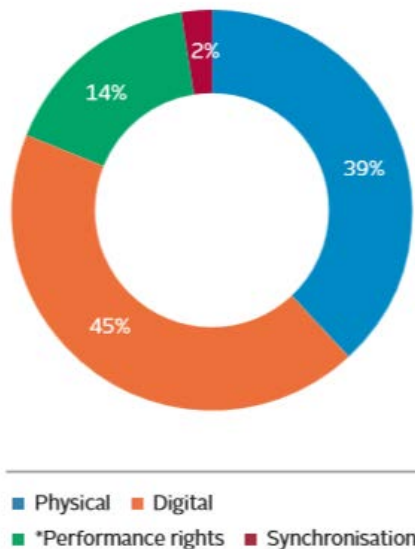


Figure 3. Global Revenues by Segment. (Global Music Report, 2016)

While still continuing to adapt to a digital world, music streaming is becoming the next industry-shifting phenomenon. Compared to music downloads, streaming has more to offer for the listeners: easy and anytime access to music, affordable prices and unlimited collection of music albums. With the launch of platforms such as Apple Music, Spotify and Pandora, consumers no longer need to pay for desired albums and download them to their devices, with paid subscription it is now possible to have access to the full music library without having to download them.

	2012	2013	2014	2015
PAID SUBSCRIBERS TO SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES (MILLIONS)	20	28	41	68

Figure 4. Streaming Subscription Statistics (Global Music Report, 2016)

Figure 4 shows the significant growth in streaming subscriptions. If in 2012 only 20 million listeners had paid subscription, by 2015 the amount has increased to 68 million of consumers. As it can be seen, streaming is not a new trend, but the global explosion happened only in the last few years when smart phones became more available and the Internet connection improved in quality. As Global Music Report states, with the technology development continuing to evolve, streaming is estimated to become a primary revenue flow for recorded music. (Global Music Report, 2016)

Moreover, streaming platforms are now focusing not only on paid-subscription services, but also aiming to expand their business development by focusing on the entertainment industry as a whole. For example, in 2015 Amazon launched a ticketing service in the UK, allowing their Prime Members to get an early access to ticket sales. With some concerts receiving a sold-out status within a few minutes, this ticketing service of Amazon is becoming in a high demand. In addition to this, in 2017 Amazon in the UK launches Prime Live Events Business which will host live shows with the tickets available only for their Prime Members. The premier show is scheduled for May 23, 2017 with the band Blondie performing at the Round Chapel in Hackney. This marks the next step in the entertainment industry development where the demand for live shows is constantly growing. (Independent, 2017)

2.2 The Value Gap in Revenue Payout

It is important to understand all changes occurring in music business as the industry's global revenue has a direct influence on touring industry as well. While digital sales and streaming in particular are dominating the market, the natural concern is: how do performers benefit from it? When the artists' income was based on CD sales certain per cent from each copy sold was granted to the artist. The streaming model does not allow to make the same calculations where the income is generated either through per-stream royalties or through advertisement played on free streaming platforms such as YouTube for example. This places the artists in a position that they cannot control or estimate their income they receive from streaming. Despite the high amount of consumers listening to music through free channels as YouTube, their revenue payout to the artists is considerably low. This is what the music industry calls the "value gap". (Global Music Report, 2016)

Even paid-subscription services cannot guarantee the fair income for musicians. With the average subscription fee of 10\$ per month, in order for artists to gain profit, their music needs a million views on streaming channels which can work well for big stars but not for mid-level musicians. (Forbes, 2017) As a result, the artists cannot rely on their recorded music and instead are becoming more dependent on touring, which in the past few decades has turned into their main income. For example, in 2015 Taylor Swift, claiming that streaming is devaluating the art, insisted on removing her music from all streaming channels. However, her touring gross revenue made up 250.4 million dollars in 2015 only. (Global Music Report, 2016) This is a good example to see that record companies, streaming channels and other parties involved in the business use the artists' recorded music to generate income for themselves, while artists, in their turn, can profit from their music by delivering it straight to the fans on the live shows.

Figure 5 shows the growing demand for live music starting from 2012 with 1,5% and increasing to 3,5% by 2020 of the total industry revenue.

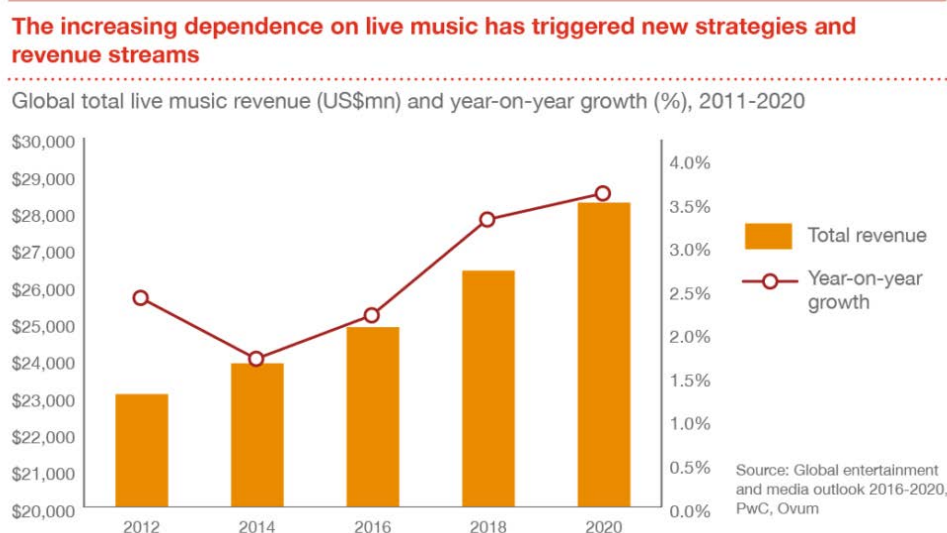


Figure 5. Live Music Revenue (Global Entertainment and Media Outlook, 2016)

It can be concluded that despite positive changes happening in the music industry and its growing revenue, the artists are still struggling to receive a fair payout for their recorded music. Even though record companies are endeavouring to protect their artists' rights, this is still a subject to further negotiation. (Global Music Report, 2016) While the industry is continuously adapting to a digital world, one thing has not yet changed - the value of live shows. For music fans seeing their favourite artists remains the most eminent way of consuming music. (Global Entertainment and Media Outlook, 2016)

3 The Virtue of Touring

As Atkins (2007) describes, touring is valuable not only in terms of revenue but it can also be an essential tool for artists' promotion. By giving the following reasons, he encourages musicians that touring will benefit their careers in many ways as following:

1. Successful shows always boost the album sales;
2. The concert is most likely to be mentioned in a local magazine or a newspaper;
3. Any show is an interaction between the audience and the performer which affects the listeners on emotional level motivating them to share their experience with other people and spread the word about the artist;
4. Fans rarely order t-shirts with the band's logo by post, but they are most likely to buy it after the show which increases merchandise sales. At the same

time, fans wearing clothes with an artist's name positively influences the promotion of the band.

5. Agents and promoters prioritize the artists who are touring more over those who are rarely on tour. This has a direct impact on the quality of the shows as the agents and the promoters are more likely to offer better services for their longtime clients.
6. Lastly, touring is also a tool for the artist's development, as the more they tour the better they become. (Atkins, 2007, 1-2)

It should be noted, that the music industry has never accounted live shows in its revenue statistics and only evaluated recorded music sales. (Global Entertainment and Media Outlook, 2016) Thus, touring has never been a big concern for the industry, but as Atkins (2007) states, it should be a big concern for artists as it plays a big role in their career development. (Atkins, 2007, 1-2)

"How do you see the role of touring? - Critical" (Atkins, 2007, 4)

3.1 Touring History

Touring has always been a part of artists' job, though the industry itself started to develop in the late 60s. The model of complex tour production that there is today did not exist in the past, which often had led to unorganized and sometimes chaotic tours. (Reynolds, 2013, 2)

Mick Jagger, the lead singer of the Rolling Stones band, shares his memories of the early stage of touring:

"In the beginning there wasn't any money to be made from touring. There wasn't a touring industry. The touring shows in the old days had eight to ten acts; you'd go out and do your two numbers, your hit record or your next one or your last one, and that was your lot. Obviously there was somebody maybe who made money, but it certainly wasn't the act. If you were really good in America, for instance, you got to play in Vegas, and that was the only time you made money. There was no touring industry until approximately 1969, when we were one of the first bands to create or be part of the burgeoning touring industry. Of course by then records were selling a lot. Recorded music and the business of it is a totally separate subject from the road and it has a completely different business model, and of course one's linked to the other. But for years they were never really linked at all. In fact you could never get the two groups to talk to each other. It was a nightmare." (Reynolds, 2013, 2)

As Reynold (2013) further explains, due to the poor tour production, the artists had to experience various problems during the tour. Firstly, as there were not any tour busses and luxury private jets, in order to travel from one city to another, they had to use any means of transportation they could find themselves. Usually bands travelled in a van, often in a bad condition which could break down in the middle of the road. (Reynolds, 2013, 2)

Secondly, due to the lack of transportation, there was not any possibility to carry their own equipment on tour and the only option was to use in-house sound and lighting systems which were mostly below standard quality resulting in a poor sound of the live shows. Even the most successful bands had to experience the same problem, for example, the Beatles used a film projector as a lighting source and cinema speakers to amplify the microphones. It should be noted that it was at the peak of their career, still they had to use very simple and limited equipment. (Reynolds, 2013, 2)

Thirdly, in order to play a show, musicians often had to rely on unqualified and amateurish personnel for the reason that there were not any professional tour or production managers in the past who could help the bands manage tours. These professions had appeared only when the touring industry started to evolve. (Reynolds, 2013, 2)

Consequently, some bands had stopped touring as, for example, the Beatles, when after struggling for many years to deliver successful shows where their expectations of live music have never been met, they eventually had decided to concentrate on studio recordings instead. Another example is Elvis Presley who was also not satisfied with touring conditions, nevertheless, had continued performing live, but for years only playing in Las Vegas. Other bands, on the contrary, had pursued touring in order to sell more records. (Reynolds, 2013, 2)

The Rolling Stones, after the release of their successful album "Let It Bleed" in 1969, fundamentally altered the touring industry. After the triumph of their album, the band was forced to go on a long tour playing arena and stadium shows throughout the USA. However, knowing how difficult and frustrating touring can be, the Stones had no longer wanted to continue working in such conditions. As a result, they devoted their time and money to recruit their own skilful and dedicated crew to follow the band on tour and help them manage the shows. Having a sound engineer, a lighting designer, production- and tour managers on tour helped them to improve the quality of live shows. Later, by the mid-'70s other bands such as Led Zeppelin and Pink Floyd who were also playing stadium shows, started to subsequently follow the same model of touring. Ultimately, artists have started traveling with their own trucks, tour busses and jets, which had given them an opportunity to hire more crew members and carry sound and lighting systems on tour. (Reynolds, 2013, 3)

3.2 Payments and Commissions

Financial situation had also changed for better. Previously, the bands were booked by agents to play concerts who were also controlling all money flow from tours. Not all agents were honest with the artists who had struggled to understand difficult contracts and financial details, and by not declaring the income or even withholding the payment, the bands had often resulted earning a small amount of money or sometimes even nothing. "We had to go up and barter for the money. We'd be sitting in the office waiting for some money to get to a gig. He'd keep us waiting 'til the banks closed. "Oh, I've got no money now. I've got some here - would you settle for that?" Little did you know, that's it - you were paid off" recounts Ray Phillips (Reynolds, 2013, 3).

However, with the development of touring industry, the artists realized the need of hiring business managers who could conduct an adequate tour accounting. Tour managers, in their turn, became responsible for collecting money after each show which has led to the agents being not involved in any financial manipulations. As a result, the agents could receive their commission only after the artists had been paid their salaries and not before. (Reynolds, 2013, 3)

Touring industry continued to organically evolve with the technology development in the 80s. Equipment manufacturer companies focused on sound and lighting engineering advancement to make the live music louder and the shows brighter. The equipment also became smaller and lighter which made it easier to transport on worldwide tours. Technology evolution, as a result, has led to a greater ticket sales due to a growing demand for the live shows. (Reynolds, 2013, 4) However, with the equipment improving in quality, the audience expectations of live shows were also becoming higher. (Wilkins, 2007, 7) At the end, the advancement of technology became a remarkable milestone of the touring industry as a whole. (Reynolds, 2013, 4)

4 Music Tour Management

This section will explain the work of a tour manager, its relation to an artist's personal manager, as well as the job requirements and qualifications.

4.1 The Difference Between an Artist's Personal Manager and a Tour Manager

Before taking a closer look at a tour manager's work, it is important to also discuss the role of an artist personal manager as it strongly correlates with the job of a tour manager. According to Workman (2012), "The manager is the overseer of every aspect of the band's career. The buck stops with the manager. It's his job to make sure the booking agent is getting the band the biggest tours and earning the highest income possible from each show and that there's

forward progress in building the band's popularity around the world by playing everywhere possible on the planet." (Workman, 2012, 9)

However, as Allen (2007) states, it is important to understand that the artist management work is different from traditional managers work principles of any other field, where the business model is based on hierarchy. The relationship between an artist and a manager, on the contrary, as Allen compares, should rather be as a successful marriage than a typical employer-employee relationship. Although an artist manager is responsible for all business related matters, the level of trust and interpersonal communication is considerably stronger than in any other field. (Allen, 2007, 2)

The substantial part of the manager's job is the band's promotion. Working in cooperation with the record company publicist or with an independent publicist, the manager assures good publicity for the band, which includes interviews, reviews, photo shoots etc. with the purpose to exposure the bands to the international market. Depending whether or not the band has a business manager, also called accountant, it is also the manager's responsibility to either supervise an accountant ensuring the financial work is being done correctly and on time, or in case the band cannot afford having an accountant, then it is the manager's job to fill the income taxes, to pay salaries for the band and the crew, and to create income and expense reports for the band. (Workman, 2012, 9)

Practically, in the beginning of an artist's career when hiring a tour manager is not yet affordable, it is also the manager's responsibility to carefully plan a tour for the band. However, Allan (2007) says "As an artist becomes more active touring and the manager cannot be with the artist at every performance, it becomes necessary to hire a tour manager. This person is effectively an extension of the manager while the artist is on the road" (Allen, 2007, 89)

Although a tour manager is responsible for operating a tour, he or she is still working under the manager's supervision and his or her duty is to keep the manager highly informed on any important issue during the tour, which can include sending weekly financial reports, ticket sales, big schedule changes, for example show cancellation etc. Communication between a manager and a tour manager, however, varies depending on a band. Some managers just allow a tour manager do their job, others prefer controlling every step of a tour. As Workman explains it is the matter of trust when the manager can stop worrying what is happening on the road and can fully rely on a tour manager. (Workman, 2012, 10)

4.2 Tour Manager's Work Description and Qualification Requirements

As it has been briefly reviewed in the previous chapter, a tour manager is a crew member who accompanies a band on tour and is responsible for its smooth operation. Since the purpose of this research is to analyze how the development of information technology has affected the work of a tour manager, first it is vital to analyze the in-depth description of his tasks and duties.

As Allen (2007) describes, "The tour manager, sometimes referred to as a road manager, is the primary contact for everything while the artist is touring, and is totally responsible for getting the artist to a performance and assuring the performance is presented without any problems." (Allen, 2007, 89) Moving the band, the crew and music equipment from one city to another across the countries requires strong attention to details, organizational skills and proper planning. Accounting, accommodation, transport logistic and merchandise - everything falls within the realm of a tour manager's job. (Workman, 2012)

As any other profession, it requires certain qualifications and competencies. First of all, since a tour manager is a primary contact on tour, he or she needs to deal with many different people on a daily basis, including venue managers, local crew, support bands, promoters, publicists etc., thus, good communication skills are necessary not only to build and maintain healthy relationship with everyone involved, but also to be able to react quickly in case of emergencies. (LaFevor, Khoury & Roberts, 2014, 87)

Secondly, organizational skills are necessary in order to accurately arrange flights, hotels and transportation. A tour manager is also responsible for collecting information on seat preferences, emergency contacts, food allergies, medical history and other small but important details, thus, strong detail orientation ability is also a must. Budgeting proficiency is essential in order to create an accurate and realistic tour budget, especially when a band is touring on limited resources. The initial budget generally includes band and crew salaries, per diems, bus and truck rentals, hotels, air travel and local transportation costs, and also miscellaneous production costs. (Workman, 2012, 16-39) During the tour, the tour manager controls that the budget is being not exceeded, or, otherwise, verifies reasons and records all additional costs, and sends financial road reports to the band manager. (LaFevor & al., 2014, 87)

Since musicians tour worldwide, it can be helpful for a tour manager to be aware of cultural differences as well. The touring business model is generally the same in Europe and in the USA, but going to South America, East Asia or Russia can be challenging if not prepared beforehand. For example, language barrier and bureaucracy could be some of potential problems when touring in the above named countries. (Teittinen, Kiertuemanageri Venäjällä, 2013)

Even though these are the most important job qualifications, still there are many other areas a tour manager should also perform well, such as safety regulations, leadership principles, teamwork, and basic knowledge of marketing and promotion. Also, dealing with people of various temperaments requires effective people skills and patience. (LaFevor & al., 2014, 87) Problem solving and fast thinking abilities help a tour manager to act quickly in emergency cases. Since tour managers are working under a lot of stress and in a constantly changing environment, even scrupulous planning cannot guarantee that everything will work as it has been planned. Chris Tisone shares his experience of tour managing: " You can plan contingencies for whatever you think is going to go wrong on the trip, but take my word for it: it's never what you think it's going to be. I'd like to say that a tour manager should be prepared for anything and everything, but there is just no way to realistically do that. I now approach touring from an almost AA point of view: Accept the things I can't change, change the things I can, and most importantly, have the wisdom to know the difference." (Atkins, 2007, 266)

As it can be concluded, a tour manager accomplishes a multitude of roles during the tour. (Wilkins, 2007, 21) "Tour managing puts you somewhere between travel agent, psychiatrist, trouble shooter, imaginative thinker, diplomat, plate-spinner, and accountant. That's a difficult balance" (Atkins, 2007, 264) Thus, in order to perform well, a good tour manager should possess all set of competencies listed above.

5 Pre-Production Phase

This section will cover detailed description of the pre-production phase by first explaining the traditional approach of advancing a tour and then moving to new principles driven by technology development.

5.1 Traditional Approach of Tour Advancing

There are various long-established methods tour managers use when advancing a tour. As a rule, pre-production phase starts long before the tour begins. After receiving the confirmed list of tour dates from a band's manager, a tour manager can start creating the route for the whole tour by organizing travel schedules, booking flights and accommodation, also renting tour buses, trucks and so on. After all information is being gathered, tour managers use itineraries to fill in initial data. (Allen, 2007, 89) Figure 6 shows a sample itinerary, though every tour manager has his own customized design, information covered mostly remains the same. As it can be seen, the itinerary should include the schedule for the day, local contacts, venue info, such as parking instructions, technical specifications and catering, and lastly accommodation details. Each show requires a separate itinerary which later are all compiled in a tour book.

SCHEDULE			
LOBBY CALL			
LOAD IN			
SOUNDCHECK			
DINNER			
DOORS			
SHOW TIME			
VENUE CURFEW			
TOMORROW: Drive to x x km / h min			
CONTACTS			
TECH	<i>name</i>	<i>phone number</i>	<i>email</i>
SHOW REP	<i>name</i>	<i>phone number</i>	<i>email</i>
VENUE INFO			
ADDRESS			
LOAD IN			
PARKING			
TECH SPECS			
GUESTS		CAPACITY	
WI-FI		STAGE SIZE & CLEARANCE	
DRESSING ROOM		RISER(S)	
SHOWER		IN-HOUSE TECHS	
CATERING		MERCH	
HOTEL			
NAME		ADDRESS	
TEL		CITY	
ROOMS		RESERVATION	
CHECK IN / OUT TIME		BREAKFAST	
DISTANCE HOTEL - VENUE		PAYMENT	
WEBSITE			
NOTES			

Figure 6. Sample Itinerary (Fullsteam Agency, 2016)

For creating itineraries tour managers commonly use Excel or Word Office where they can easily build and modify the information according to their needs by excluding or including any parts when necessary. For example, a Finnish band touring in Finland does not need a fully detailed itinerary, but going abroad, as a rule, requires more additional information.

In comparison with a modern approach based on the use of software programmes, creating customized itineraries can be a more time-consuming task, since a tour manager needs to route the whole tour by himself using Google Maps for example, as well as to search for hotel and venue information from different sources. Since a tour manager software is a database-driven application, all venue and hotel information is stored there and is being constantly updated by the software developers.

Continuing further with the traditional method, the tour accounting is also executed by using Excel which is a perfect tool for financial calculations. Tour Managers can use it for creating tour budget, income and expenses reports, and show settlements.

After the tour has been fully advanced, all information including itineraries is compiled in a tour book which needs to be printed and distributed to every band and crew member of a touring party. Tour books serve as a guide and help to create a clear vision of the whole tour.

5.2 Modern Approach of Tour Advancing

The traditional method of compiling itineraries in a tour book has been used since the touring industry started to develop and has proven its reliability in practice. However, with the technology advancement there appeared new techniques which aim is to simplify the process of tour advancing and touring. Where traditional approach requires a great deal of paper work, modern methods are based on software programmes which allow tour managers to advance the whole tour just in one application: itineraries, guest and set lists, accounting, accommodation, routing and scheduling.

Master Tour is the software projected by Eventric company, originally called Master Tour Database, which has become the first product in the market using database-driven applications in the touring industry. When first users, the tour industry insiders, started to share their experience of using Master Tour Database, the software popularity began to progressively grow.

The early customers included not only small size artists but also top grossing performers such as Dave Matthews Band, The Dead, Green Day and The Black Eyed Peas. Due to the growing demand, Master Tour Database was thoroughly re-designed and re-branded to Master Tour, also expanding their course of development with the focus not only on touring, but on entertainment industry as a whole. For Example, Live Access is an online VIP ticketing service which aim is to control retail sales and private tickets distribution. It can also help to ensure that tickets go directly to the fans and not to the scalpers which is a normal practice, especially with the arena and stadium shows. (Eventric, Live Access, 2017)

Live Marketplace provides the touring party with an additional information of any services they might need on the road. It can vary from guitar maintenance to fancy restaurants within the venue or the hotel distance. In addition to this, Live Marketplace can offer special deals which are exclusively available for Master Tour application users. These deals automatically appear on the application desktop. It can also help the crew to find the most reliable vendors specialised in sound, lighting and visual effect. All in all, the system aims to meet every possible tour needs. Today Master Tour is one of the most efficient applications used by tour

managers. According to Eventric official website, its clients base accounts hundreds of artists of different genres from classical musicians to heavy metal bands. (Eventric, Live Marketplace, 2017)

As it has been briefly explained in the traditional approach section, Master Tour allows to advance the whole tour just in one application. Tour managers still need to create itineraries for each show, organize accommodation and plan the route for the whole tour, but the process has been significantly simplified. The database contains the technical specifications of thousands of venues around the world, the detailed information of hotels by also giving the possibility to create the rooming lists, as well as promoters and agencies contacts. With Master Tour software tour managers can also conduct complete tour accounting without having to use Excel program. Full guest list management allows to easily edit and control the guests allowance.

When the tour advancing is complete, a tour manager shares the information with the touring party by giving an access to the software. Every band and crew member needs to download the application to their devices, whether it is a smartphone, an Ipad, or a laptop and by logging in to the system they can have a full access to all tour information.

6 Touring Phase

This section will compare traditional and modern approaches when the artist is on tour. Even though the pre-production phase is the most important part of a tour manager's job where everything needs to be carefully organized and planned, still going on tour is not less demanding. Traditionally, for every show a tour manager needs to create day sheets, print and post them in a tour bus, in the dressing rooms and sometimes also on stage. A day sheet is generally the more detailed schedule for the day, which can include interview times, catering information and other additional instructions. There are also other various spreadsheets a tour manager might need to create and distribute depending on a day and a schedule, for example, a separate press sheet is needed when the band has several interviews, Radio and TV appearance, or photo shoots.

The modern approach allows avoiding printing any sheets as all information is easily accessible through the application. However, many tour managers still prefer printing at least a day sheet for posting it in the backstage rooms on the reason that one may not have time, especially in rush hours, to log in to the system to search for the information. Printed day sheets can still be a useful addition to the application. (Workman, 2012, 175) Otherwise, Master Tour can substitute printed tour books and other sheets.

6.1 Methodology

6.2 Qualitative Approach and Data Analysis

Qualitative and Quantitative methods are commonly used by researchers to collect and analyze empirical data. In order to differentiate the methods and choose the more applicable technique, it is important to understand that qualitative is an exploratory method which aims to generate the hypothesis and formulate reasons, opinions and motivation. Whereas quantitative method is more suitable for testing the hypothesis and formulating facts. (Glenn, 2010, 96) Considering this, qualitative method was chosen for this project in order to obtain in-depth understanding of the research problem.

Sampling cannot be random in qualitative method and should be carefully targeted. (Glenn, 2010, 96) Since this research is based on the interview findings with two professional tour managers, in order to assure credibility of the interviews, the author targeted the following criteria:

1. A tour manager has an experience of conducting both domestic and international tours;
2. An experience of working for stadium shows is also important as the scale of production is more demanding than in small venue shows;
3. A tour manager has used or is currently using any modern software programs.

Qualitative method also aims to provide answers to questions *why* and *how*, rather than *what*, *when* and *where* which are more relevant for quantitative method. (Glenn, 2010, 95) This research aims to present answers for the questions:

1. How the IT development has affected the work of a tour manager?
2. Why the process of adaptation to new technologies is going slowly?

Thus, it is clear that qualitative method is more applicable for this research as it will help to analyze the problem from the broader perspective.

6.3 Research Limitations

During the process of the research conduction the author has faced certain limitations. First of all, music tour management has not been previously researched by other authors which on the plus side, has given freedom to current research. The downside is, however, the lack of reliable sources and academic books. Where most of the music industry's studies are dedicated to the artist management, only the limited amount of academic books related to tour management have been found. As a result, in addition to books, the author had to use the variety of electronic sources, which can be stated as reliable as they include official global music reports and statistics.

Secondly, since music market in Finland is considerably smaller compared to other global markets, and Finnish bands often touring without a tour manager, it was challenging for the author to find and arrange interviews with professional tour managers, thus the amount is limited to two participants.

7 Results

This chapter presents the results based on interviews conducted with professional tour managers. On the reason that the IT affects the work on different levels, for more convenient analysis the interview findings were themed into three parts:

1. Background section will introduce the interviewees, such as the bands they worked or work with and how they started their career as a tour manager;
2. Communication section will explain the changes which have occurred with the development of the IT;
3. Tour Management Software section will analyze the usage of applications, consumers' satisfaction, including advantages and disadvantages of the software.

7.1 Respondents' Background Information

The first interviewee, Joonas Teittinen is currently working in Fullsteam Agency as a production manager. Having a Bachelor's degree in Media, based on Music Business and Sound Technology, he started working as a sound engineer for different bands in Finland and had discovered that during tours some bands needed a person who could handle road issues. As it has been discussed in the theoretical section, it is not affordable for every band to have a professional tour manager, so musicians often perform tour manager's tasks themselves or rely on other crew members. This was the case with Joonas Teittinen, who along with sound engineering duties started helping the bands with tour arrangements and consequently familiarised himself with the tour manager's tasks and duties. Currently, he is working as a tour man-

ager for Hisser and Tuomo and in summer 2016 successfully managed stadium shows tour for a Finnish rapper Cheek.

The second interviewee, Heikki Häkkinen is also working in Fullsteam Agency as a production manager. As a tour manager, he had worked four years for the band Michael Monroe both on domestic and international tours. However, before that he was also helping some smaller bands to manage tours, and as he mentioned in the interview, it is a completely different approach than working with bigger bands such as Michael Monroe, and one needs to have a proper experience before officially taking the role of a tour manager. (Häkkinen, 2017)

As it can be seen, having worked on stadium and international tours, both participants possess required skills and competences to share their knowledge regarding a tour manager's job.

7.2 Communication Improvements

In order to understand the influence of the IT on communication, the participants have been asked to identify the changes they have noticed within the certain period of time, and whether they find these changes positive or negative.

First of all, as Häkkinen noticed, even though the technology is evolving with each passing year, however, the most considerable innovations which affected communication have occurred 10-15 years ago with the Internet development, otherwise no dramatic changes are noticeable within the last five years. (Häkkinen, 2017) Due to the Internet connection improving in quality it allows to perform tasks faster and more effectively. At the same time, it is an impeccable tool in emergency cases. If the band has problems crossing the border, for example, it is easy to call or write an email to the promoter informing about the delay or even the show cancellation, compared to touring in 90s when no one would have known if everything was going according to the schedule. (Teittinen, 2017)

With the IT development there appearing more tools for communication as, for example, Skype negotiations, however, both participants agreed that emails are one of the most reliable methods of information exchange. Despite calling by phone is a faster way to agree a deal, emails serve as a proof of what has been discussed. Especially in tour management where due to many people being involved in tour production, there is a high risk of misconception. "If something gets completely out of control, I have a proof of something that either I have said or the other party has said. All the money issues, if somebody says "Yes, we can do it. I can pay it" I still don't trust. I want to prove it on an email and get it confirmed" (Teittinen, 2017)

In general, both interviewees agreed that there are noticeable improvements in communication which allow working faster and more productively. However, one disadvantage of fast communication in regards to tour management job has been pointed out: when most of the business world work within office hours, tour managers need to be available 24/7 and everyone expects to receive a reply from them immediately. Tour managers, in their turn, require from other parties to act accordingly. As Teittinen mentioned "Some people ignore to be available outside of normal working hours" which in this business is a sign of unprofessionalism. (Teittinen, 2017)

Also, as it has been covered in the theoretical part, artists are becoming more dependent on touring rather than on CD or digital sales and it directly affects tour managers work as well. Both participants agreed that today there are more shows than in the past days which for a tour manager may become more stressful and hectic. However, Häkkinen argued that despite the increasing amount of shows, the level of stress must be the same if compared to 90s, for example, when tour managers did not have modern tools for fast communication and they could not receive an immediate reply when it was needed. Stress has always been a part of a tour manager's job, but the IT development has allowed solving the problems faster. (Häkkinen, 2017)

"The more tools we have and the faster they work, the better for the artist and everyone involved in the business." (Häkkinen, 2017)

7.3 Tour Management Software

This part of the research focuses on comparison of two methods covered in the theoretical part: traditional approach of pre-production and touring phase with the modern techniques which are currently available for tour managers. Even though the advanced applications and software programs are carefully designed and widely used by production and tour managers, the interview results showed that there are still certain issues which need to be further developed.

According to Häkkinen, the main disadvantage he has encountered is an impossibility to modify and customize the application to his needs. Even though the information covered in tour books and day sheets is generally the same, still every tour manager builds and structures information in a desirable order which is suitable for the band and for the touring party. The information is possible to customize using Excel or Word but in applications the layout always remains the same. As Häkkinen explains, every tour manager has his own established ways of performing tasks and when there appears an application which aims to meet everyone's needs, it is most likely not going to work. There will be much of information that is not valid for someone and at the same time missing information which is valid for someone else. Thus,

building own database is the better option if a tour manager wants to adjust everything to his own and the band's needs. (Häkkinen, 2017)

At the moment, there is a company in Finland which aim is to create a software that would bring all agents, promoters, venues, buyers and production together so that everyone would do their business through this program. However, this software is most likely to face the same problem - a very diverse targeting group which will make it not possible to meet the needs of every party. (Häkkinen, 2017)

Secondly, in case a tour manager decides to switch completely to using software, he will need to teach every band and crew member how to use this application. Here the problem arises that not necessarily each person in a touring party can have a smart phone or an Ipad. Despite the vast majority now possess iPhones, some people still operate with old Nokias. Also, the young generation is more likely to take advantage of the IT and use different applications, whereas it may not work with the artists who are accustomed to traditional ways of consuming information. (Häkkinen, 2017)

However, in contrast to the given arguments, Teittinen identified some major advantages that are only available for application users:

1. Every band and crew member has an access to the schedules everywhere and at any time, they do not need to walk into backstage to check information from the day sheet or call a tour manager. Instead, they can log in to an application from a hotel room and find the information they are searching for from the system;
2. The same works for a tour manager, when any possible changes occur, he does not need to call everyone, all he needs to do is to update the day sheet in the application and everyone will receive an automatic update by a pushup notification. It saves much time and efforts both for a tour manager and for a touring party;
3. Since every member can add notes and share them with the others, an application becomes not just an information tool but also a communication device. (Teittinen, 2017)

Teittinen also discussed the security issue in regards to information technology. Even though Master Tour is a reliable and stable application, still it is reasonable not to rely completely on technology yet. A tour manager needs to keep this in mind and have a backup of all information on a different source if possible. (Teittinen, 2017)

To sum up the results, both interviewees had an experience of using Master Tour application and they agreed that this software covers all necessary elements of tour production such as day sheets, tour books, guest lists, routing and accommodation, however, it has been identified that there is still a missing gap between theory and practice in regards to using applications in tour managers work.

8 Conclusion and Reflection

The theoretical part of this research provided insight into the music industry's fluctuations and the artists' income statistics, also explained the role and importance of touring, as well as introduced to two different approaches of advancing a tour and touring. The data analysis based on qualitative research method, in its turn, aimed to identify the affects of the IT development on a tour manager's work and whether or not the modern applications can fully replace the traditional methods.

General results showed that there are noticeable improvements in communication and other sectors of tour management. The evolving technology provides tools for more efficient implementation of tasks. For example, in the past days, show settlements have been conducted in cash, which caused a tour manager additional problems as it clearly was not secure to carry a big amount of money on tour. In the present days, the show settlement is paid by card and money is transferred directly to an artist's bank account. (Teittinen, 2017)

The Internet accessibility is also defined as a significant advantage of the IT development allowing tour managers to solve arising problems on tour faster and more effectively, especially in case of emergencies. However, the fundamental change driven by technology development is the increasing demand for live shows and the advancement of the entertainment industry in a whole. It is detectable from the data analysis that despite the evident advantages of Master Tour software, still it cannot yet fully replace the traditional methods of production.

According to Häkkinen, he identifies the IT development generally as an advantage but suggests that some things still should be kept simple: using Excel and Word, as well as conventional tour books and day sheets is a reliable combination that has been used for many years. Nevertheless, he classifies Master Tour as the leading software currently available on the market and explains that adaptation should not occur fast and rather be a gradual process. (Häkkinen, 2017)

When carrying out this research, the author has observed that since most of Master Tour clients are American artists, it can be proposed that geographical factors can also be a reason of slow adaptation. Finnish music market is considerably smaller compared to bigger scale markets, such as the USA, for example, where the industry is developed to the greater extent.

However, this should not be considered as the main factor, rather as an addition to other reasons, since both participants possess comprehensive international touring experience.

As it is proposed by Workman (2012), "When the day comes that we can always get a strong wireless signal everywhere and everyone owns a smart phone or tablet, then I might begin to view a service such as Master Tour as a total replacement for conventional printed information devices, such as tour books, day sheets, press sheets, and memos, and not just a great addition to them. I still believe we're better off to have both for now." (Workman, 2012, 175)

In conclusion, the author proposes that the reasons of the slow adaptation are the following:

1. Preference choice - traditional method of production does not have critical disadvantages. It is rather a reliable approach and can still be used if a tour manager finds it more suitable for doing his work;
2. Geographical factors - music markets in different countries are developed unequal;
3. The IT has not yet developed to an extent to totally replace traditional method.

Since the technology is constantly evolving, tour managers should also endeavour to strengthen their skills in order to increase their competitiveness on the market. It can be beneficial, for example, to be able to advance tours using both traditional and modern approaches.

However, tour managers who have just started their career may find it unaffordable to pay a subscription for using software programs which vary from fifty to one hundred dollars per month. As Teittinen explains "I believe that the most important part of the whole tour management is a carefully planned advancing." (Teittinen, 2017) Thus, it is the outcome that is important rather than the method used.

"The basics of a show are pretty much the same, only the technology has really changed."
(Wilkins, 2007, 6)

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Figures

Figure 1. The Sources of Music Artists Income. (Future of Music 2017)

Figure 2. Music Downloads Statistics (Digital Music News, 2017)

Figure 3. Global Revenues by Segment. (Global Music Report, 2016)

Figure 4. Streaming Subscription Statistics (Global Music Report, 2016)

Figure 5. Live Music Revenue (Global Entertainment and Media Outlook, 2016)

Appendix 1: Interview Questions 33

Appendix 1: Interview Questions.

General questions on tour management and IT

1. Please, shortly introduce yourself. How did you start your career as a tour manager and could you name a few bands you've been working with?
2. In your opinion, which changes have occurred with the development of IT and how they affected your work as a tour manager? Do you find these changes positive or negative?

Communication

3. Emails are nowadays the most common way of communication. Do you find them reliable or you prefer calling?
4. How did communication improve in general?

Applications

5. Have you ever tried to use any applications during the tour? For example, Master Tour? What are advantages and disadvantages of these applications?
6. Can these applications fully substitute printed tour books, day sheets etc.?
7. How would you like to improve these applications?