



BY MATT GOODWILL



WE'RE MUSICDASH; YOUR PLATFORM FOR ALL THINGS MUSIC

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ABOUT THE BRAND

Music Dash is your dashboard for all things music. It's a Music News Publishing Platform that work with journalists and it's strategic partners to deliver the latest and greatest music industry news across the web.

Covering topics from record releases, tours, emerging artists, business, videos and events, MusicDash journalists consist of writing veterans and industry up-comers alike.



INTRODUCTION

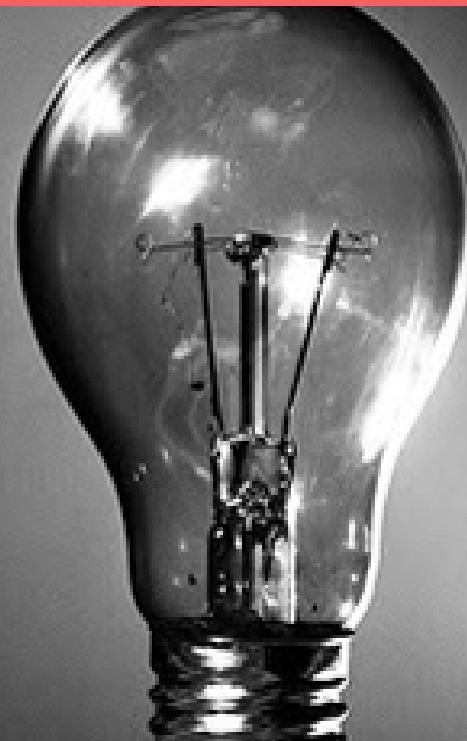
Final Major Project is something I've been looking forward to for years now! At the time of starting FMP I didn't know what I wanted to produce, but I knew it would be something in the music industry. Once I graduate, I want to start my own media network – consisting of music, management, consultancy, film & publishing companies underneath a parent company. I'd already started work on a brand called MusicDash that I'd been brainstorming ideas for since October 2014. I thought FMP would be the perfect opportunity to follow through on this idea and bring it to life.

MusicDash is a music news publishing platform. The reason I wanted to create it in the first place is because I'd been working within the film industry for 2/3 years. Towards the end of 2014 I realised that while I love to watch movies, pull them to pieces and find out how they were created, I don't love the process of filmmaking. I realised that it was the process of music making and all industries surrounding it that I could see myself spending 12 hours a day on for the rest of my life. Once I knew that I wanted to go into the music industry, I decided to create a way in which I could find out about lots of different artists/genres and music business news – as I didn't know much about the industry at all. Initially I was going to create my own personal blog, but I'd been inspired by companies like Billboard and MTV and eventually decided to create a music news publishing platform – a dashboard for all music on the web. It dawned on me that this would be perfect when I eventually start to manage music artists under my management label – because I'll be able to promote them through the platform and its partners for free.

I registered the domain MusicDash.co and the twitter handle @MusicDashOnline in January 2015 and started work from there. I decided to register a .co URL because MusicDash.com was taken and because of all the benefits you receive as a .co on go.co. It was around this time that I also discovered the domain 'MusicDa.sh' was free. I decided to buy it for the year and use it as a short URL when posting content on Twitter.



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THE PROCESS: COMPETITORS

As MusicDash isn't reinventing the wheel when it comes to reporting music news, we have a large number of competitors who are in the online publishing industry. Billboard.com, possibly the biggest of all has been operating since 1894 and started out by publishing the Billboard magazine for print (which they still do and have a circulation rate of 16,000). It now publishes articles across its website, mobile and tablet apps, as well as hosting the BMA's (Billboard Music Awards) each year. In recent years Billboard launched its online music chart.

Billboard.com is the company I'd most like MusicDash ending up like. I want MusicDash to turn into more of a music service: offering music charts, online profiles, radio stations etc.

Other close MusicDash competitors publishing music news online include: MTV, Pitchfork and BBC Music.

BBC
MUSIC

billboard

MTVTM

PitchforkSM



MUSIC DASH

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THE PROCESS: DESIGN INSPIRATION

My main inspiration for the website design was that I wanted it to replicate the look of some kind of digital ‘Dashboard’. I decided to have a look at similar websites that I wanted it to look like. I ended up deciding that I wanted to create a ‘box theme’ on the homepage – similar to The Verge homepage shown below. I also looked at sites like Mashable.com, HypeM.com, and MTV.com/music for news layout inspiration – all competitors in different forms.

On top of that I visited websites for design communities such as Adobe’s Behance, Dribbble.com and themeforest.net. These helped me to look at actual online dashboards and how I could integrate that look/feel into a content oriented website.

Once I had gathered enough examples, I set out looking for an already developed theme. Doing this meant that I had a whole lot more time to focus on the business/editorial side of the project instead of spending hours changing code. As I want to be a media entrepreneur when I leave, and not a web designer, I didn’t want to spend too long on the coding side of the website. I’m glad I chose to go down this route as it’s enabled me the time to establish an editorial and management team of 20 people. It also meant that I could rely on a professional developer who had spent their life perfecting their craft.

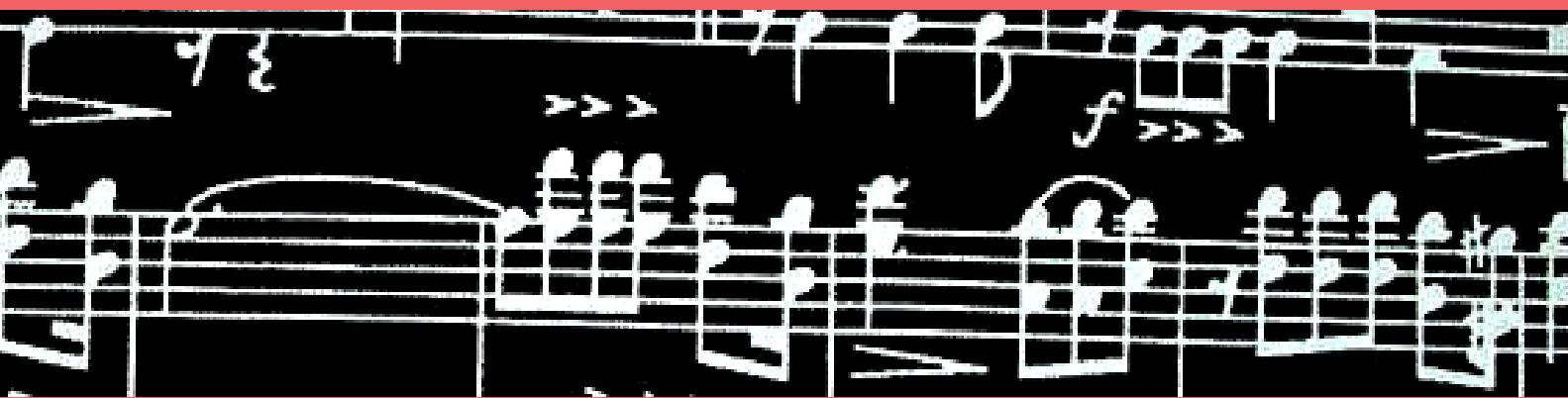
The Verge homepage features a prominent red header bar with the site's name. Below it is a grid of news articles. One article on the left discusses the director of Fast & Furious 7. Another article on the right is about AmazonFresh. The footer includes a banner for 'The Future of Google'.

billboard.com homepage showing a 'BIGGEST MOVERS IN THE LAST HOUR' chart. The chart lists songs and artists with their respective trending percentages. The top song is 'Runaway' by Gatonots, which has increased by +0.25% over the last 24 hours.

POSITION	SONG AND ARTIST	% CHANGED	TREND
1	Runaway Gatonots	+0.25%	@newregress △1
2	Here Alessia Cara	-0.06%	@alesciacara △2
3	King Years and Years	-0.63%	@yearsandyears △1
4	Special Affair The Internet	-0.06%	@theinternet △1
5	Hold My Hand Jess Glynne	-0.06%	@jessglynne △2



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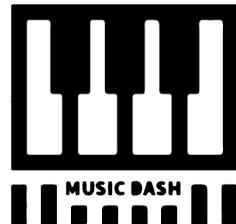


THE PROCESS: LOGO CONCEPTS

Logo concepts was something I wanted to spend a while on as I knew it was something that would make or break the brand. In total it took me over two months to create and user test a logo which I was happy with. As you can see below in all of the logos, I created the 'dash' lines in illustrator, found the royalty free images online including the cassette graphic which is used as the current logo, and then traced both assets to finish with a modern but retro look. When I started to design the logo, I was keen to create a sharp black logo, somehow integrating the 'dashboard' theme. I managed to do this by adding dashes under the MusicDash text – which can be interpreted as cassette tape streaming out of the bottom of the cassette.

By the end of the process I was really happy with the logo because it can be divided in to two parts. The smaller text logo can be displayed in small spaces and in the header on the website, and the larger cassette logo can be displayed on social media display pictures etc. Its also sharp, bold and black but also has a relaxed and hand drawn feel to it.

Below you can see the five concepts I user tested before deciding on the final cassette brand image:





THE PROCESS: TEAM

Having partnered with online publishing brand ‘The Indiependent’, I was lucky enough to have Beth (the founder) allow me access to their writers in order to offer them the opportunity to write for MusicDash as well. After creating a ‘Write for Us’ page on the website, posting it on Twitter and asking The Indiependent to retweet, we had over 17 people submit applications to write for us. Now, over a month later, we have a team of 20 people working in journalism, web and management.

Thanks to a very dedicated team, we’re often able to post three new articles a day. This number will continue to increase in the coming months. I would like MusicDash to get to the stage where we’re publishing 50-100 articles per day. This may seem like a lot but The Huffington Post (another online publication) posts over 2000 articles per day.





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THE PROCESS: MARKETING

As a digital marketer, I know a lot of tips and tricks that I've learned over the last few years as to how to gain a following and encourage interaction on social media: especially Twitter. A mix of paying for advertising, help of spreading the brand from partners, and music artists retweeting articles about them has enabled MusicDash to gain a following of 18,000 on Twitter since January 2015. This will continue to grow as the brand gains a bigger team and expands. As you can see from the images to the right of this text, @MusicDashOnline has received user impressions over 118,000 in the last 28 days. This means that 118,000 people have interacted with the brand in some way, on Twitter.

After launching exclusively on Twitter, we will set up on Tumblr next.

TWEETS FOLLOWING FOLLOWERS LISTS
71 1,804 18.3K 4

Tweets Tweets & replies Photos & videos

Who to follow · Refresh · View all

Nike.com @nikestore Follow

Coca-Cola @CocaCola Follow

Tony Diver @Tony_Diver Follow

Account home

28 day summary with change over previous period

Tweets 30 ↑87.5% Tweet impressions 118K ↑208.6% Profile visits 11.8K ↑123.8% Mentions 63 ↑133.3% Followers 18.3K ↑1,362

June 2015 • 8 days so far...

Top Tweet earned 6,436 impressions

We're on the lookout for music journalists to join our Editorial team! Details: MusicDash.co/write-for-us/ pic.twitter.com/5KBPNlgEsL

Top mention earned 114 engagements

Beth @BettyKirker - Jun 2 I picked Heroin // @engahr as Track of the Week for @MusicDashOnline

MusicDash.stv/EP8C4Y pic.twitter.com/PfRqjOZWh pic.twitter.com/gME5kRhnNU

ADVERTISEMENT ON TWITTER

Get your Tweets in front of more people

Promoted Tweets and content open up your reach on Twitter to more than 1.2 billion people.

Get started

JUNE 2015 SUMMARY

Tweets 16 Tweet impressions 42.6K



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THE PROCESS: ADVERTISING

Advertising on the MusicDash.co platform will be a key part of the revenue system we're starting to put in place. Advertisers will be able to create dedicated campaigns, moulded exclusively for our website, social platforms and our partners websites.

Leaderboard adverts as well as square advertising on the website will allow musicians and brands a perfect position to promote their content on the platform. On top of this, I've been in contact with WOOT Media as well as several other advertising agencies to start to develop advertising campaigns for our users as the website grows in size.

I want to create advertising campaigns for MusicDash which will only enhance the user experience when using our service.

The image displays two screenshots of the MusicDash.co website's news section. The top screenshot shows a main news article about Inque's new EP 'Witching Hour' with a large image of the artist. To the right is a red rectangular advertisement placeholder labeled 'News Section Rectangle Ad (300 x 250 pixels)'. Below the main article are smaller news snippets and a sidebar with links to popular articles and recent releases. The bottom screenshot shows another news article about Kanye West's 'Only One' video, featuring a smaller image and a detailed description. To the right of this article is a large red 'Dashboard Large Leaderboard (970 x 90 pixels)' placeholder.



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THE PROCESS: REVENUE

As mentioned on the previous page, website Advertising will play a key part in generating revenue for MusicDash. On top of that, as part of our advertising system we'll be offering 'Exclusive' and Partnerships. MusicDash Exclusive is an initiative which allows music artists, management and brands the opportunity to receive discounts on advertising as well as other offers such as profile pages, written articles etc. This is in exchange for breaking news/music exclusively through the MusicDash platform.

We'll also be actively partnering with other brands and websites in exchange for promotion of content from both parties.

MusicDash Charts will form another arm of our advertising system and will allow artists to be featured.

MUSIC DASH
EXCLUSIVE

MUSIC DASH
PARTNERSHIPS

CHARTS



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PROJECT MANAGEMENT

MusicDash is a project that I want to continue once I graduate Ravensbourne. It's the very first step in creating the media network I want to establish over the next 5 years. Even running MusicDash by itself, without even taking into consideration all of the other businesses that I'm planning to build, effective management is a key concept to staying on top of the huge workload that comes with managing a news platform and a team (of 20 people currently – but this will continue to grow).

The three digital tools that I've used most (which I would highly recommend to anyone) are WordPress, Slack and Trello. WordPress has been a brilliant content management system which I've been able to build a functioning website around. My favourite feature is that I can add users and give them author status (this restricts them to being able to write articles only and not change general website settings). Once I've done this, they can write an article, hit the 'send for review' button in the drafts editor, and the post will be sent to myself or an editor to review before publishing live on the website. This process has made things extremely easy with managing the online editorial content of over 17 people. WordPress is an extremely powerful tool and I'm glad I'll continue to have it as the MusicDash brand and our team grows in size.

Slack is a team communication tool which has allowed the members of the MusicDash team to communicate with each other directly via Direct Messages, but also offers the use of 'Channels' – which any member of the team can join and contribute to (like Facebook groups). The channels I've created so far include '#Journalists', '#General' and '#Web-Design_Dev'. Using this communication platform is so much quicker and easier than emailing all the time – and it has already improved efficiency within the week we've been using it.

Trello is a to-do software which allows you to create an 'organisation' (MusicDash) and share it with your team. Within this you can create boards (like lists) and create individual tickets within boards – which act as tickets that you can raise with members of your team and then archive when a task has been completed. Very useful for keeping track of company wide tasks – and also on a personal workload level too.



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EXPANDING

MusicDash is just the very start to a large media network that I have planned to build over the next 5 years. Within the MusicDash family alone, joining the brand next year will be sister company MovieDash (similar to IMDB, FreshTomatoes) and parent company MediaDash (Similar to Buzzfeed). These three companies together will join the publishing arm of a media network coming in 2016.

I decided to form MusicDash before the others as music is the industry I'm most interested in. And while I don't know a lot about the industry, I know that launching MusicDash will help me to learn about new artists/topics and music business so that I can go on to launch a music management company under the network as well.





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REFLECTION

MusicDash has been such a fun project to work on for my FMP – and I'm glad I pushed myself to finally achieve what I've been thinking about doing for the previous year. It definitely hasn't felt like a huge undertaking because I had fun working on it for 4/5 hours a day, everyday.

I think the selling point of this project for me is that I can now go on to continue developing the brand and turning it into a business. What's always bothered me about projects before is that in class they're never carried through to a working model – used by real people. With MusicDash, I know that the work I've been doing for the past 6 months and the work I continue to do will make a difference in the real world.

MusicDash will hopefully continue to grow and expand into sister brand MovieDash and parent brand MediaDash. All three will compliment each other and will act as a solid publishing arm to the media network I want to found this year.

Our team has lots of plans for MusicDash over the next year – please feel free to stay up to date at: <http://musicdash.co/press/>