

Do you consider
corporate
involvement in
relation to the control
of creative prac...

[Art & Culture](#), [Music](#)



Corporate involvement in relation to creating a successful accessible artist is more often than not a way for companies/ record labels to sell and promote a commodity. Creative practice is vital for an artist to shape the individual they want to be projected as to society and more importantly fans. Picking a target audience is key when choosing a direction to go with in relation to creative practice. For an individual to control the direction their music takes and to have an input in other creative aspects of their career is something all artists would ideally like.

However having that guidance and security that corporate involvement provides within the music industry may be just as important to an artist that craves success. Therefore the question is whether or not sacrificing complete creative control over a career in the music industry has more beneficial outcomes than negative ones. There are two valid sides to this argument as there are positive and negative repercussions for having corporate involvement in relation to create practice.

The music business is a multimillion pound industry and this is due to advertisement and promotion of big selling names that fit a certain purpose. If a music artist loses complete control of their creative practice they are arguably limited in terms of development and the variety of music they can produce. As their music is crafted for them and their image is moulded around what society deems as fashionable at the time. As an individual within the music industry a sense of individual identity is to a certain degree lost in the plight for fame and success.

Record companies ' exercise great power simply because they offer record contracts to few groups among many... ', this is also relevant to solo artists as well of course. A record contract is considered a golden opportunity to any artist serious about their career and therefore the lengths people go to and the sacrifices they make in order to further themselves in the business are arguably limitless. One disadvantage being the loss of control over creative practice.

Consequently in a lack of opportunity to choose the direction your music takes. To go as far as to say corporate involvement in relation to control of creative practice is villainous is the concept taken to the extreme. For an artist to buy into the life style of a top selling, commercially successful brand they in return have to sacrifice certain ideals they may have on the direction they may or may not take. To be successful an individual within the music industry must adhere to rules and guidelines enforced by the label they are under.

In doing so they are perhaps not portraying themselves in a way they would prefer to be, but they are however benefiting in terms of money and fame. An artist will counterbalance fame for talent and creative control and therefore it is their decision to join a label that for the majority governs the direction of creative practice. For example the image of the individual and the style of the music produced. This is why it is difficult to empathise with a successful musician who is not happy with their portrayal to society.

This is because to an extent they know what they are getting themselves into, which is touched upon in Kraft's study as ' arguably we are seeing a

return to a much more managed form of production with the rise of ' manufactured " pop acts". ' Acts are created to fit a purpose and are thus moulded into a commodity that will sell. This is how the music industry works- supply and demand is a key facture. Creating a popular, desirable artist with catchy popular songs that will sell is corporates main concern and this is portrayed through the way an acts management or label will usually hone in on a certain type of desired audience.

An example of this would be a generic boy band targeting an audience mainly of young girls. This is who their music will appeal to most and thus sell to. To call this involvement villainous however is perhaps a strong term to use as corporates are merely reining in on what they know will sell and from this an artist benefits as previously mentioned through a life style change and fame. The concept of major record companies creating a ' star' through selling what they know to be popular does seem to turn the process of music making into an artificial emotionless practise.

Taking away the vital component- the music and turning it into a show could be deemed as iniquitous by people who believe in music as an expression of emotion. Companies create supposed flawless records and thus so the critic ' Lou Donaldson never evaluates " musicians from their records. They are made under a different set of circumstances where they can make over what they don't like. You need to hear musicians in person to be able to judge them ". This brings us onto the idea of how artificial music composing has become.

The raw talent is lost through repetition of the same ideals- creating something that will sell, not necessarily something that evokes emotion within the listener. This may appear morally wrong; however it is the result of artists selling themselves in order to be successful. This is unfortunately how the music industry appears to work a lot of the time especially in modern day society. This can be considered as villainous to a degree as the involvement of corporations in this area appears to be stifling artistic creativity.

This is touched upon in Keith Negus' Popular Music Theory where he talks of Adorno and how - ' He observed that aspiring commercial songwriters were advised that their melodies and lyrics should fit rigid formulas and patterns. ' This illustrates how repetitive so called popular music can be as it has to fit a certain formula to guarantee a successful outcome for the song created. This is perhaps the worst aspect of corporate involvement in relevance to control of creative practice as the whole message sent out is revolving around this artificial method of production.

Is conveying yourself in a way you perhaps wouldn't ideally like to be, whilst producing tracks that you don't personally feel represent the style you desire worth it for an artist in the long run? This is the question that needs to be addressed when discussing whether or not corporate involvement in relation to control of creative practice is villainous within the music industry. As an artist buys into the whole experience as we all know the music industry is strongly linked to attention and praise.

It is difficult to gauge whether or not corporate involvement should be deemed as villainous as without the money a label pumps into an act they would not potentially have commercial success and as a knock on affect would not become rich or be famous. A music corporation is a business after all and it fulfills its purpose by making artists fit certain regimented criteria. Therefore it is tough to brand it as villainous. The purpose it fulfills regrettably ruins the authenticity of a lot of music and this factor perhaps is considered villainous.

Like it says in Jason Toynbee's *The Popular Studies Reader*, 'industry and music are intimately related' and this factor makes this analysis difficult to conclude. When discussing this debate there has clearly been two sides as the argument is not a simple one. The term villainous is perhaps the wrong one to use in relation to this question as it is quite a stern word. It is undeniable that corporate involvement in relation to control of creative practice does dominate the music industry and wreck the authenticity of a lot of music.

An artist's creativity is perhaps stifled and thus the music does not represent the artist themselves but the commodity they're trying to sell. This is of course wrong in the eyes of any true music lover. However this is what society seemingly craves, as music corporations are selling to the masses what they desire- popular music that fits the purpose for commercial success. Therefore I think the answer to this question could be yes and no. This is because as previously mentioned music corporations are a business after all and money making is first and foremost the aim.

Creating an image for an artist to help entice the public and creating tracks that will sell, however morally wrong as it may seem it is also known to the artist at the time of joining the label. This is why I believe villainous to be the wrong term to describe corporate involvement in relation to creative practice within the music industry. It is perhaps wrong in certain areas but this is what we as a society buy into and therefore 'villainous' is perhaps an incorrect term when analysing corporate involvement within the music industry. ?