

# Development of taylor swift



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## Taylor Swift: Pinnacle of the Music Industry

Billboard, a popular news source for music, interviewed the successful singer Sam Smith and he gave his opinion on another artist he has become quite fond of; he says, “ Taylor Swift is amazing... She's a role model. I really respect her. And she manages to sell a lot of records and make a lot of people happy financially, but also to keep that soulfulness, that honesty” (‘ Sam Smith: Taylor Swift Is Amazing’). Taylor Swift was raised in Wyomissing, Pennsylvania where she had discovered her passion for music and started her music career at the age of 14 after moving to Nashville. She is currently a 25-year-old singer-songwriter who is famous for country and pop music. Having only been in the music industry for a short 10 years, Taylor Swift was able to frequently top the charts with her new songs and in 2010 and at the age of 20, became the youngest artist in history to win the Grammy Award for Album of the Year. Currently holding the title of top-selling digital artist in music history, Taylor Swift’s rise to fame is credited to not only her incredible music but also to her successful business tactics. Although some critics may say, “ I don’t really care for Taylor Swift... [She] has a very dull public persona” (Juzwiak). Taylor Swift is a successful businesswoman, her ability to target her audience very well with her songs has allowed her to consistently become a hit artist, and her public actions has made her a favorite among fans.

Being a successful and popular artist in today’s culture is a difficult task. It no longer depends on solely musical talent but also on other factors. Barbara A. Stremikis, the author of “ The Personal Characteristics and Environmental Circumstances of Successful Women Musicians” presents data that analyzes

the qualities and factors that many successful musicians have. “ Results of the study indicate that in addition to family support of musical talent, women who are to become successful musicians must be highly motivated, self-directed, and single minded in their determination to achieve their goal. They must be independent thinkers who are unconcerned about conforming to gender stereotypes and able to withstand difficult experiences related to gender and their career” (Stremikis). The results of this study coincide with Taylor Swift’s background and qualities. Also to note in the study, “ Probabilistic Diffusion Tractography Reveals Improvement Of Structural Network In Musicians" that correlates improved brain activity in musicians, “ in long-term musical training and performance may contribute to the improved efficiency of communication between brain regions with sensory, motor, and emotional functions” (Li). Taylor Swift’s motivation for music is evident in the early years of her musical career. She has consistently shown persistence, ingenuity, and intelligence starting at a young age. Being taught how to play the guitar at the age of 12, Taylor Swift quickly fell in love with music and had started to write her own pieces. Following that, she had started playing at small venues and her family, showing support for her musical aspiration, moved to Nashville, Tennessee where 14-year-old Taylor Swift started her quick journey to the top. Taylor Swift has shown that she is an independent thinker unconcerned about conforming to gender stereotypes by being open about personal aspects of her own life that are revealed through her songs and unafraid of criticism. Taylor Swift continually releases songs that empower individuals and creates an atmosphere of acceptance towards those who are independent and encourages individuality. For example, her song “ Shake It Off” is about how one

shouldn't let bullies get the best of them and that they should always be themselves no matter the obstacles they face.

Taylor Swift has made many bright business decisions that has allowed her to further succeed in her career. Taylor Swift made a bold statement to one of the biggest music streaming giants by removing her music from Spotify. "Taylor Swift has broken up with someone else - this time with one of the music industry's largest players, Spotify" (SPOTI-FIRED! Swift Yanks Her Work From Streaming Giant"). This decision was bred out of the framework that music-streaming services do not compensate artists enough. This action was a smart business endeavor because it shows that she is not allowing herself to be taken advantage of financially. She is setting an example for future artists to rethink their participation in streaming services, as they will become more prevalent in today's music culture. Another advantageous business decision was the decision to trademark her popular phrase ' Shake It Off', among others. She chose to make the decision so that third parties would not be able to benefit monetarily off of her success. "'What she is trying to do is to protect individual phrases within her lyrics where those lyrics have become catchphrases' explains Alexander Ross, a partner at law firm Wiggin who specializes in music. ' Once you have a trademarked phrase you have the right to stop someone else using it on things like merchandising'" (Forde). Not only has Taylor Swift had and will continue to have successful business endeavors, but she also has perfected the ability to successfully target her audience.

How successfully one is able to accurately relate their music to their audience is a good indication of how successful that artist will become.

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Taylor Swift is an artist who knows how to target her audience. Her music becomes something any listener can relate to. Ranging from topics of bullying to heartbreak, everyone knows someone who has personally gone through this or has gone through it himself or herself. One of her songs 'Blank Space' is about an unsuccessful relationship, a topic all can understand. Her talent for making her music become more of a 'us' or 'I' kind of story rather than a 'her' story has allowed her music to appeal to a wide variety of the population. Taylor Swift is one of the few artists in today's culture that has frequently been able to have most of her songs that are released make it to the top charts. This is due to her not her music being catchy and upbeat, but also relatable to many. Another example of her talent is her recent top-charting 'Shake It Off.' This song has reached millions due to the message that it is okay to be yourself. This is something that many young fans can relate to, which has become a huge portion of her fan base.

Some critics may say that Taylor Swift has a dull public persona. Although many have bashed upon Taylor Swift's public persona, her public actions show differently:

"When a heartbroken teenager named Kasey was dumped by her boyfriend via text, she reached out to someone she knew had experience with breakups: Taylor Swift. Kasey, who was clearly unable to sleep, posted a plaintive note on her Tumblr account at 2:09 a. m. Tuesday. (Girl, we've all been there.) 'Taylor Swift, I hope you see this,' she wrote to the "Style" singer. 'We've been together for four months. He just texted me and told me he was done with me. Gave me no reason and kept trying to get me to do

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irrational things to get him back. Now he's calling me names and I just feel crumbled. I don't know what to do.' Within hours, Swift, 25, left her first comment. ' He ended it, just like that?' she wrote incredulously" (Helling).

The conversation had lasted hours more and Swift was able to not only give advice to this girl that she has accumulated over the years, but was also generous enough to make a break-up playlist for this young fan in need of advice. Knowing that social media is a big contributor to today's communication:

" Swift has become a social-media maven, taking full advantage of the Taylor-made outlet for mixing and mingling with millennials. ' The younger generation is very good at communicating about themselves,' Catanach said. ' My students are starting to see that they're very good with the 'me' stories and not so much with the 'we' stories. ' I think what makes Taylor so successful on social media is the fact that she is the 'me' and the 'we' story. She is her own brand. She's very generous with fans and very inclusive. Fans feels like they're included in the world.'" (Fassnacht).

Taylor Swift has used social media to make fans feel like they are a part of her world. While many other celebrities personally manage their social media, Taylor Swift is able to personally respond to many further aiding in her positive public persona that she continues to uphold.

Taylor Swift is the pinnacle of successful artists of this generation. Through 10 years of being in the music industry, Taylor has shown that she is a force to be reckoned with. With a popular status, a positive public persona, a great business sense, and the ability to target an audience successfully, Taylor

Swift has become one of the most successful singers of all time. Her journey to the top was one of perseverance, strategy, and individuality.

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