

Technology is killing creativity

[Art & Culture](#)



Technology is not killing creativity. If it was, then Les Paul's invention of the electric guitar, Bob Moog's invention of the synthesizer, Kusek et al.'s invention of MIDI, Pro Tools' inventor as well as every effects pedal or electronic music enhancing piece of gear would have to be part of this destructive force. Thoughts like this are fun to debate but totally unproductive. The real issue to be discussed for which a solution must be found is how can those who produce great music be found, heard above all the clutter and find an audience large enough to sustain a career financially.

How music will be discovered in the future will determine whether next generation major artists will ever be developed again or whether the fragmentation of the music space only allows for creation of a large middle class of artists struggling to survive. Today's battle for discovery of great music is no different than it was over the past 60 years for innovative genres like Rock and Roll, R&B and Hip Hop. The innovator's dilemma applied to those artists and entrepreneurs fomenting these musical revolutions.

It all comes down to how the tools available at the time, both music and business, were employed by the innovators to create a force great enough to break through the same type of early technology adoption problems we have today. The world was much simpler in those days and today those trying to break through are faced with a much more challenging and complicated set of circumstances BUT the exact same problem. From the 50's through the 80's, the record business could develop great artists out of the trunks of their cars. One driven and focused person could make it all happen.

Channels of distribution were easily controlled by those who knew how to utilize them. The press, radio and TV allowed massive marketing and promotion machines to be built that could break an artist over night. In the early days there was no one way to get it done. It took 25 years for a successful cookie cutter business model to be developed but there were always interlopers that could come in at any time and change the game. Unfortunately, the world in which great music must be found and nurtured is so fragmented and overwhelming to almost everyone that's in it.

We haven't figured it out yet. One thing is very clear to me: moving forward no band or artist will be able to do it alone. Collaboration, better teamwork, and a better meld of technology with creativity, marketing and promotion are essential if success is to be found in the future. Outside the box thinking, new tools need to be tested for success and the new music business needs to evolve a system that makes the fragmentation more manageable and controllable to easier focus our attention on the great music that is really out there and the artists who play it.