



Image source: Katerina Holmes, Pexels



Transforming Arts Organizations Worldwide

Online Business Education for Musicians

February 2024

Research Methodology

Research Question

Which are the best models of online non-artistic education for creatives?

What is the most attractive product to young artists in the online education realm?

What should the price be for individual young artists?

What is the best way to attract / market to young artists?

How do you continue to engage young artists – if at all – after they finish an online course?

Who is the competition?

What KPI's can an organization expect?

To investigate this question, we conducted the following research:



Past ABA proprietary research:

- *Earned Revenue Opportunities: Online Music Education and Services for Musicians*



Interviews with 5 organizations:

- Music Schools with online business training
- Music Schools with face-to-face business training
- Career Accelerators



Profiled 11 additional organizations:

- Examples of membership programs across Europe and the US
- Lessons learned and best practices

Organizations Interviewed

Career Boosting organizations in the arts industry



Music Schools with online music/business training

Juilliard



Music Schools with face-to-face business training

Manhattan School of Music

Profiled based on publicly available information



Sotheby's INSTITUTE OF ART



ArtTactic®



Juilliard

Lessons Learned

- There is a significant **need** for business training for musicians, particularly for classical musicians.
- The key to success is to have a course that the audience can see is **directly relevant** to their careers.
- **What** you teach, **how** you teach it and **who** teaches it matter.
- Start small but with an extremely **high-quality product**. The first prototype counts particularly if you aren't well known in the space.
- **Testing** the product with your potential pool of clients will help with its future development.
- While students appear willing to pay upwards €1,500 for interactive on-line courses, based on other examples, it appears that the **average price** for access to a large library of high-quality videos is €20-30/month.
- **Partnerships** appear to be a significant opportunity - both to have additional content in the library and to build brand recognition.
- While creating a library of videos may be **cost efficient**, creating a full-scale interactive course is likely to be very expensive.

Which Issues Do Musicians Experience in the Job Market?

1

Expectations are not fulfilled

Upon completing their educations, musicians expect to find full-time employment, such as joining an orchestra for a "vertical" career trajectory. However, they frequently end up balancing multiple jobs simultaneously, leading to a "horizontal" career. Often, they are not aware of the various available job opportunities.

2

They lack core skills

Especially when pursuing a "horizontal" career. It's more than just artistic talent that's needed. Schools often do not teach them skills like networking or basic accounting, which are crucial for being entrepreneurial in their careers.

3

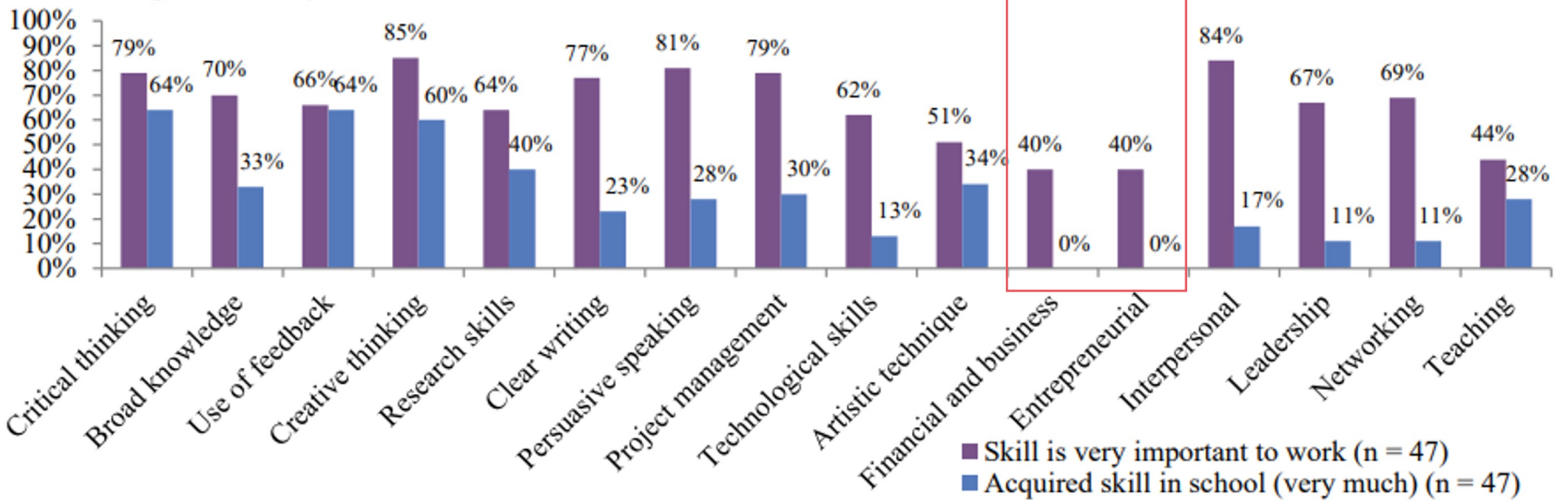
Dissatisfaction

Even when they land a prestigious or stable job, they might find it doesn't spark their personal artistic creativity.

Source: <https://www.isme.org/sites/default/files/documents/proceedings/2006%20CEPROM%20Proceedings.pdf#page=185>

Which Issues Do Musicians Experience in the Job Market?

Comparing the % of alumni who say a skill is **very important** to their work to the % who say that they acquired that skill **very much** while at Sample University:



The Strategic National Arts Alumni Project’s report from 2016 (the last study is ongoing) shows that undergraduate programs do not help enough to develop business and entrepreneurial skills

Source: <https://snaaparts.org/uploads/downloads/Sample-Reports/SNAAP-2016-Sample-Institutional-Report.pdf>

Pricing Models – Online Business for Musicians

Organization	Type of course (No.)	Duration	Teaching method	Price
Berklee School of Music	Individual (35)	12 week	Recorded lessons	\$1,290 to \$2,615
*(Berklee has also content on Coursera both for free non-free)	Individual on edX (11)	Self-paced (last 1-6 weeks)	Recorded lessons	Free
	Programs on edX (2)	Self-paced (last 4 months)	Recorded lessons	\$118-142
The School of Music Business	Programs (7)	From intensive (2 full days) to 1 full day for 4 weeks	Live streaming	£449 to £995
Point Blank Music School	Program (1)	3 months (2 hours sessions, 1 day per week)	Live streaming	£775
The Institute of Contemporary Music Performance	Program (1)	Self-paced	Recorded lessons	£40

Pricing Models – Online Learning Platforms

Platform	Offer	Pricing model	Price
Coursera	+7,000 courses	Individual course Subscription	Free to \$9,000 (for degrees) \$59/month*
edX	+3500 courses	Individual course	Free to \$50/300 (for certificates)*
MasterClass	+200 courses	Subscription	\$10 to \$19/month**
Skillshare	+30,000 classes	Subscription	\$32/month or \$168/year
Udemy	+210,000 courses	Individual course Subscription	\$9 to \$200*** From \$15/month

*Coursera and edX work in a similar way: individual courses are free but certificates are to be paid (starting at \$50 depending on the course). The more the certificate is professionalizing, the higher is the price of the course. For those interested in getting the certificate on multiple courses, Coursera offers a subscription (Coursera Plus).

** The higher the price, the higher the number of devices that can access to the same account

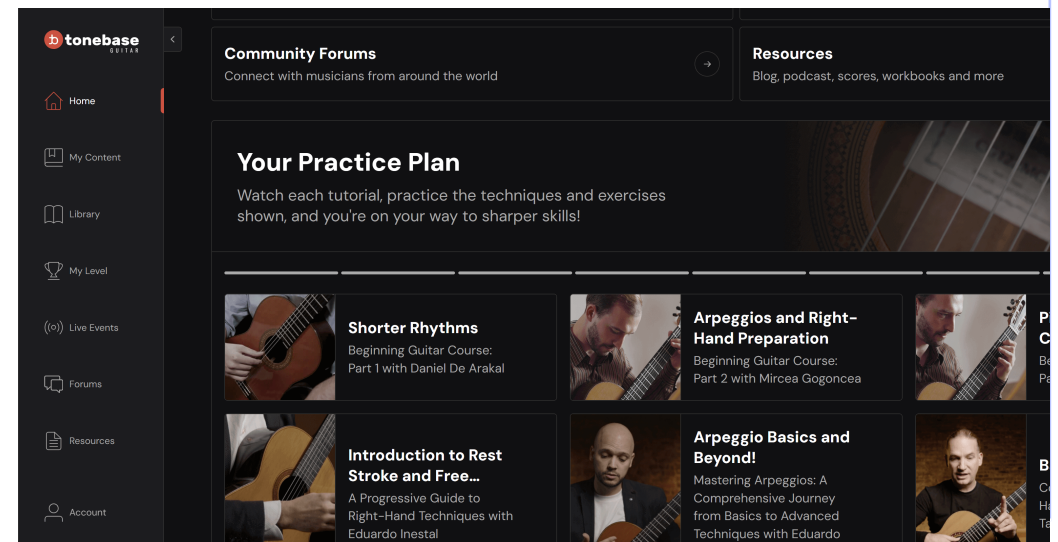
***Teachers on Udemy can choose themselves the price of their courses, or they can subscribe to Udemy Deals and let Udemy define the price. On the other hand, students can choose to enroll in individual courses or pay for a monthly subscription that gives access to a curated selection of courses. The price of the subscription depends on how many people will access it.

Pricing Models – Tonebase



Offer	Type of courses	Model
<p>+500 courses : learn to play piano, violin, cello, and flute</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn a piece: learn how to play a piece according to your level • Build skills and knowledge: from music history to fundamentals, from creativity to interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-recorded lectures • Weekly live workshops
Price model		

- 14-day free trial
- Subscription: \$75/month, billed monthly (currently discounted at \$49.95)
 \$30/month, billed yearly (currently \$24.95)
 \$995 single payment for lifetime access (currently \$695)
- 90 days money-back guarantee



Pricing Models – Art World

	Characteristics	Strengths	Price
Sotheby's Institute of Art	<p>Flexible courses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4,6 or 8 weeks-long • Pre-recorded videos with additional reading material. • Expected time to review content: at least 5 hrs/week. • Possibility of written interaction with faculty and other students. • Access to material for 90 days after the course conclusion. <p>Live courses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 weeks • Live lectures and discussion • Duration: 2hrs (not specified for all courses) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renowned institution • Same faculty of their Masters programs or experts in the area • Prestigious guests • Issues both SIA Certificate of Completion and IACET Continuing Education Units 	<p>Flexible:</p> <p>4 weeks: £1,210 6 weeks: £1,590 8 weeks: £1,950</p> <p>Live: £975</p>
ArtTactic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courses' duration between 1h30m and 2h30m • Pre-recorded lectures • Hands-on approach: downloadable material which the student can experiment with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widely known and respected company for their diverse range of activities (podcasts, talks, etc.) and especially for their relevant and detailed analytics • Give access to some reports for free and future discounts • Issues Certification • Courses led by the company's Founder • High-relevant topics • Only reputable player in the market (which is not an institute/university) 	<p>£100-150 (sometimes they offer discounted bundles)</p>

Models We Found– Business as Subject as Part of a Wider Degree Program

Business Training and Entrepreneurship as a Subject

- Business training is a subject (either mandatory or optional) of the undergraduate or master program.
- No need to commercialize independently so no need to carefully think of financial sustainability or profitability.
- Not a huge investment from the organization.
- The lack of readiness for this type of content among young classical musicians is higher than among other musicians (jazz, pop, trad).
- Always synchronic (live) and designed for being in person, not designed to be taught *online*.
- Examples: Reina Sofía, Juilliard, Manhattan School of Music.



Models We Found– Business as an Independent Program



Business Training and Entrepreneurship as an Independent Program

- There are very few companies either educational organizations or not that offer business training for musicians.
- When launched, the commercialization of it came backed by a deep knowledge of the industry and an engaged pool of potential clients. Musicians are willing to pay for this type of training.
- Expect the first round of investments to run this project to be very high.
- There is no *online* business training for classical musicians (or we haven't been able to find it).
- The online education available for non-classical musicians is both synchronic (live) or asynchronous (prerecorded) and designed to be consumed 100% *online*.
- Examples: Berklee College, Le Dimore del Quartetto

Models We Found – Online Learning Platforms

While there currently isn't a dedicated online library specifically tailored for business and entrepreneurship training in the field of music, certain courses provide students with access to supplementary resources and masterclasses.



Live Masterclass with Dr Mathew Knowles

We were joined by Dr Mathew Knowles, father of Beyoncé and Solange Knowles, for an exclusive Point Blank masterclass on breaking into the music industry.



Working as a Live Production Manager - Joel Stanley

We sat down with Live Production Manager, Joel Stanley, to discuss how COVID-19 has impacted the live music industry, how we can manoeuvre the current situation and how to get started in the music business.



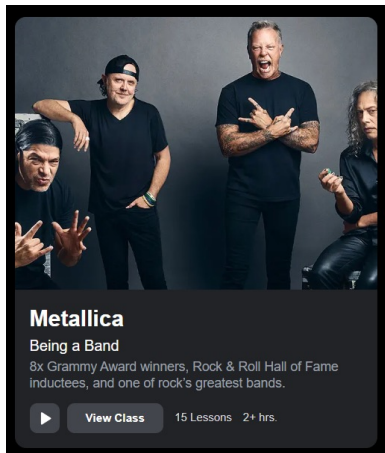
Sander van Doorn Masterclass | Career, Production & Artist Development Tips

For this masterclass, we were joined by the legendary producer and DJ, Sander van Doorn, to talk all things career and music production-focused.



Masterclass: Tips for Creative Inspiration with Matt Berry + Bonus Q&A

For this masterclass, we were joined by non-other than esteemed actor, writer and musician, Matt Berry to discuss creative drive and finding inspiration.



Those who are interested in libraries can find recorded lectures on music business on websites such as Coursera, edX, Udemy and YouTube.

Characteristics of online libraries:

- Platforms that allow organizations (e.g., Coursera, edX) or individuals to upload their content (Udemy). These are also known as MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) providers.
- Depending on the platform, the user pay per program, per course or a subscription (MasterClass).
- Most platforms adopt the program format, selling packages instead of individual classes.
- Platforms can be funded in different ways: through subscriptions, tuitions, sponsors and partners.

Ingredients for Success: **Content**, Format, People

What should you teach?

Juilliard

- It needs to be a combination of hard skills (e.g., how to read a balance sheet) and soft skills (e.g., how to present yourself, how to argue for something)
- Understand who is your target student: musicians who have been in the business for longer might need more in-depth information than newly graduates. The course must help directly with the next step in their careers

Juilliard



- Make sure your course is up-to-date and detailed around certain topics. Find a way to get your students and alumni reactions to the syllabus



Berklee

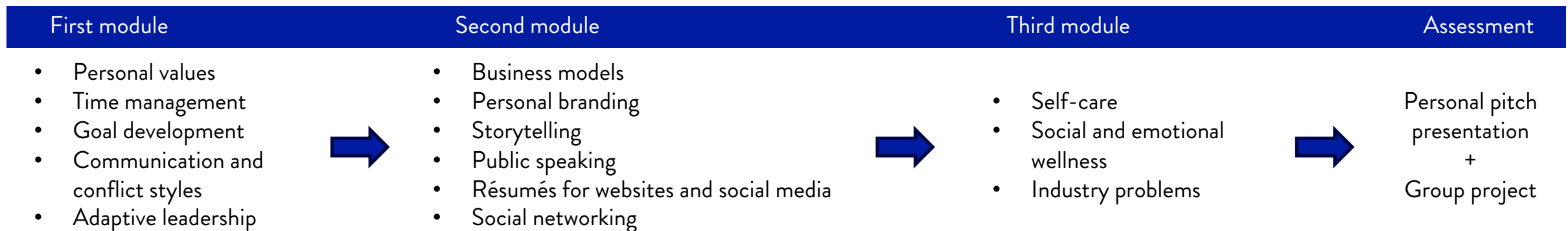
- Be adaptable: if the course is not successful, consider modifying it

Example of Course Curriculum – Juilliard

Course: A Career in Music (one semester, optional)

Goal: for the curious and ambitious musician who wants to develop the foundations for a well-rounded and fulfilling career in the music industry.

Structure: Three modules taught by the head of the course and guest lecturers.



Example of Course Curriculum – Reina Sofía School of Music

Course: Entrepreneurship and Social Innovation (two semesters, mandatory during the second year)

Goal: inspiring students to create their own opportunities in the music industry; connecting them with the social realities of the field, and developing crucial social skills.

Structure: Three strands around Motivation and Transformation, Theoretical Knowledge, and Learning by Doing.

Motivation and Transformation	Theoretical Knowledge	Learning by Doing
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Team creation: how to work in teams, learn from each other	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Basic financial knowledge• Project management• Working and collaborating with others• Communication and marketing• Impact measurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hands-on funded project

Ingredients for Success: Content, **Format**, People

How should you teach?

Juilliard



- Use experiential learning: stimulate participation and offer “try by doing” opportunities

Juilliard

- Acknowledge that every student learns in different ways: combine frontal teaching with various types of content (Youtube videos, podcasts, exercises, etc.)



- Live lectures are to be preferred over pre-recorded material. Make the participant engage and learn from each other’s experience
- If teaching via live lectures, identify the best moments to teach according to the usual schedule of a performer

Ingredients for Success: Content, Format, **People**

Who should teach?

Juilliard



- Invite guest lecturers for specific topics
- Professional musicians – even if they have not followed a career in performing – are the right people

According to Cornelia Watkins and Laurie Scott in their book "From the Stage to the Studio: How Fine Musicians Become Great Teachers" (2022), letting students connect with a variety of professionals helps them understand how their practice fits into the real-world music scene.

Similarly, educators aren't solely performers; engaging in collaborative activities, from structuring courses to contributing to scholarships, enriches their experience and broadens the cultural perspective they bring to teaching.

Marketing and Performance Measurement Are Not Yet Sophisticated for Many Players

Despite the successes, there is still a need in the industry for further development in areas such as marketing and performance monitoring.

Implementing [SEO](#) for a music business online course enhances visibility, attracts a targeted audience, and builds credibility. It provides a competitive edge, valuable market insights, and ensures long-term success by generating organic traffic



Establish [strategic partnerships](#). Collaborating with institutions like universities not only brings in subject matter experts but also expands your reach and ensures a high level of quality.



While the quantity of subscribers is significant, the true measure of your course's quality lies in the number of individuals who successfully [completed](#) it.



Begin with an initial [questionnaire](#) to understand participants' current knowledge and expectations. At the end of the course, follow up to assess their learning progress: participants will recognize their achievements and you will gather important data for future improvements.



[Udemy Business](#) allows its users to access analytics regarding their courses. Data tracked includes: total activity, average activity per user, average activity per active user, and active user base.



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