

ON TOP. SCIENCE MARKETING IDEAS THROUGH MUSIC MARKETING LESSONS

Review of the volume *În top. 7 modele de marketing în muzică* by Andreea Mitan,
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ÎN TOP



FIG.1 Andreea Mitan, *În top. 7 modele de marketing în muzică*. Front cover.

The book *În top. 7 modele de marketing în muzică* (*On top. 7 models of music marketing*), written by Andreea Mitan (2016) is unique both in approaching/style and as a framework of analysing a scientific area poor in information in Romania. Taking into account that one single university is dedicated to issues that fall under umbrella-concept of *music marketing*, i.e. Berklee College of Music from Boston, Massachusetts, the intention of designing and writing a scientific work that approaches the above mentioned concept from the perspective of at least three distinct areas of study: economics / marketing, communication and (ethno)musicology, is really venturesome.

The book of the young researcher Andreea Mitan, teaching assistant at the National University of Political Science and Public Administration in Bucharest, is the result of a complex and long research on *music marketing*, starting from the communication sciences perspective, completed in 2011 with an important dissertation entitled *Muzică, imagine și propagandă în campaniile electorale (Music, image and propaganda during election campaigns)*, coordinated by associate professor Nicolae Frigioiu, PhD, respectively in 2014 with an outstanding doctoral thesis entitled *Popular culture și identitatea tinerilor în era digitală. Preferințe muzicale și profiluri identitare la studenții români (Popular culture and young's identity in the digital era. Musical preferences and identity profiles of Romanian students)*, coordinated by Professor Grigore Georgiu, PhD. The two previous works, accompanied by articles sporadically published in various scientific journals, are the starting point in shaping this book. The author's firm positioning on the marketing area reshapes the scientific design and allows the public / the readers (initiated or not in *music marketing*) to approach the issues of the Romanian music market, characterized by particular relationships between the young *digital natives* and *popular music*, in the context of weakening their identity linkage with music.

This trend remains the fundamental characteristic of a dynamic society where values are fragmented, where marginal and plural tendencies are constantly claimed. Despite the modern general trend of association with belonging groups with definite and well defined identity, the young people tend to prefer a variety of music, without feeling connected in terms of identity with the music they listen to. The young people do not follow the various cultural challenges and do not accommodate with the crossbred genres of *popular music* that are a mix of unstructured stylistic elements with different cultural origins. The author abandons the 'hard' foundation of the relationship between music consumer and his/her music preferences for a 'weak' one (*debole*), and focuses on the study of cultural hybridization, experienced at the level of music consumption. Music is used to maintain cultural identity, to create cohesion and to deepen the ideological division especially within the clusters of immigrants. The awareness of weakening the role of music in identity clotting of *digital natives*, while the music is further understood as a map of mental representations of values is, pointedly, the awareness of dissipation and dispersion of dominant values within a trans-ethnic and trans-linguistic society that is in a severe identity crisis.

The novelty of this book consists of highlighting the characteristics of the environment that allows a weak liaison between young people and music genres. Moreover, the novelty also consists of asserting that no one can speak about patterns of relating the young Romanians to their favourite music genres. For example, subsections II.2 *Repere istorice: popular music în România înainte de '89 (Historical landmarks: popular music in Romania before '89)* and II.3 *Manelele: Orient, marginali, samsarul cultural (The 'manele': East, marginals, and the cultural broker)*, see Mitan (2016:35-59) are excellent, as well. The mass fragmentation, understood as preferences fragmentation, is seen as a weak association with certain patterns (of music preferences, for example), that are fluid, not enough solidified in a society that leads to removal of values specific to the 'hard' historicism.

Given these characteristics of the interaction between the Romanian consumers and the music industry, i.e. those characteristics of the Romanian music market, the author proposes – and here the focus is deliberately moved on *music marketing* area – “7 idei SMART din marketing pentru artiști” (7 SMART marketing ideas for artists), thus justifying the title of the book: “III.1 *Storytelling?* Desigur! Te rog, spune-mi o poveste!; III.2 *I fink U freeky and I like U alot!* Echilibristică pe linia fină dintre geniuși prea mult; III.3 *Umbrella brand*.”

Unde-s muți puterea crește; III.4 Challengeri? Clubul din Balcani și strategia *me-too*; III.5 *Retromarketing. The 90s are back! Și the 80s. Și the 70s*; III.6 *Product placement. Videoclipuri și branduri comerciale*; III.7 Un alt fel de *celebrity endorsement*¹. The exemplification of marketing ideas in the Romanian music market through titles of subsections is not accidental. It is illustrative for the author's style, attractive for a large mass of people. The author 'sells' scientific information in a package with a label of popularization of the scientific knowledge and facilitates, therefore, the access of the middle public to the consistent scientific information. For example, the association under umbrella brands is excellently illustrated by the Romanian saying "Unde-s muți puterea crește" (*Many hands make light work*), reflecting the creation of sub-brands that symbolically take the franchise of the mother-brand on a market with particular nuances, dynamics and scalability:

In some cases, the strategy chosen by those who are behind the artists and provide their "infrastructure" for the conception of the music products, consists in creation of brands for the recording studios, a sub-brand cord tied with the mother-brand being 'allocated' to each artist or band. In some cases we cannot talk even about sub-brands, but about brands with supportive role, that helps in maintaining the credibility and consistency of the studio brand's offer² (Mitan, 2016:100).

Proposing a topic of *music marketing*, Andreea Mitan produces in this paper (probably with an assumed intention) *science marketing*, consequently positioning herself on a science market saturated by the neutral and devoid of attractiveness style, present in many works that disseminate the results of the scientific research.

REFERENCES

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- [2] Mitan, Andreea, *Popular culture și identitatea tinerilor în era digitală. Preferințe muzicale și profiluri identitare la studenții români*. PhD Thesis. Coordinator: prof Grigore Georgiu, PhD. Bucharest: National University of Political Science and Public Administration, 2014;
- [3] Mitan, Andreea, *În top. 7 modele de marketing în muzică*. Galați: Galați University Press, 2016.

¹ „III.1 *Storytelling?* Of course! Please, tell me a story!; III.2 *I fink U freeky and I like U alot!* Balancing on the fine line between genius and *too much*; III.3 *Umbrella brand*. Many hands make light work; III.4 *Challengers?* Balkan club and *me-too* strategy; III.5 *Retromarketing. The 90s are back! The 80s too. The 70s too*; III.6 *Product placement*. Video clips and commercial brands; III.7 *A different kind of celebrity endorsement*”.

² “În unele situații strategia aleasă de cei care sunt în spatele artiștilor și asigură „infrastructura” pentru nașterea produselor muzicale și a brandurilor asociate constă în crearea unor branduri ale studiourilor de înregistrări, fiecărui artist sau fiecărei formații fiindu-i „alocat” câte un subbrand, legat ombilical de brandul mamă. În unele situații nu discutăm nici măcar de sub-branduri, ci despre branduri cu rol de susținere, care ajută la menținerea credibilității ofertei brandului studioului și la consecvență” in original.

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