

## Abstract

This thesis examines the influence of advertising brands on popular music cultures and popular music at the beginning of the 21st Century. The multi-methodological exploration of the research object can be formally described by the term triangulation and is therefore based on the evaluation of a broad spectrum of literature and data extracted from case studies, expert interviews and personal communication with industry experts.

The first part of the dissertation deals with the hypothesis that advertising brands developed into an omnipresent and decisive influencing factor within the contemporary *popular music cultures* of the early 21st Century. Following the discussion of relevant terms from marketing terminology and audio branding typology as well as the analysis of the overall economic significance of brand communications and current trends in brand management, the legal framework for the promotional exploitation of musical content is reviewed. On this basis, the systematic survey of the development of the economic relevance of advertising brands in the music industry since the late 1990s as well as the resilient examination of their significance for music streaming is carried out. Finally, the weight of current brand management trends for authors, performing artists and music industry stakeholders is investigated and the hierarchical positioning of marketing-oriented brands in contemporary popular music cultures is addressed.

The second part of the dissertation reviews the validity of the hypothesis that the impact of advertising brands on popular music cultures has reached a game-changing level implicating a homogenizing effect on the *configurations of popular music*. Starting from the discussion of general present-day development trends of the appearances of popular musical content, the specific and, in their recurring dominance, normative commonalities of the requirements of advertising brands for promotional music are detected, the manifestation of which is decoded in an exemplary manner by means of the case study of a piece of popular music.

The results of the study confirm the validity of both hypotheses: In the early 21st Century, advertising brands developed into a ubiquitous influencing force within the popular music cultures of the present, whose impact has a homogenizing effect on the configurations of popular music.