



**MATT ANNECHARICO**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

29 January, 2018

**Re:** Report on MDXcel pilot with the  
Employability Centre at Middlesex University

During October and November 2017, Dreamscope Media Group Ltd. received 25 applications from students wishing to take part in unpaid internship opportunities through the MDXcel pilot programme. A small amount of marketing had been done in the way attending several modules in the music business course to give brief presentations about the programme and about Dreamscope. The students submitted CVs which were assessed by Dreamscope prior to scheduling interviews. Given that we anticipated a certain level of inexperience, we simply analyzed the CVs for any relevant experience (paid or unpaid) and took notes on the information provided in their cover letters. Prior to the interviews we prepared questions that we asked every applicant in order to gain a better understanding of their level of competency of the music industry, their individual goals and ambition, and any relevant previous experience. Finally, upon completion of the interviews we separated the candidates into “Yes”, “Maybe” and “No” categories. Those that were turned down demonstrated little to no ambition and lacked a sufficient level of comprehension regarding the requirements of the position for which they were applying for. A small number of applicants showed a great deal of ambition, despite having little to no experience, but did not provide a sense for what they were hoping to accomplish through this programme. Immediately successful candidates had heavily researched Dreamscope prior to the interview, had a sense of personal direction, and displayed a great deal of ambition. In the end, we offered positions to 14 students who would work no more than 5 hours per week.

Students were put into teams and given specific roles within those teams. The biggest of these teams was our charity event for Muscular Dystrophy UK but we also had a smaller team of A&R representatives, a group of Executive Understudies who each had ambitions of starting their own businesses, and a small group of individuals interested in IT. Those in the Executive Understudy roles were assigned teams to oversee and to liaise between the group and our Executive Director on any progress but were also trained on understanding employee motivations, problem solving and how to get the most out of their teams. The A&R team received extensive training on how to analyze music, how to approach and speak to artists about their goals and how Dreamscope can help, about maintaining appropriate reporting so that Dreamscope can begin building relationships with artists, etc. The MDUK team worked on a pitch for the Muscular Dystrophy charity for which they traveled to the charity’s office in Southwark to give in person. The charity said that they were, “genuinely so grateful to be the beneficiaries of such an exciting event. Everyone was super impressed by the level of detail that you had gone to”.

As part of the programme, Dreamscope facilitated training opportunities through our partners at the British Phonographic Industry (BPI) and MusicAlly that were free to the students. These trainings were offered on a first come first served basis and covered topics ranging from social media in the music industry, emerging music technologies, and direct to consumer marketing. They were also given the opportunity to attend networking events, escorting our artists to events such as radio interviews, and attend high level meetings with external partners. They were all asked to voluntarily submit feedback on these opportunities on a regular basis. Jade Powell, a second year student from the Music Business and Arts Management degree feedback to us

about her training in direct to consumer marketing that, “overall the experience made me far more interested in marketing than I had been before, and she {the presenter} gave real world tips rather than the standard information found in books or online”. Wilmer Stridsberg, a second year Music Business and Arts Management student, shadowed a meeting with our Executive Director and our UK Department for International Trade representative at their offices in central London. Wilmer said of the experience, “This was truly an exciting experience. One really understood the value of networking, and how one contact could be the start of multiple prosperous relationships”. What we quickly began to notice was that the same students were the ones repeatedly putting their names forward to have these opportunities. To remedy this we made direct offers to students who were otherwise quiet but were turned down or not replied to.

We did run into a few small problems that we feel we need to work together to remedy for the future of the programme. The main issue that we had revolved around not having a dedicated space where the students could work so that this didn't feel like a university project. We attempted to work around this with booking rooms on campus on a daily basis but the room booking team was unreliable and often changed the rooms around causing confusion for the students. Not having a dedicated space made it difficult for the students to find places to work as the communal work spaces offered on campus are often noisy, too small, and/or taken. Further, the students required meetings with the directors and/or their Dreamscope managers on a moment's notice. We utilized the MDXWorks office for much of this spontaneous foot traffic however students expressed frequent frustration that we didn't have somewhere to go on campus. The next problem we ran into, which may or may not be able to be remedied, is due to the nature of the recording industry in that the job activities often change day-to-day and require a great deal of self motivation. We prepared them for this by sending them to training opportunities that demonstrated this and through our own internal training - and most have excelled as a result. However there are 4 students in particular who had seemed to find it difficult. These were mostly the same students who we couldn't entice to attend the events or training opportunities despite attempts to specifically offer them spots. Recently, we have attempted to have one to ones with these students - two replied, booked appointments and then canceled and two never replied. This probably falls in line with a natural attrition level however I did feel compelled to try to help the students to overcome these obstacles. These students have since resigned (only recently). All of them referenced not being able to balance their uni work with the internship so I think this is a big opportunity for MDXworks and MDXcel to tackle.

As of the date of this letter, we have offered permanent opportunities to two students who have gone through this program and the offers have been accepted. We plan to offer two additional permanent roles. We are preparing to offer more opportunities to students through a summer internship programme. It is important to note that Dreamscope is a business born through Middlesex University while our Directors where students and the university is currently sponsoring them under the Tier 1 Graduate Entrepreneur programme run by Dr. Simon Best and the EDH. We are in a unique position to inspire students who are interested in entrepreneurship and to bring a sense of the 'real world' into the learning environment in such a way where it can compliment their studies. We are proud Middlesex graduates and look forward to being a part of future success stories. We truly are being made in Middlesex.