

06-07 Tools CompanionLabs
08-09 Campaigns Björk, X Ambassadors, Mabel
10-15 Behind The Campaign Hot Chip

BROUGHT TO YOU COURTESY OF

FUGA



sandbox

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



MUSIC MARKETING FOR THE DIGITAL ERA

music:)ally

SEPTEMBER 18 2019
ISSUE 236

POWER PLAYS ▶

THE NEXT STEP FOR PLAYLISTS



BEHIND THE CAMPAIGN **HOT CHIP**



A Bath Full Of Ecstasy is Hot Chip's seventh album and was released in June – their first new album since *Why Make Sense?* in 2015. **COREY ZALOOM** (senior manager, digital marketing) and **BROOKE SALISBURY** (head of marketing) of Domino Recording Company explain how they set up the album by getting their catalogue streaming in order after the label acquired three of their previous albums from EMI/Parlophone, where live was used to reawaken interest in the band, how the video for 'Hungry Child' reached far beyond their core audience and why both Instagram and TikTok were key new platforms in the band's marketing arsenal.



Getting the band's catalogue streaming in order before the new album

BS: This is only our third album with the band [after 2012's *In Our Heads* and 2015's *Why Make Sense?*]. They have made seven albums altogether but we haven't worked with them for their entire career. We were lucky enough to take them on a couple of records ago.

Domino acquired the band's EMI/Parlophone catalogue in early 2018 [covering three albums between 2006 and 2010] and that was a key part of the set up for this campaign. At that point we were preparing for this new album campaign and so, finally, we had everything in-house. That's when we really started to get underway with our preparations for the new album campaign.

CZ: We had a few goals going into the album in spring 2019 and one was to reactivate their catalogue. Some of that included re-uploading high-definition versions of their videos and getting streaming to a stronger place.

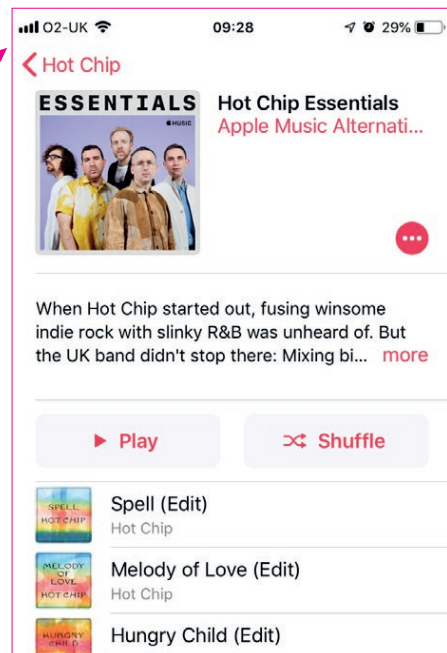
The band have a substantial social following, but given the amount of time between releases, the fanbase really needed to be reactivated. So much can

change in three or four years, so things like Instagram were a new priority for the band. We were looking at how to integrate things like Instagram Stories as well as how we shifted our content and asset strategy around these rapidly changing trends on social media in a way that fits the brand, voice and style [of the band].

We started off by setting up some key

catalogue playlists for the band as well as curated playlists that the band could update regularly and that we could share on socials to help grow Spotify followers. We also did a merchandise giveaway leading into the end of the year. That was attached to a Spotify follow and an email list sign-up. It was about getting those core followers set up for that.

BS: We really were very invested in reactivating the catalogue but we also knew that the stronger the following that we can accrue around the This Is Hot Chip playlist on Spotify and the Hot Chip **Essentials** playlist on Apple Music the more it was going to benefit us when we moved into the new campaign cycle. Having that engaged audience ready to speak to with new music in partnership with the DSPs [was key].



This Is Hot Chip had been an algorithmic playlist on Spotify. It wasn't curated or managed by the Spotify team. We really wanted to work with Spotify on the playlist as the key catalogue property and destination for the campaign. In order to do that and to get Spotify to start curating the playlist and working on it with us actively, we had a six-month period of digital focus around growing the follower accounts and driving streams per user within the playlist.

We were really working hard on that before we got into campaign mode. We were then able to show Spotify the incredible growth within the playlist and ask them at that point to start curating it and really focusing on the list with us within the album campaign. That was successful and Spotify ended up curating the playlist.

Throughout the album campaign, we've seen incredible results with [playlist

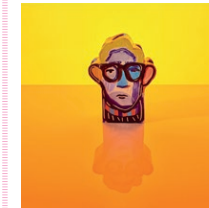
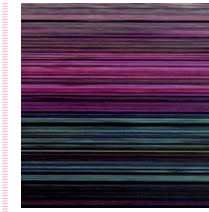
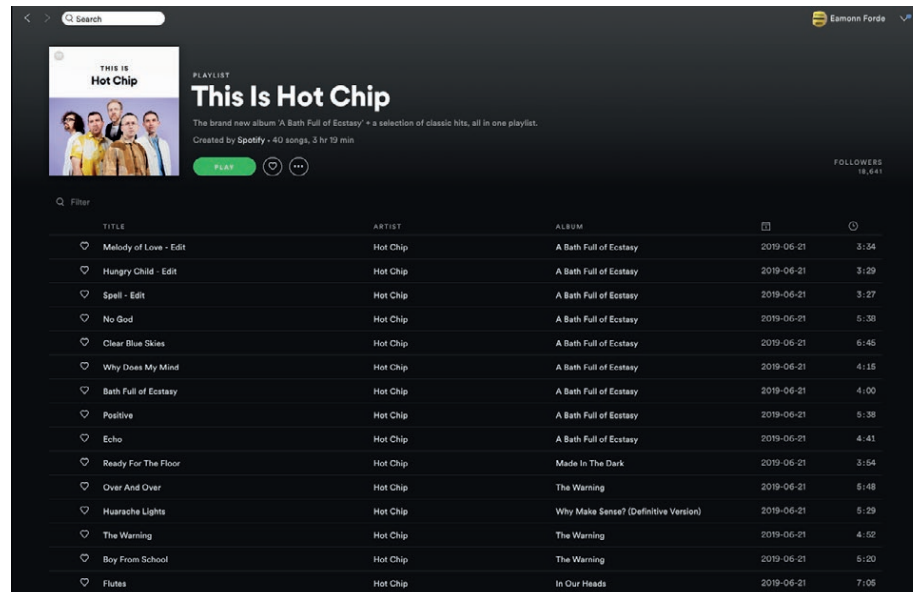
follows]. We started in November last year when This Is Hot Chip had 5,000 followers in total. After moving through the following drive and Spotify on-boarding the playlist as a curated list, we're now at 18.62k followers.

The whole exercise in terms of driving This Is Hot Chip on Spotify and Hot Chip Essentials on Apple Music has been incredible. Those two playlists are now the band's number one stream generators on both Spotify and Apple Music.

We've come into the campaign with the catalogue completely reactivated globally and two playlist properties that are actually yielding really incredible stream results week-on-week for the band.

Keeping abreast of evolving marketing techniques and working with a new team

BS: It was four years between albums for the band. Domino works with [band



members] Joe Goddard and Alexis Taylor on their **solo projects** as well. So during that time we were working closely with Joe and Alexis on their own album campaigns. That meant the band members stayed very well versed in what it takes to put together a modern campaign.

When we approached the new Hot Chip record, the guys were completely au fait with how people were engaging and consuming music these days – which was really helpful from our side. As a band, they are incredibly creative and they bring a lot to the table. They're very connected in terms of the collaborators that they want to work with.

For this campaign, the band had just taken on brand new management. They'd started working with Verdigris Management who also do Superorganism [another Domino signing]. For us at Domino, we had a band who are incredibly engaged with a lot of great ideas and a brand new management company who always bring a lot to our campaigns. We were really coming into it from a strong position in terms of where the band was at and the team around them.

Underplays helping to set things up and teasing the album artwork

CZ: The band announced a short run of underplays a month before the album announcement. We offered a pre-sale access code with an email signup.

As it was a month before album announcement, we already had artwork ready and knew what things were starting to look like. So we were able to incorporate some of the new elements, like new fonts and new textures, as a gradual rebranding process. We were starting to trickle some

of that into our marketing.

The album cover is very colourful. We did everything in black and white to start so that when we were ready to move into the album announcement there would be a big explosion of colour. There was also a new video that we were teasing out and we had a substantial email list coming from the tour announcement to share with everybody.

Getting everything in place for the album announcement

BS: When we came to do the album announcement, we had done six months of digital housekeeping. The Spotify followers were in a great place. The band had announced and sold out a global headline tour. They also had just played the **6 Music Festival** where they previewed a few of the new songs live and these filmed performances from the festival were flying around the internet.

People were talking and we could really see that the engagement was high.

That was a perfect jumping off moment to announce the new record and to finally put a new track out there [at the start of April].

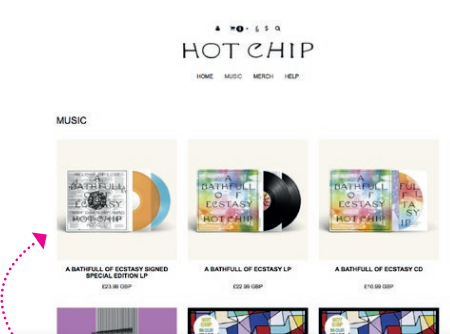
We'd been doing a lot of teasing before that point. People knew there was new music coming and they'd had a taste of the artwork.

One thing that we learned along the way with Hot Chip is that their fanbase doesn't necessarily need a high degree of complicated teasing.

We knew that this process of re-engaging the fanbase had been an elongated exercise and so we didn't want to draw it out too much.

We came straight out of the gates after the 6 Music Festival and announced the album. We dropped 'Hungry Child', the first single with a really great narrative-driven video that we knew would really excite the fanbase.

Touring is always key for Hot Chip, so we put on sale a massive world tour and bundled the album with tickets, which ended up producing an incredible



result. With the album/ticket bundle and signed **D2C** combination, we were able to produce our best ever pre-order results for Hot Chip, both in the UK and in the US.

We came out of that week of the album announcement knowing that the setup period for the campaign and all the hard work of re-engaging and building the fanbase had really paid off.

Moving things up a level with the 'Hungry Child' video

BS: Jonny Bradshaw, the band's product manager at Domino, knew that the first video for Hot Chip had to be incredible. Music videos are such a core part of the band's legacy and such a contributor to their visual identity. Director Saman Kesh

brought in Martin Starr from Silicon Valley and Freaks & Geeks along with Milana Vayntrub to appear in the video. It knocked all of us out – and the band too.

With **'Hungry Child'**, we knew that there was this great opportunity to place the band very squarely in front of a generation of fans who would have probably never had contact with Hot Chip before.

Combined with having this great video, we also knew that this was a chance to really introduce ourselves to this brand new strata of fans. This was a big target demographic for the campaign based on the album that the band had made.

From that point, we really focused on digital marketing and social marketing that would put the video in front of people who were not in the traditional Hot Chip fanbase.

CZ: We used the 'Hungry Child' video for the bulk of our digital advertising. One of the great things about that was that, because it's a narrative video, we were able to have more narrative-style advertising. We had these comedic bits that I think people were more likely to pause on and actually watch. There were subtitles so they could engage with it even with the audio off in their feeds.

The recognisability of the actors obviously helped and there will be people who watched it because they recognised the guy from Silicon Valley. They were making that recognition when they saw this just popping up in their feed and so they were more likely to engage and want to find out you know who Hot Chip are, or they remembered them and wanted to see what they are doing now.





It was just a little more attention-grabbing and a little more engaging than your standard advertising.

BS: One of the best performing creatives of the entire campaign was actually using a screen grab from the music video where one of the characters says, "Ugh – I hate house music!"



CZ: There's a lot of dialogue in the video and that was the most engaged-with and most commented-on part of the video.

Touring leading into the album release

CZ: We had about 10 weeks of lead in. The album came out on 21st June. We did have a few other things come through before that – a video for 'Melody Of Love' and we also had some remixes of 'Hungry Child' in that time period.

We did do a few things to continue sustaining our growth on the Spotify and Apple playlists. We did a signed album

giveaway tied into a pre-save. Pre-saving and pre-adding was a core focus on a lot of our messaging.

BS: Once we announced the record, the band had also begun their underplay tour. It started in the UK around the announcement and ran for a month from announcement onwards. They went all through Europe and the US. We were using that underplay tour to engage fans at a local level.

For every market that they went to, we were doing digital marketing and social

marketing to really complement the live activity.

We were using the band's socials to engage with fans who'd been at the shows to get them to share content that they had been sharing from their own channels. We wanted to make sure that for each show the band played, even if it was only to 1,000 people, we were having an impact with however many fans they had in that particular market who were there and were ready to be engaged with.

CZ: The fans were so enthusiastic about getting to see the band in these small venues and they were really aggressive about sharing on socials. We were getting this really great content in from fans, The band were also able to share that, letting everybody see what Hot Chip in 2019 looks like live.

BS: Throughout that time, we also continued running advertising on Spotify's free tier. We kept our focus on catalogue and we continued to bring in more casual or lapsed fans, using catalogue as the hook.

We knew that with everyone we could bring into the This Is Hot Chip playlist based on someone loving [earlier hits] 'Ready For The Floor' or 'Over & Over', we had that opportunity to put the brand new singles in front of them and to bring them into the fold on the new campaign. We set that agenda right through the album campaign and into launch.

Social media in general and Instagram in particular as a key focus

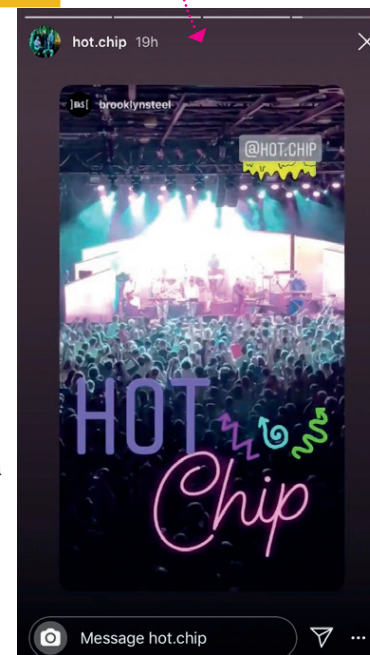
CZ: It was definitely about striking a balance. We wanted to look at one-third direct marketing content so we had a new video and there were tour dates and pre-orders for the album; another third was indirect but pre-planned and scheduled content, including things like updates to the band-curated playlist, sharing snippets from the road or re-sharing fan content; and the final third was organic and fun content.

The band have really fun videos that are smart and witty. It was about getting that to translate into sharing candid photos or fun videos. Around Valentine's Day, we shared a video of AI [Doyle from the band] playing 'What The World Needs Now Is Love'. It was keeping people engaged and making sure they were connecting with the band as people and as personalities.

Instagram Stories was a really great way to do that because it's quick and casual. They're gone in 24 hours, so if something isn't the most brilliant piece of content in the history of social media, then it disappears.

BS: Instagram definitely ended up being the biggest growth platform for the campaign. At this point we're almost close to doubling the follower count that we started with.

CZ: We saw an 80% increase on Instagram alone. Age-wise, the demographic breakdown is pretty evenly split now between the 18-24 segment and the 25-34 segments. That is really exciting for a band that is on their seventh album – seeing



how certain platforms, and a platform like Instagram especially, can really help open up new fans and new audiences.

Testing TikTok

BS: We did make the band's catalogue available on **TikTok** for this campaign. The independent sector's music is currently in the process of being licensed to TikTok. We worked with Merlin to make the singles and the key catalogue tracks available on the platform.

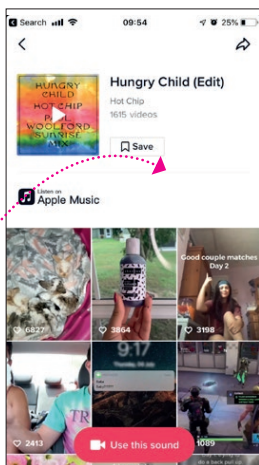
The band were playing festivals like Glastonbury and we had major promo moments we knew would be placing the band into the mainstream – so we wanted to make sure their music was available on TikTok around those points.

Capitalising on Facebook and Twitter

CZ: Facebook and Twitter were both really active. The band have a massive Facebook following of over half a million people and over 130,000 Twitter followers as well. Facebook was a big part of our advertising.

Twitter ended up being a really strong way for the band to engage with fans. Hot Chip fans are on there and tweeting about the band – and they've got a lot of really great things to say. In the same way that we were sharing fans' visual content on Instagram, the band were really retweeting a lot of fan tweets.

BS: With Facebook, our biggest objective was really just engaging the audience that was there. In those four years that have



passed between albums, not a lot of had gone on on the band's Facebook page.

At Domino we have a lot of fan insights and you can actually see higher engagement on a page that has 20,000 followers than on a page that has millions of followers, sometimes based on the way that the artist is using the page.

With Hot Chip, we really just wanted to work with that half a million people who were there to get engagement on the page beyond where it had been.

When we started focusing on this last year, most of the posts on the band's Facebook page were probably in the region of 100 likes.

Just looking at where we're at now, we're probably at a point where most posts will be getting around 500 likes. We've been able to raise the general level of engagement on the page through consistency and more attention to detail around the way that we are speaking to fans.

Bringing in an outside creative agency

BS: For the album release period, we had a lot of discussion with the band's management around the way that we would advertise the record on release. Management had a contact at London creative agency Big DB.

They asked if it would be interesting if we looked at making advertising creative for the record that didn't necessarily lean



on music videos but that was actually unique and gave the viewer something to engage with or think about that they hadn't ever come into contact with before.

We started chatting with Big DB and this was the first music job that they'd taken on. They really specialise in working with big brands, telcos and companies that sit outside of the music space.

To have their perspective on how they could market a record from Hot Chip – this band that has this great mainstream awareness and a very playful aesthetic – was a really nice addition to the campaign. Big DB worked with us to brainstorm a campaign that we called **What's In The Tub?** based around the album title.

We worked with Big DB to shoot an advertising campaign for the records that was focused on the idea of what your perception of ecstasy might be. We did a shoot on one day in London in a studio where we had a handful of different actors get into different bathtubs full of unusual and unexpected things.

There was a bathtub full of watermelons, a bathtub full of chips, a bathtub full of disco balls and a bathtub full of synthesisers and different bits of

musical equipment. We filmed all of those and we worked with Big DB to edit four separate advertising creatives that we could use during release week.

They had the goal of presenting people with advertising content they'd not seen before so that, when they encountered it, they would be compelled to take a bit more time to sit with the creative and sit with the album message.

Maintaining the album campaign after release

CZ: We've had numerous remixes to carry us through the post-release summer period. We've also continued with the strategy of sharing fan content.

We also participated in the Spotify storyline initiative. For select tracks on the album, you were able to scroll through and see some extra visuals and commentary from the band talking about how they wrote or recorded the tracks.

They were sharing little bits and pieces about what each song is about. We included some not-yet-seen images and some of those included stills from a video that hadn't been released yet. That has been an ongoing piece of engagement within Spotify that fans can scroll through as they listen to the album. :)

WANT TO FEATURE IN BEHIND THE CAMPAIGN?

Marketing people: do you have a campaign you are working on that you would like to see featured in Behind The Campaign in a future edition of **sandbox**? If so, send a brief synopsis of it to Eamonn Forde for consideration and your work (and your words) could appear here.

Email: eamonn.forde@me.com



Published by **music:)ally**.

music:)ally helps companies **market music better**, and helps create more sustainable careers for everyone in the music industry. We accomplish this by researching and publishing news and the latest trends on digital change, startups and strategy, by **training companies** in what we know, and by **running campaigns** to learn as much as we can and drive excellence in our industry forward.

We also produce events to facilitate international discussion, planning and networking around digital change and digital strategy.

Clients include: Spotify, Red Bull, Universal Music Group, Sony Music Group, Warner Music Group, Beggars Group, Facebook, Amazon, Google, Domino Recording Co, AEI, Anjuna, Songtrust, Blue Raincoat Music, Chrysalis Records, The Orchard, the MMF, the BPI, Berklee College of Music, BIMM and more.

SUBSCRIBE

To subscribe to **music:)ally**, begin a corporate deal or add subscribers to an existing corporate subscription, please contact Anthony Churchman on anthony@musically.com

To learn more about our training, learning and development, and innovation workshops, again please contact Anthony Churchman on anthony@musically.com.

For digital marketing and campaign-level services, please contact Patrick Ross at patrick@musically.com

If you have a digital campaign related story for **sandbox**, please contact Eamonn Forde on eamonn.forde@me.com

TRAINING

music:)ally trains labels, agencies and management companies across over 30 countries. Training is available as:

- In-house workshops and innovation sessions
- Material creation for corporate L&D programs
- Team-level / department-level best practice structuring
- Internet-based learning options also available

MARKETING SERVICES

- Digital health check
- Audience development, remarketing and CRM setup
- Ad campaign audit / optimization
- YouTube assessment / optimization
- Facebook assessment / optimization
- Digital marketing plan creation
- Digital media buying
- Creative campaign planning
- Full-service digital campaign implementation

CONTACT music:)ally

Boat: Holly, Holborn Studios
49-50 Eagle Wharf Rd
London N1 7ED

www.MusicAlly.com

mail@MusicAlly.com

Registered company number:
04525243

VAT number: 858212321

© Music Ally Ltd. For the purposes of personal, private use the subscriber may print this publication or move it to a storage medium; however, this publication is intended for subscribers only and as such may not be redistributed without permission.

Subscribers agree to terms and conditions set up on the **music:)ally** website, except where a separate contract takes precedence. **music:)ally** has taken all reasonable endeavours to ensure the validity of all items reported within this document.

We do not assume, and hereby disclaim, any liability for loss or damage caused by errors or omissions. In particular the content is not intended to be relied upon in making (or refraining from making) investments or other decisions. We cannot be held responsible for the contents of any linked sites.