

HEARTBEATS TREND REPORT

NEUS MÈLICH is a coordinator at the Business Development Service of the Ministry of Culture of Catalonia, developing a strategic, wide and active creative industries policy. They support actors from the audiovisual, theatre, music, publishing and visual arts industries in Catalonia. Neus is also member of Heartbeats Movement and a sommelier, her professional goal being to pair her two great passions; wine and culture. Read about her insights in regards to music and marketing trends in Barcelona.



Neus, first of all how do Spanish people consume music?

Mostly, people consume music through subscription models, live streaming, digital cloud services, Spotify (free version) and similar streaming services. They consume more digital than physical music. However, this doesn't mean they buy more digital than physical music...



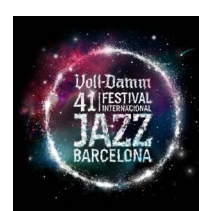
Do you see any specific trends in regards to music?

Recently buying vinyl has become a big trend among the new 'hipsters' in Barcelona, at the same time they consume music from the cloud. Young people are getting more open and curious. Lately it has become easier to categorise people according to the different neighborhoods they go to. In regards to party and night life, the neighbourhoods El Raval and El Gòtic stand out. You can find Indie, alternative, new tendencies, with famous clubs and small bars as MOOG (link to <http://www.masimas.com/en/moog>) near the **Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona (CCCB)**, which is a public organisation that organizes and produces exhibitions, debates, festivals and concerts. The CCCB also programs film cycles, courses and lectures, and encourages creativity using new technologies and languages.

Barcelona is a city that is known for hosting some grand music festivals. Can you tell us more about them?

Definitely, in Barcelona there's two major international music festivals; San Miguel Primavera Sound Festival and Sónar Estrella Damm Festival. Both with their main sponsors included in their festival names; the beers San Miguel and Estrella Damm.

San Miguel Primavera Sound Festival is a festival with rock and pop artists, 'and it opens' the musical season in Barcelona in May while **Sónar** takes place in June and consists of Sónar by Day and Sónar by Night. Sónar by Day programs simultaneous and uninterrupted concerts and DJs at the CCCB. Sónar by Night has a distinctive nature, an enormous cosmopolitan celebration with a Mediterranean feeling, giving it a unique festive atmosphere. Primavera Sound as well as Sónar have both introduced a PRO(fessional) area in addition to the festivities of the last two years, containing conferences, showcases and networking events for international professionals working with music, marketing, TV, radio and new technologies.



In Barcelona there is also a minor alternative but very successful and trendy music scene, related to music festivals but focused on smaller and more specific target groups located in villages outside Barcelona. For instance, **Faraday** and **PopArb**, which both manage to show the latest trends in Catalan pop music through their specific line-ups. Both are sponsored by Estrella Damm. Besides them we also have the **Flamenco Festival** in Ciutat Vella and **Voll-Damm International Jazz Festival**, with Voll-Damm, which is a product of Estrella Damm, as their main sponsor.

In regards to marketing, do you see any major trends around you?

Barcelona itself has become a huge brand. From the Olympics Games in 1992, the name 'Barcelona' or 'BCN' has been used by brands in several campaigns, as part of their brand strategies. Cosmo, international, cool, arty... these are some of the city's clichés. Sometimes living in Barcelona makes one think that this is a bit superficial or fake. Beyond these clichés it's worth experimenting with the 'genuine' Barcelona through neighborhoods that are becoming alternative meeting points of the city today, such as Barceloneta, Gracia and Raval to name a few.



Besides that, I'd say that there are more partnerships between beverage brands and music festivals or 'strategic philanthropy'. Renaming a festival with the brand of a drink is becoming quite normal, as seen in the names of the San Miguel Primavera Sound Festival and Sónar Estrella Damm Festival. I often find myself wondering why I can't see any similar effort or investments been done in regards to wine labels? It would be a great opportunity to market wine products and connect them with new generations of potential consumers that aren't used to the traditional wine world.

What about brands connected to specific artists? Is that common, or something you think will evolve?

There's actually a few good examples. For example **The Plan B**, which is a 2.0 philosophy project between Ballantine's and Carlos Jean, one of the most international artists on the Spanish electronic scene. In the words of Carlos himself, The Plan B "is a change of philosophy, a different way of creating, producing and distributing music. It is a multimedia initiative featuring video, music, artists, social networks and above all, a 2.0 philosophy." At www.elplanb.tv, users can add their vocals, lyrics, or instruments they play to the

bases the artist uploads free of charge every month. Further, I'd like to mention the collaboration between Bacardi and some Spanish music groups such as Love of Lesbian that perform in front of a very small audience with the live performance being streamed for selected fans.

Music branding is something that is here to stay and will increase even more in the near future. Brands can gain a lot, such as new audiences, consumers, better or closer perception of the brand. Often with less investment, if you compare it with a traditional analogical marketing campaign.

Besides music branding, which marketing trends are there to stay and why?

Social media marketing - 100% as well as web 2.0 and 3.0. With the information of the Web 2.0, and even 1.0, companies can market directly to an interested audience. But that's only the beginning of a new whole era of marketing. As consumers spend more time out of their homes and less time with traditional media, brands have to use digital outdoor displays, retail solutions, and mobile campaigns to engage consumers as well. Something I refer to as 'Outernet'.

What do you believe is the 'digital' future?

Mobile as a unique 360° or cloud device and applications, which have a big potential with viral marketing. But brands should be aware that the space is becoming more crowded and consumer expectations are rising. Brand managers must therefore ensure that their applications provide real value to the consumer.

I also believe that free digital blogs and magazines will guide what people do more and more, as does weekly free magazine **Le Cool**.

Last, but not least, where's the best place to hang out in Barcelona and why?

Gracia, with its narrow streets and charming squares the neighbourhood offers an enchanting contrast to the touristic routes and wide boulevards that sweep across the rest of the city; keep an eye out for Modernist buildings like Casa Vicens, one of Antoni Gaudi's early works, located at number 24 Carolines Street and discover the young designer clothes around Verdi street, find a seat in Cinema Verdi and enjoy with one of the best cocktails of your life in VELCRO Bar, located at number 10 Vallfogona Street, while you watch a classic movie on the indoor screen or just catch up with local fauna. And for everyone planning to visit Barcelona in August, don't miss the 'Festes de Gràcia, an 8 day non-stop party that Gracia holds. Another option is to just flow and get yourself lost in Barceloneta, which is sailor neighborhood that offers great aperitifs and seafood tapas... and please, avoid Las Ramblas!

For more insight into the fields of music branding and communication strategies, visit www.soundlikebranding.com and www.heartbeatsinternational.com