Cultural Entrepreneurs and Creating Exchange

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Abstract: "Marketing, as it relates to the arts, is not about intimidation or coercion or abandoning an artistic vision. It is not 'hard-selling' or deceptive advertising. It is a sound, effective technology for creating exchanges and influencing behaviour that, when properly applied, must be beneficial to both parties involved in the exchange". The focus of this paper is on how owners/managers of small and medium sized Independent businesses in the music industry ('cultural entrepreneurs') create exchange and influence behaviour when accessing finance for their businesses.

The paper is based on Leadbeater and Oakley's5 description of a 'new' model of work and creative production, derived from cultural entrepreneurs' characteristic 'independence'. With reference to initial findings from a major Government-sponsored research project looking at the extent to which access to finance acts as a barrier to growth for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the Music Industry, the paper identifies some potential difficulties such independence might lead to in creating beneficial exchange. The importance of appropriate partnership and promotion strategies, effective communication skills, and financial self-sufficiency are highlighted in the context of the Industry's uncertain environment. In conclusion, it is argued that the reconciliation of the entrepreneurs' independence on the one hand with the qualities that allow mutually beneficial exchange on the other, is a primary requisite for effective cultural entrepreneurship.