

MARKETING MODEL DEVELOPMENT FOR INDEPENDENT JAZZ ARTISTS IN BANGKOK: A CASE STUDY OF SRI BAND*

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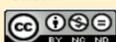
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Abstract

This research aims to: (1) examine current marketing practices of independent jazz artists in Bangkok through the case of Sri Band, (2) identify systemic challenges and barriers facing independent artists, (3) analyze audience behavior and preferences, and (4) develop a sustainable marketing model that balances artistic integrity with business viability. This qualitative case study employed in-depth interviews with 17 participants, including 13 audience members, 3 Sri Band members, and 1 artist relations manager, enabling data triangulation across stakeholder perspectives. Thematic analysis was employed to analyze the data. The research results found that: (1) Three key challenge themes emerged: resource constraints (limited budgets and time), awareness and access barriers (difficulty reaching target audiences), and systemic market constraints (venue limitations and industry infrastructure gaps); (2) Three

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consumer behavior patterns were identified: network-driven discovery (learning about artists through personal connections), support-driven consumption (attending shows to support artists personally), and live experience as core value (prioritizing authentic performance over recorded music); (3) Analysis across the 7Ps marketing mix revealed that independent jazz artists prioritize authentic artistic expression (Product) and community-based engagement while facing limitations in professional service delivery (Process), comprehensive physical and digital presence (Physical Evidence), and dedicated marketing personnel (People).

These findings reveal Bangkok-specific constraints including the necessity for artists to maintain parallel professional careers due to insufficient income from music alone, reliance on interpersonal networks rather than institutional support systems, and the absence of dedicated jazz infrastructure that characterizes Western markets. A three-component sustainable marketing model is proposed: artistic identity as foundation (maintaining authentic creative expression), business viability through community (building loyal supporter networks rather than pursuing mass appeal), and career growth through optimization (strategic resource allocation and platform leverage). This research contributes to jazz music marketing literature in Southeast Asian contexts and provides practical guidelines for independent artists balancing artistic integrity with business sustainability in resource-constrained, niche market environments.

Keywords: independent jazz artists, marketing model, music marketing, audience engagement, Bangkok

Introduction

Despite its historical significance in Thailand since the reign of King Rama IX, himself an accomplished jazz musician and composer, jazz remains a niche genre overshadowed by mainstream pop music in both commercial success and academic attention (Wichitwongwan, 2022). The contemporary Thai jazz scene

has witnessed gradual growth, with increasing numbers of independent artists releasing original compositions and performing across Bangkok's live music venues. However, independent jazz musicians face substantial obstacles in attracting audiences, generating sustainable income, and effectively marketing their work (Suwannabhum & Fyr, 2024).

Thailand's creative economy policies, as outlined in the Creative Economy Development Plan (2017-2021), prioritize mainstream commercial sectors such as film, design, and digital content, with limited specific support mechanisms for niche music genres like jazz (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, 2017). Unlike Western countries where jazz benefits from established institutional infrastructure, including dedicated performance venues, government arts grants, music education programs, and nonprofit arts funding, Thailand's jazz ecosystem operates largely outside formal creative economy support structures. Independent jazz artists in Bangkok therefore face systemic disadvantages: absence of dedicated jazz venues requiring artists to negotiate with multipurpose spaces, lack of genre-specific grant programs forcing reliance on personal resources, and minimal integration into music education curricula limiting audience development pathways. These structural gaps fundamentally shape how independent jazz artists must approach marketing and career sustainability.

This structural context creates a profound value conflict between artistic integrity and commercial survival for Thai jazz musicians. Jazz as an art form emphasizes improvisation, experimentation, and artistic authenticity, values often positioned in tension with mass-market commercial appeal (Lena & Peterson, 2008). In Western contexts, institutional support mechanisms provide buffers that allow artists to maintain artistic purity while achieving financial stability through teaching positions, grants, and subsidized venues (Throsby &

Zednik, 2011). However, Bangkok's independent jazz artists lack these institutional safety nets, forcing them to navigate this value conflict more directly and individually. Musicians must simultaneously maintain their artistic credibility within the jazz community while developing commercially viable strategies to generate income, often requiring them to maintain parallel professional careers in unrelated fields to subsidize their artistic practice. This dual-identity paradox, being both serious artists and pragmatic entrepreneurs—distinguishes the Bangkok jazz context from Western models and necessitates marketing approaches specifically calibrated to resource-constrained, institutionally unsupported creative work.

Independent jazz artists in Bangkok rely heavily on live performances and word-of-mouth promotion, which prove insufficient for building stable audience bases or ensuring long-term career viability (Hracs, 2012). While artists have increasingly adopted digital platforms since the COVID-19 pandemic, their online presence typically focuses on event announcements rather than strategic audience engagement or brand development (Hesmondhalgh, 2021). Many independent jazz artists lack the ability to analyze audience data and apply marketing knowledge systematically within the local context.

International research has explored marketing strategies for jazz musicians in Western contexts, emphasizing audience development through meaningful engagement and community building rather than purely commercial approaches (Kessier, 2011; Brand et al., 2012). However, a significant research gap exists regarding marketing models specifically designed for independent jazz artists in non-Western contexts, particularly Southeast Asia. Thai academic research on jazz has primarily focused on historical development and music education (Wichitwongwan, 2022), with limited attention to marketing practices, audience engagement, or financial sustainability. No existing studies examine how independent jazz artists in Bangkok apply marketing theories in practice or how marketing strategies must be adapted to local cultural, economic, and industry

conditions. This study addresses these gaps by developing a sustainable marketing model specifically designed for independent jazz artists in Bangkok, using Sri Band, and experimental jazz ensemble, as a primary case study.

Objectives

The primary objective of this research is to develop a sustainable marketing model for independent jazz artists in Bangkok through the case study of Sri Band. This is achieved by examining current marketing practices, identifying challenges and barriers, analyzing audience behavior and preferences, and synthesizing these insights into a practical framework.

Literature Review

Marketing Theory for Independent Artists

The Marketing Mix framework, originally proposed by Kotler and Armstrong (2018) as the 4Ps (Product, Price, Place, Promotion) and later expanded by Booms and Bitner (1981) to include People, Process, and Physical Evidence, provides a foundational structure for analyzing marketing strategies. In the context of independent music artists, this framework requires adaptation to reflect the unique characteristics of artistic production and audience engagement (Allen, 2023). For jazz artists, the "product" encompasses not only recorded music but also live performances, artistic identity, and the experience of musical excellence. Unlike mainstream pop artists supported by record labels, independent jazz artists often manage multiple elements of the marketing mix themselves, requiring them to balance artistic creation with business functions (Haynes & Marshall, 2018).

The promotion mix, comprising advertising, sales promotion, personal selling, public relations, direct marketing, and digital marketing, is particularly

crucial for independent artists operating with limited budgets (Albrecht, Green, & Hoffman, 2023). Word-of-mouth (WOM) communication represents one of the most powerful yet least controllable elements. In music contexts, personal recommendations from trusted sources influence discovery, trial, and sustained engagement more than most paid advertising (Dewan & Ramaprasad, 2014). WOM is particularly important for independent artists who lack budgets for mass media campaigns and for niche genres where mainstream media provide limited coverage (Lena & Peterson, 2008). The effectiveness of WOM stems from high source credibility, perceived authenticity, social validation, and identity signaling (Baym, 2018). For independent artists, marketing strategy should focus on empowering existing fans to introduce others rather than attempting to reach all potential audiences directly.

Consumer Behavior and Audience Engagement in Jazz Music

Consumer behavior in creative industries often extends beyond traditional transactional models (Ling et al., 2015). In cultural markets, particularly for independent artists and niche genres, audiences may engage in support-driven consumption where purchasing decisions reflect desires to sustain artistic production rather than primarily to acquire products (Bhattacharjee et al., 2007; Sinclair & Green, 2016). Support-driven consumption represents a form of cultural patronage where audiences view purchases as contributions to artists' sustainability. This behavior is distinct from both purely commercial transactions and traditional patronage, creating "constrained patronage" where audiences optimize cultural impact within their disposable income limitations (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011).

While digital platforms have expanded access to music, research indicates that personal networks and interpersonal recommendation remain critical discovery mechanisms, particularly for niche genres and independent artists (Liebman & Palfrey, 2007; Oestreicher-Singer & Sundararajan, 2012). Word-of-mouth recommendation serves multiple functions: it provides social validation,

reduces perceived risk, and signals shared taste communities (Dewan & Ramaprasad, 2014). For niche music genres, network-driven discovery may be especially important because mainstream media channels provide limited coverage and algorithmic recommendation systems prioritize popular content (Lena & Peterson, 2008).

Platform Economy and Direct-to-Fan Models

The emergence of digital platforms has fundamentally transformed music industry economics and artist-audience relationships, creating what scholars term the "platform economy" (Hesmondhalgh, 2021). Streaming platforms such as Spotify, Apple Music, and YouTube have democratized music distribution, enabling independent artists to reach global audiences without traditional record label intermediaries. However, research reveals that streaming economics heavily favor high-volume mainstream artists, with independent and niche genre musicians earning minimal revenue per stream (Dewan & Ramaprasad, 2014; Bhattacharjee et al., 2007). For independent jazz artists operating in niche markets, streaming platforms function primarily as promotional channels rather than significant revenue sources, necessitating alternative monetization strategies.

Direct-to-fan monetization models have emerged as increasingly vital alternatives for independent artists. Crowdfunding platforms (Kickstarter, Indiegogo) and subscription-based patronage models (Patreon, Bandcamp subscriptions) enable artists to cultivate dedicated supporter communities willing to financially sustain artistic production (Baym, 2018). These platforms facilitate disintermediation—direct relationships between creators and audiences that bypass traditional music industry gatekeepers. Research indicates that successful direct-to-fan strategies require substantial "intimate labor" (Baym, 2018): ongoing communication, behind-the-scenes content sharing, and personalized

engagement that transforms casual listeners into committed patrons. For niche genre artists like jazz musicians, this relationship-intensive approach aligns with existing emphasis on authentic connection and community building but demands significant time investment alongside artistic creation.

Social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter) function simultaneously as promotional tools and direct distribution channels, collapsing traditional distinctions between marketing and content delivery. Musicians must navigate what Oestreicher-Singer and Sundararajan (2012) term "recommendation networks"—algorithmic and social mechanisms that shape music discovery. However, these platforms operate on attention economy principles where visibility requires constant content production and audience engagement, creating labor demands that can overwhelm resource-constrained independent artists (Haynes & Marshall, 2018). The challenge intensifies for niche genres like jazz, where algorithmic recommendation systems favor mainstream popular music, potentially rendering jazz content less visible despite quality or artistic merit.

While the 7Ps marketing mix framework provides useful analytical structure, its application to contemporary independent music presents significant limitations. The framework was developed for tangible product marketing and traditional service industries (Booms & Bitner, 1981), not platform-mediated creative labor operating under attention economy dynamics. "Product" in music contexts is experiential and intangible, resisting straightforward classification. "Place" has become radically decentralized across multiple digital platforms with different affordances and audience demographics. "Promotion" increasingly merges with authentic artistic expression, as audiences expect genuine communication rather than commercial messaging. "Process" must account for algorithmic curation and platform governance structures beyond artists' control. These limitations suggest that while the 7Ps offers a starting framework, understanding independent artist marketing in 2026 requires integration with

platform economy scholarship, fan economy theories, and attention economy analysis. This research therefore employs the 7Ps as an organizing structure while critically examining where traditional marketing frameworks prove insufficient for capturing contemporary independent music realities.

The jazz audience base has evolved in response to changing social and technological contexts. Research emphasizes that effective jazz audience development relies on meaningful engagement, education, and community-building rather than purely commercial approaches (Kessier, 2011). Brand et al. (2012) found that audience attentiveness and venue intimacy significantly influence musicians' performance quality and creative motivation. The relationship between jazz musicians and audiences is conditional, requiring mutual respect for live performances to achieve high artistic quality and meaningful experiences for both parties.

Research Gap

International studies provide insights into jazz audience development, music consumption, and marketing practices but remain largely focused on Western contexts (Kessier, 2011; Brand et al., 2012). Thai studies emphasize historical and educational aspects of jazz music (Wichitwongwan, 2022; Suwannabhum & Fyr, 2024), with limited attention to marketing and sustainability issues. A clear research gap exists regarding the lack of empirical research on marketing models for independent Thai jazz artists in Bangkok. This study addresses this gap by developing a marketing model through a qualitative case study of Sri Band, integrating marketing theory with real-world practice in the Thai jazz context.

Methodology

Case Selection Rationale

Sri Band was selected as the focal case through purposive sampling based on several criteria that make it an information-rich case suitable for theory development (Yin, 2018). First, Sri Band represents a contemporary fusion jazz ensemble that navigates the challenges typical of independent jazz artists in Bangkok: they maintain artistic integrity through original compositions while actively seeking sustainable audience engagement and revenue generation. Second, the band has demonstrated longevity and consistency, having been active since 2017 with regular performance schedules and continuous audience development efforts, providing sufficient operational history to analyze marketing practices over time. Third, Sri Band's stylistic positioning, blending traditional jazz with Thai and international influences, appeals to diverse audience demographics, making them representative of contemporary Bangkok jazz rather than an extreme or atypical case. Fourth, their independent status (operating without major label support or institutional backing) exemplifies the resource constraints and entrepreneurial demands facing most jazz musicians in Thailand. Finally, the band members and management demonstrated willingness to participate openly in research, providing access necessary for in-depth case study investigation. These characteristics position Sri Band as what Stake (1995) terms an "instrumental case", one that facilitates understanding of broader phenomena beyond the specific instance, in this case illuminating marketing challenges and strategies applicable to independent jazz artists operating in similar contexts.

Participant Selection and Sample Composition

The study's participant structure reflects deliberate sampling decisions designed to capture comprehensive perspectives while maintaining feasibility for in-depth qualitative analysis. The four artist/management participants comprise the complete decision-making unit for Sri Band: three core band members who

collectively make artistic and business decisions, plus one artist relations manager who handles booking and promotional coordination. This constitutes a census sample of the band's decision-making structure rather than an insufficient subsample, providing complete coverage of the "back-end management" perspective the reviewer appropriately emphasizes. All key stakeholders involved in marketing strategy formulation and implementation were included, ensuring no critical perspectives were omitted.

The thirteen audience participants were selected through maximum variation sampling (Patton, 2015) to capture diversity across key dimensions: demographic characteristics (age range 28-64, gender balance, varied professional backgrounds), engagement levels (ranging from casual attendees to dedicated followers), discovery pathways (friend recommendations, social media, venue browsing), and attendance frequency (occasional vs. regular). This sampling strategy prioritizes depth of understanding across audience segments over statistical representativeness. Qualitative case study methodology emphasizes data saturation—the point where additional participants yield diminishing new insights—rather than predetermined sample sizes (Guest et al., 2006). The 13 audience interviews achieved saturation for the major themes identified in this research, with later interviews confirming patterns established in earlier conversations rather than introducing fundamentally new concepts.

The 4:13 artist-to-audience ratio reflects the realities of organizational structure (bands have fewer members than audiences) and appropriately weights perspectives: artist participants provided in-depth, lengthy interviews averaging 90 minutes each, yielding rich data on marketing strategy, challenges, and decision-making processes, while audience participants provided focused 45-60 minute interviews on consumption patterns and preferences. When assessed by total interview time and transcript volume rather than participant count, the data

corpus provides balanced representation of both supply-side (artist) and demand-side (audience) perspectives necessary for comprehensive marketing analysis.

This study employed a qualitative research design with a case study approach focusing on Sri Band, an independent Thai jazz group based in Bangkok. Data triangulation was achieved through three participant groups examining the same phenomena from different perspectives. Key informants were selected through purposive sampling and included: (1) Three core members of Sri Band directly involved in performance, composition, branding, and event management; (2) One artist relations manager with experience in performance coordination and communication with music organizers; (3) Thirteen audience members who actively follow Sri Band through online platforms and live performances. This multi-perspective approach enabled cross-validation of findings regarding marketing practices, challenges, and audience engagement patterns.

Table 1: Fan/audience participants details

NO.	NAME (PSEUDONYM)	AGE	GENDER	OCCUPATION	ATTENDANCE FREQUENCY	CHANNEL OF ENGAGEMENT
1	Chattapit	28	M	Musician	Seldom	YouTube
2	Marwin	38	M	Creative, Producer	Once or twice a month	YouTube, Spotify, Live Performance
3	Mike	29	M	Musician	Often	Live Performance, Instagram, Facebook
4	Dang	64	F	Administrator	Rarely	YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube
5	Korn	30	M	Musician/Bar Owner	Once or three times a month	Spotify
6	Jasper	31	M	Business Owner	Often	YouTube, YouTube Music
7	Matoom	31	F	Freelance Artist/Graphic Designer	Once a month	Instagram, Live Performance
8	Guide	38	M	Business Owner	Often	Spotify, Instagram
9	Seree	30	M	Musician	Twice a month	YouTube, Instagram, Live Performance
10	Dew	31	F	English Educator	Seldom	Instagram, Live Performance
11	Natalie	32	F	Line Producer	Once or twice a month	Spotify, Facebook, Instagram, Live Performance
12	Mook	29	F	Musician	Once or twice a month	Live Performance
13	Andy	44	M	Physician Doctor/Bar Owner	Once or twice a month	Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, Spotify, Live Performance

Table 2: Sri Members and artist participants details

NO	NAME (PSEUDONYM)	AGE	GENDER	ROLE IN BAND	MARKETING CONTRIBUTION	MUSICAL EDUCATION BACKGROUND
1	Vetit	27	M	Saxophonist	Idea and decision	Bachelor's degree in jazz study
2	Tae	35	M	Bassist	Idea	Master's degree in jazz study
3	Tanakrit	29	M	Pianist	Idea	Master's degree in jazz study
4	Jee	24	F	A r t i s t Relations	Organize and promote	Bachelor's degree in music business study

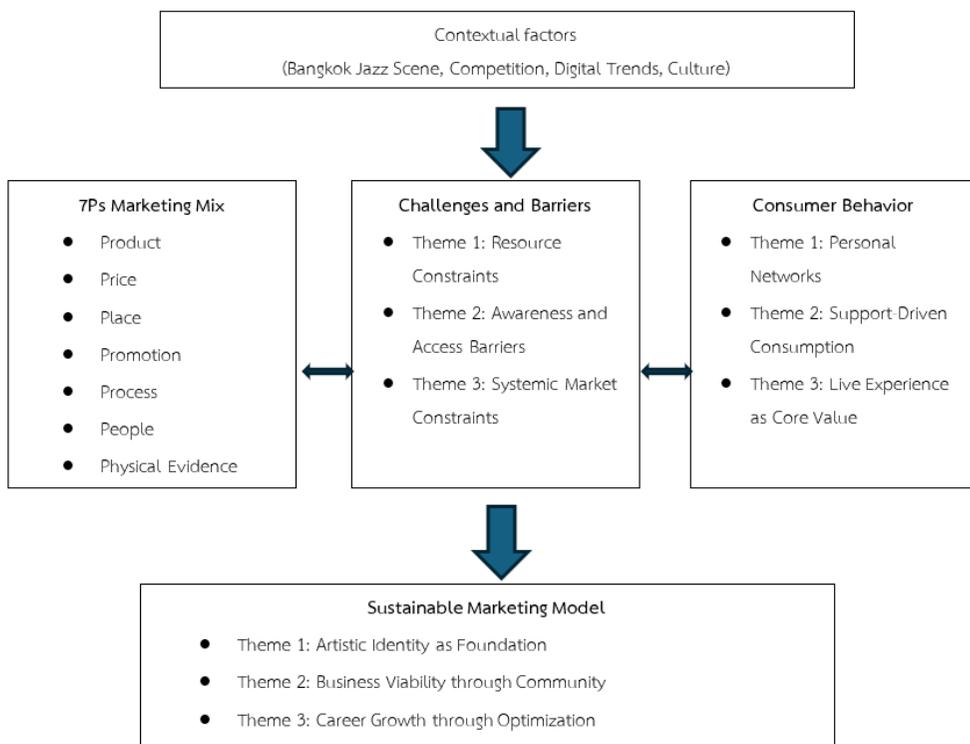
According to table 1 and 2, the first participant group comprised 13 audience members (7 males, 6 females; ages 28-64 years, $M = 34.3$) representing various professional backgrounds. The majority ($n=9$) attended events at least once or twice per month. The second group consisted of four band members and artist relations personnel (3 males, 1 female; ages 24-35 years, $M = 28.8$), all possessing formal music education.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews conducted face-to-face or online, following a semi-structured interview guide lasting approximately 45-90 minutes. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim to capture participants' lived experiences and perspectives. Thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase approach was employed: (1) familiarizing with data through repeated reading of transcripts, (2) generating initial codes, (3) searching for themes, (4) reviewing themes, (5) defining and naming themes, and (6) producing the report. This process enabled thick description of audience engagement patterns, marketing practices, challenges, and opportunities within Bangkok's independent jazz scene, allowing for deep understanding of participants' meanings and experiences.

Results

The findings follow the analytical framework presented in Figure 1, generated through thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) of three data sources: 7Ps Marketing Mix, challenges and barriers, and consumer behavior patterns. Emergent themes from each source were synthesized to develop the integrated marketing model, directly addressing the research objective of examining current practices, identifying challenges, analyzing audience behavior, and creating a sustainable marketing model balancing artistic integrity with business viability.

Figure 1: Analytical Framework for Sustainable Marketing Model Development Through Thematic Analysis



The 7Ps framework reveals Sri Band's current marketing approach across seven dimensions. For *product*, Sri Band's Band stands out as an experimental

jazz band with a contemporary fusion jazz sound blending electronic elements, dream pop, and shoegaze creates unique differentiation: "Dream pop/shoegaze with more jazz influence... The dreamy feeling presented in the songs is something I don't hear from other jazz artists" (Jasper). Live performances consistently exceed recordings: "The freshness of the performance and the sound goes beyond recorded audio" (Marwin). However, jazz remains perceived as "difficult" or "high-class" music among general audiences. For **price**, the band prioritizes artistic expression over profit, with members maintaining stable day jobs: "Sri Band operates without profit. We focus on making the music the best it can be" (Tanakrit). Audiences demonstrate strong merchandise interest motivated by support: "I want to support them. I want artists with this musical identity to exist forever" (Seree). For **place**, audiences access music through multiple platforms (Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, Spotify, Apple Music), but low performance frequency creates accessibility barriers: "Sri hasn't performed in a very long time" (Tanakrit). For **promotion**, Facebook and Instagram are most effective channels, with strong word-of-mouth networks: "A friend who plays guitar introduced me" (Chattapit); "Introduced by friend" (Korn). However, limited budgets restrict reach: "Lack of budget to boost posts" (Vetit). For **people**, marketing responsibilities lack clear distribution; time management severely constrains activities: "We don't have time to meet. It's challenging because everyone has to balance their own work, so we don't have consistent output" (Vetit). For **process**, band-to-audience communication during performances is minimal: "There's still a lack of communication with the audience, especially from the vocalist" (Vetit). Audiences listen in diverse contexts: "On the road, at work, during meals" (Natalie). For **physical evidence**, visual elements influence perception: "It has an effect because it shows the music style or the band's identity" (Chattapit), though consistency is needed: "Need to keep the image memorable" (Vetit).

Three Constraints in Challenges and Barriers

Thematic analysis revealed three interconnected constraint categories fundamentally limiting marketing effectiveness and growth potential. First, **resource constraints (time, budget, infrastructure)**, the band faces severe limitations across three key areas that directly impact marketing execution. Financial constraints prevent paid advertising and content boosting: "Lack of budget to boost posts" (Vetit). Time availability emerges as the most critical barrier, as all members maintain stable day jobs: "We don't have time to meet. It's challenging because everyone has to balance their own work, so we don't have consistent output. Time and budget have an effect" (Vetit). Marketing infrastructure remains underdeveloped with unclear role distribution. These resource limitations create a cascade effect—insufficient time prevents content creation, lack of budget restricts promotional reach, and absent infrastructure means no systematic approach to marketing activities. The artist relations manager confirmed: "Jazz is not mainstream music, so media space is quite limited and independent band promotional budgets are not very high" (Jee).

Second, **awareness and access barriers**, limited brand awareness stems from both practical and perceptual barriers. Practically, low performance frequency creates visibility gaps: "Sri hasn't performed in a very long time" (Tanakrit). Audiences explicitly requested: "The performance needs to be seen frequently to create awareness" (Dew). Perceptually, jazz faces significant accessibility barriers as the genre is perceived as "difficult" or "high-class" music: "Jazz is perceived as difficult because Thai art education lacks cultivation of complex artistic appreciation" (Guide). Communication barriers exist even during performances: "There's still a lack of communication with the audience, especially from the vocalist who is the front man" (Vetit). These dual barriers—limited visibility and genre perception—create a challenging environment where

potential audiences struggle both to discover the band and to access the music meaningfully.

Third, *systemic market constraints (competition, platform limitations, institutional support)*, the band operates within structural disadvantages beyond their control. Competition in Bangkok's independent music scene is intense, with numerous bands competing for limited venue slots, audience attention, and media coverage. Platform constraints manifest in limited mainstream media coverage for non-mainstream jazz, algorithmic disadvantages for independent artists without paid promotion budgets, and challenges maintaining presence across multiple platforms with minimal resources. Systemic institutional barriers create fundamental sustainability challenges: "The Thai government doesn't seriously support music, making it unsustainable in the long term" (Tanakrit). These market-level constraints are interconnected—intense competition increases the need for promotional budgets (which the band lacks), while lack of institutional support means independent artists must compete in purely commercial terms without safety nets or development infrastructure.

Three Emergent Consumer Behavior Themes

Thematic analysis revealed three critical patterns explaining how audiences discover, engage with, and support Sri Band, providing essential insights into effective marketing approaches for independent artists. First, *personal networks as primary discovery channel*, word-of-mouth through personal networks drives discovery far more effectively than formal marketing channels. Multiple participants confirmed being introduced through friends: "A friend who plays guitar introduced me" (Chattapit); "Introduced by friend" (Korn). Network-driven discovery extends to active sharing behavior, with some discovering the band through community contexts like swing dance gatherings. The critical paradox emerged: while Facebook and Instagram are recognized as highly effective—"Instagram and Facebook work well because they reach interested audiences directly and help artists and listeners feel close" (Jee)—these channels

remain severely underutilized due to resource constraints. Band members acknowledged: "We haven't had consistent output. Everyone is busy" (Vetit). This creates a missed opportunity where the infrastructure exists and audiences are willing to engage and share, but inconsistent presence prevents leveraging network effects. The theme reveals that sustainable marketing must amplify existing network effects through consistent social media presence rather than relying solely on paid advertising.

Second, *support-driven rather than transaction-driven consumption*, a fundamental shift from traditional consumer behavior emerged: audiences purchase merchandise and attend concerts not because they need products but to sustain artistic work and participate in meaningful community. Purchase motivations explicitly articulate support over utility: "I would buy because I want to support good bands" (Mike); "I want artists with this musical identity to exist forever" (Seree). This support-driven motivation extends to regular attendance and strengthens through personal relationships with artists. This pattern aligns perfectly with the band's artistic philosophy: "We focus on making the music the best it can be" (Tanakrit). The artist relations manager confirmed this approach's viability: "What's important is having a clear identity, continuous communication with listeners, revenue from multiple channels, and building a community that supports artists in the long term" (Jee). This theme reveals that sustainable marketing must frame engagement as community stewardship where both artists and audiences share values of artistic integrity over commercial conformity.

Third, *live ephemeral experience as irreplaceable core value*, live performance quality and improvisation's ephemeral nature constitute the irreplaceable value proposition that recordings cannot capture. Audiences consistently emphasized specific qualities unique to live experiences: "As a listener, you never know what will happen in each performance" (Matoom); "The

freshness of the performance and the sound goes beyond recorded audio" (Marwin); "They are extremely strong as a live band, especially considering the musical complexity" (Natalie). Venue atmosphere significantly enhances this experience. This creates fundamental tension in the marketing model: the primary marketing channels (digital/social media) cannot deliver the core value (ephemeral live experience). Marketing happens online, but value is delivered offline. Compounding this tension, the band faces severe constraints in delivering this core value: "Sri hasn't performed in a very long time" (Tanakrit). Yet audiences explicitly request more frequent performances: "Perform more frequently" (Marwin); "I want to see more content and live performance from Sri" (Mook). This theme reveals that sustainable marketing must optimize limited performance opportunities for maximum impact, use digital channels primarily to build anticipation and drive attendance, and develop content strategies that capture live spontaneity essence between performances.

Three Proposed Sustainable Marketing Model

Synthesizing the 7Ps analysis, three challenge themes, and three consumer behavior themes, thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's (2006) framework revealed three interdependent themes constituting a sustainable marketing model for independent jazz artists—the primary finding addressing the research objective.

First, *the artistic identity as foundation*, artistic authenticity emerged as the non-negotiable foundation enabling community-based support. Audiences explicitly valued maintaining distinctive identity over commercial conformity: "Be real. Be you" (Natalie); "I want each band and each artist to maintain their own identity" (Matoom). Band members aligned with this philosophy: "We focus on making the music the best it can be" (Tanakrit). This theme reveals that artistic integrity is not merely aesthetic preference but strategic positioning—it creates the credibility necessary for support-driven rather than transaction-driven

markets. Marketing initiatives must enhance rather than compromise this authenticity.

Second, *business viability through community rather than transactions*, community-based sustainability through loyal supporter cultivation emerged as more viable than mass market scaling. Audiences articulated support motivations beyond product acquisition: "I would buy because I want to support good bands" (Mike); "I want artists with this musical identity to exist forever" (Seree). The artist relations manager confirmed: "What's important is revenue from multiple channels and building a community that supports artists in the long term" (Jee). This theme reveals that business viability requires creating visible pathways for supporters to contribute financially while feeling like community participants. Multiple revenue streams (merchandise, patron programs, performances) must maintain community intimacy rather than transactional distance.

Third, *career growth through optimization not scaling*, sustainable career growth requires optimizing limited resources rather than pursuing traditional expansion. Time constraints emerged as the critical barrier: "We don't have time to meet. It's challenging because everyone has to balance their own work, so we don't have consistent output. Time and budget have an effect" (Vetit). This theme reveals that growth must be redefined: improving content efficiency, developing passive revenue streams (streaming, licensing), building systems for maintaining presence with minimal time investment, and strategically leveraging few performances for maximum impact. Sustainability comes from quality over quantity—working within constraints rather than eliminating them.

Model Dynamics and Feedback Mechanisms

The proposed sustainable marketing model operates through iterative feedback loops rather than linear progression, with each component reinforcing

and enabling the others. The model's functional dynamics demonstrate how artistic identity practically fuels business viability through three interconnected mechanisms.

First, artistic identity serves as the foundation that enables authentic community engagement. When artists maintain genuine creative expression and resist compromising artistic vision for commercial appeal, they attract audiences who value authenticity over mainstream popularity. As one participant explained: "When artists stay true to their sound, that's when I want to support them" (Vetit). This authenticity creates the basis for meaningful artist-audience relationships that transcend transactional exchanges. The feedback loop operates as follows: Authentic artistic expression → Attracts values-aligned audiences → Enables deeper engagement → Reinforces artist commitment to authenticity.

Second, community engagement generates business viability through support-driven consumption rather than mass-market appeal. Audiences who connect with artists' authentic expression become active supporters willing to attend multiple shows, purchase merchandise, participate in crowdfunding, and evangelize within their networks. This creates sustainable revenue streams: "I buy their merchandise not because I need another t-shirt, but because I want them to keep making music" (Panida). The community becomes an economic asset: Authentic artistic identity → Cultivates committed community → Generates multiple revenue streams → Provides financial stability → Enables continued artistic production. Critically, this revenue sufficiency allows artists to maintain their authentic creative direction rather than pivoting toward commercial compromise, thus completing the reinforcing cycle.

Third, career growth through optimization enhances both artistic capacity and community reach without sacrificing authenticity. Strategic resource allocation—investing time in high-impact promotional activities, leveraging platform analytics to understand audience preferences, optimizing performance

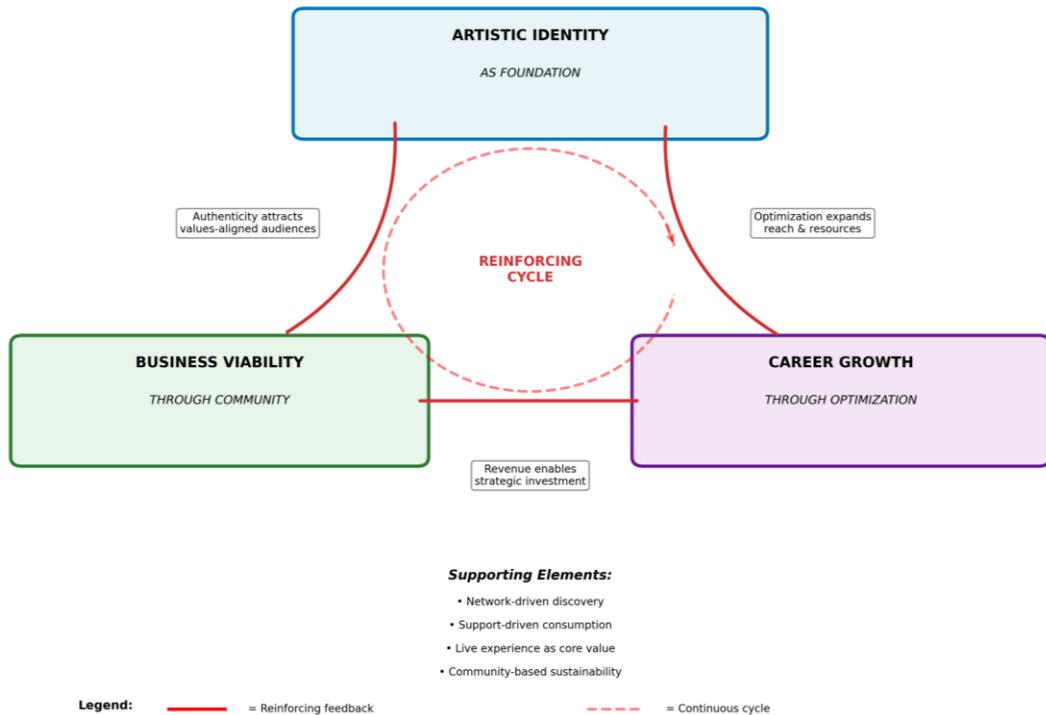
scheduling for maximum attendance—increases efficiency and effectiveness. This optimization expands community size and engagement depth: Optimized marketing → Reaches more potential community members → Increases revenue and sustainability → Provides resources for better production quality → Enhances artistic output → Attracts additional community members. Importantly, optimization focuses on doing existing activities more effectively rather than fundamentally changing artistic direction.

These three components create a virtuous cycle: artistic identity attracts community, community enables business viability, business viability supports artistic production and strategic growth, and strategic growth expands community while preserving authenticity. The model's resilience derives from multiple interdependencies—if one component weakens temporarily (e.g., fewer performance opportunities during a pandemic), the others provide support (e.g., loyal community maintains engagement through online content, merchandise purchases sustain income). This systemic interdependence distinguishes the model from linear approaches that treat marketing as a one-directional process from artist to audience. Instead, the model recognizes that sustainable independent artist careers emerge from dynamic ecosystems where authentic artistic expression, committed communities, and strategic business practices mutually reinforce one another across time. Figure 2 visualizes these dynamic relationships and feedback mechanisms, illustrating how the three model components create a reinforcing cycle that enables sustainable independent artist careers.

Figure 2: Sustainable Marketing Model with Dynamic Feedback Loops

Sustainable Marketing Model for Independent Jazz Artists

Dynamic Feedback Loop Framework



Note: The model demonstrates three interconnected components operating through reinforcing feedback loops. Solid arrows indicate directional relationships showing how each component enables and strengthens the others. The central dashed circle represents the continuous cyclical nature of the model, where artistic identity attracts values-aligned audiences, community support generates business viability, and optimized strategies expand reach while preserving authenticity. This dynamic system creates resilience through multiple interdependencies.

These three themes form an integrated model where artistic identity attracts loyal communities, community loyalty generates sustainable revenue,

and optimized growth preserves both artistic integrity and member wellbeing. This model addresses the research objective by providing an empirically-grounded framework balancing artistic authenticity with financial viability specifically designed for independent artists operating under resource constraints in Bangkok's competitive jazz scene.

Discussion

The findings reveal that independent jazz artists in Bangkok face unique challenges requiring marketing approaches fundamentally different from mainstream pop music. While Sri Band possesses strong artistic identity and loyal audience support, resource constraints and time limitations prevent capitalizing on these strengths to achieve business sustainability and career growth. This section interprets the three emergent marketing model themes and discusses their theoretical and practical implications. Sri Band's distinctive modern fusion jazz sound creates unique differentiation in Bangkok's crowded music market. This authenticity resonates deeply with audiences who explicitly value maintaining individual artistic identity over commercial conformity. The band's commitment to artistic excellence over profit creates credibility and trust, attracting audiences who want to support work that prioritizes integrity. This artistic priority is strategic positioning—it makes the band worthy of support in a support-driven market (Bhattacharjee et al., 2007; Sinclair & Green, 2016). This finding extends existing theory on cultural patronage by demonstrating how artistic authenticity functions as strategic differentiation in niche markets rather than merely aesthetic preference. Marketing initiatives must enhance rather than compromise this authenticity, as revenue generation should come from audiences who value the art as-is, not from diluting it for broader appeal.

Business viability depends not on maximizing sales volume but on cultivating loyal audiences willing to provide consistent support over time. The findings reveal strong merchandise purchase intent motivated by desire to sustain the band rather than product need, confirming support-driven consumption patterns documented in Western contexts (Sinclair & Green, 2016) and extending this understanding to Southeast Asian independent music scenes. This support-driven model requires different metrics than traditional business: depth of loyalty matters more than breadth of reach (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011). The challenge is creating multiple revenue streams—concert tickets, merchandise (CDs, vinyl, apparel), streaming revenue, private events, music licensing, and patron/membership programs—while maintaining community intimacy. The strategic principle is to create visible pathways for loyal supporters to contribute financially while feeling like community participants rather than consumers (Baym, 2018). This finding contributes to understanding constrained patronage in cultural markets, where audiences optimize cultural impact within their disposable income limitations.

Sustainable career growth requires optimizing limited resources rather than pursuing traditional expansion. All band members maintain stable day jobs that provide financial security but severely limit time for rehearsals, content creation, and performances—a common challenge for independent musicians (Throsby & Zednik, 2011; Coulson, 2012). This creates a paradox: the band needs to grow to achieve sustainability, but lacks time resources to execute growth strategies. Career growth must be redefined to mean: (1) increasing performance frequency within available time, (2) improving efficiency in content creation and marketing, (3) developing passive revenue streams (streaming, licensing), (4) building systems that maintain presence with minimal time investment, and (5) strategically leveraging few performances for maximum impact. The strategic principle is to optimize for sustainability over scale through efficient systems (batched content creation, consistent social media schedules) and quality over

quantity, fewer, high-impact performances rather than frequent shows. This finding extends understanding of portfolio careers in creative industries by demonstrating how optimization strategies enable sustainable artistic practice within severe time constraints.

Moreover, an important finding emerged that challenges existing assumptions about jazz's audience in Thailand. Despite jazz being perceived as "old people's music," this study found predominantly young practitioners and audiences (average age 34.6 years for band members; 34.3 years for audiences, range 24-38). All audience participants were highly educated professionals actively engaging with jazz through personal networks, explicitly preferring Sri Band's modern approach: "Other bands feel more old-school, but Sri sounds more modern." This contradicts stereotypical assumptions and Suwannabhum and Fyr's (2024) finding that jazz is culturally marginal in Thailand, revealing instead a vibrant but hidden young jazz community. The barrier is perception—not genuine generational incompatibility. This finding validates that contemporary artistic approaches maintaining authenticity can attract young audiences (Model Theme 1) and that a committed young audience base exists to support independent jazz through community-based models (Model Theme 2). The challenge lies not in audience absence but in overcoming perception barriers that prevent discovery.

Structural Constraints and Policy Implications

The findings illuminate critical structural and policy failures that constrain independent jazz artists in Bangkok, necessitating analysis beyond individual marketing tactics to examine systemic conditions shaping creative work. Bangkok's cultural infrastructure for jazz remains severely underdeveloped compared to cities with established jazz ecosystems. Unlike Western contexts where dedicated jazz venues (Blue Note in New York, Ronnie Scott's in London) provide consistent

performance spaces and audience development infrastructure, Bangkok lacks permanent jazz-specific venues. Artists must negotiate with multipurpose spaces—cafés, bars, hotels—where jazz programming competes with other entertainment forms and venue operators prioritize commercial viability over artistic development. This infrastructure gap forces artists to expend substantial energy on venue relationship management and logistical coordination rather than artistic creation and audience engagement.

Government cultural policy exacerbates these challenges through systematic neglect of niche genres. Thailand's Creative Economy Development Plan (2017-2021) prioritizes mainstream commercial sectors—film, design, digital content—offering grant programs, tax incentives, and promotional support for these industries while providing minimal resources for independent music, particularly non-commercial genres like jazz. In contrast, countries with vibrant jazz scenes provide substantial public funding: France's SPEDIDAM supports jazz musicians through performance grants and social security contributions, Norway's Norsk Jazzforum receives government funding for festival organization and artist development, and the United States maintains National Endowment for the Arts programs specifically targeting jazz preservation and innovation. Bangkok's independent jazz artists operate without these institutional safety nets, relying entirely on personal resources and community support for career sustainability. This policy failure reflects broader cultural hierarchies that privilege mainstream popular culture over artistic experimentation and niche genres, effectively abandoning independent artists to market forces while simultaneously expecting them to contribute to Thailand's creative economy reputation.

These structural conditions create what can be termed the "professional artist paradox": musicians must simultaneously maintain authenticity as serious artists while developing entrepreneurial capabilities typically handled by specialized personnel in commercial music contexts. All three Sri Band members hold full-time professional careers, Tanakrit in software development,

Pongsakorn in graphic design, and Phubet in architecture, not by choice but by structural necessity. Jazz performance alone generates insufficient income for basic living expenses, forcing artists into dual identities: dedicated musicians during evenings and weekends, professionals in unrelated fields during working hours. This arrangement is economically rational but creatively constraining. Artists must develop expertise across domains, musical composition and performance, marketing strategy, social media management, graphic design, financial planning, booking coordination, merchandise logistics, that in commercial music operations are distributed across dedicated roles (artist, manager, publicist, booking agent, social media manager). The expectation that independent artists individually perform all these functions reflects neoliberal assumptions about creative entrepreneurship that ignore resource asymmetries and structural barriers.

This professional artist paradox places unrealistic expectations on individuals who must navigate competing demands of artistic development, professional career advancement, and music business management. The time required for marketing and business activities directly competes with time for musical practice, composition, and artistic growth. As one participant observed: "I want to support them, but I know they're already working full time jobs and still trying to promote their music" (Panida). The exhaustion inherent in dual-career management limits what individual artists can reasonably accomplish, yet policy discourse frames creative career sustainability as an individual responsibility requiring "entrepreneurial mindset" rather than a collective problem requiring institutional support.

These realities necessitate shifting analysis from individual artist strategies to industry ecosystem critique. The proposed marketing model recognizes that sustainable independent music careers cannot emerge from individual

entrepreneurship alone but require collective action, resource sharing, and policy intervention. Recommendations must therefore address multiple levels: operational strategies artists can implement within existing constraints, business ecosystem changes enabling resource pooling and cooperation, and policy reforms creating supportive infrastructure. The current system asks individual artists to compensate through personal effort for structural failures in cultural policy and industry infrastructure—a fundamentally unsustainable approach that privileges those with pre-existing financial resources while marginalizing artists from less privileged backgrounds. Critical engagement with these industry realities reveals that solving independent artist sustainability requires not just better marketing techniques but fundamental restructuring of how creative work is valued, supported, and sustained within Thailand's creative economy.

Theoretical and Practical Contributions

This study makes several important contributions to both theory and practice. Theoretically, it extends the Marketing Mix framework (Booms & Bitner, 1981; Allen, 2023) to independent artists in niche music genres, demonstrating how the 7Ps must be adapted when traditional mass-market assumptions do not apply. The study advances understanding of support-driven consumption in cultural markets (Bhattacharjee et al., 2007; Sinclair & Green, 2016), revealing how audience motivations differ fundamentally between mainstream commercial music and independent artistic production. By identifying three emergent themes through systematic thematic analysis, this research provides empirical evidence for network-driven discovery, patronage-based consumption, and experience economy principles in Southeast Asian independent music contexts, extending theories developed primarily in Western markets.

Practically, the proposed marketing model provides actionable guidance for independent jazz artists facing similar constraints. Unlike models developed for Western markets or mainstream genres (Kessier, 2011; Brand et al., 2012), this framework addresses the specific realities of Southeast Asian independent music

scenes: limited institutional support, niche audiences, resource constraints, and the necessity of balancing artistic careers with day jobs (Hracs, 2012; Haynes & Marshall, 2018). The model's emphasis on community-based sustainability rather than mass market scaling offers a viable path forward for artists who prioritize artistic integrity alongside financial viability. The three-theme structure provides clear, implementable strategies: protecting artistic identity as strategic positioning, leveraging community support for sustainable revenue, and optimizing limited time through efficient systems.

Recommendation

The following recommendations are organized into three levels—Operational (individual artists), Business Ecosystem (venues and industry), and Policy (government and institutions)—acknowledging that sustainable independent music careers require coordinated action across multiple stakeholders rather than individual entrepreneurial effort alone.

Operational Recommendations for Artists

Within existing resource constraints, independent jazz artists can implement several tactical strategies. First, establish consistent content calendars that batch creative work: dedicate specific days monthly for recording social media content, photographs, and video clips that can be scheduled across subsequent weeks, reducing daily time demands while maintaining regular audience engagement. Second, develop tiered patron/membership programs through platforms like Patreon or direct website subscriptions, offering exclusive content (behind-the-scenes videos, early access to new songs, online listening parties) to supporters willing to provide monthly financial backing. This creates predictable revenue streams beyond sporadic performance income. Third, optimize performance scheduling by analyzing which venues, days, and times

generate strongest attendance and revenue, then concentrating efforts on high-return opportunities rather than accepting all booking requests. Fourth, build email lists through performance sign-ups and social media conversions, as email remains the most reliable direct communication channel artists control (unlike algorithm-dependent social platforms). Fifth, create shareable multimedia content from performances—high-quality video clips, memorable quotes, striking photographs—that fans can easily distribute through their networks, leveraging word-of-mouth digitally. Critically, these operational tactics acknowledge that artists operating under dual-career constraints have limited time and energy. Recommendations emphasize efficiency and strategic focus over volume or comprehensiveness. Artists cannot reasonably implement all possible marketing activities; rather, they must select high-impact strategies compatible with their specific resource limitations.

Business Ecosystem Recommendations

Collective action among artists and industry stakeholders offers more realistic pathways to sustainability than isolated individual effort. First, establish cooperative marketing pools where multiple independent jazz bands contribute modest monthly fees (500-1000 baht per band) to fund shared professional services: a part-time social media manager coordinating cross-promotional campaigns, a graphic designer creating consistent visual materials, or a publicist pitching collective story angles to media outlets. This distributes costs that individual bands cannot afford while providing professional-quality marketing output. Second, develop shared booking coordination through informal collectives or formalized agencies representing multiple artists. Collective representation provides venues with reliable artist pipelines while reducing individual bands' administrative burden. Booking cooperatives can also negotiate fairer compensation structures and revenue-sharing arrangements than individual artists typically secure. Third, organize coordinated festival programming where multiple bands perform sequential sets, sharing venue costs, sound equipment

expenses, and promotional efforts while creating more substantial events that attract larger audiences than single-band shows. Fourth, create resource-sharing networks for equipment (sound systems, recording gear, instruments), rehearsal spaces, and transportation, reducing capital investment requirements for each individual band. Fifth, establish informal mentorship and knowledge-exchange systems where more experienced artists share practical business insights with emerging musicians, accelerating learning curves and preventing repeated mistakes.

These ecosystem-level interventions require minimal financial investment while generating substantial collective benefits. They acknowledge that independent artists face common challenges better addressed through cooperation than competition. Most importantly, they create infrastructure support that currently does not exist, filling gaps left by policy neglect without requiring government action.

Policy and Infrastructure Recommendations

Government agencies and cultural institutions should implement multi-level support structures recognizing that vibrant creative economies require public investment in non-commercial art forms. First, establish dedicated grant programs for independent music marketing and content production. Annual grants of 50,000-100,000 baht per artist would fund professional recording, photography, video production, and promotional materials currently beyond most artists' financial reach. Unlike broad creative economy funding prioritizing commercial sectors, these grants should specifically target niche genres demonstrating artistic merit but limited commercial viability. Second, develop subsidized performance venues through partnerships with Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, providing tax incentives or direct subsidies to venues maintaining consistent jazz programming, or creating publicly-managed performance spaces

where artists keep larger revenue percentages than commercial venues typically offer. Third, launch music business training programs tailored to independent artists balancing parallel professional careers. Curriculum should address time-efficient marketing strategies, digital platform optimization, financial planning, copyright management, and contract negotiation—practical skills that conservatory education rarely provides. Programs should offer flexible scheduling (weekend intensives, online modules) compatible with working artists' constraints. Fourth, establish Bangkok Jazz Development Initiative modeled on successful international programs (Norway's Norsk Jazzforum, France's SPEDIDAM): provide organizational infrastructure, festival coordination, international exchange opportunities, and professional development resources that individual artists cannot access independently. Fifth, integrate jazz education into public school curricula and community education programs, developing future audiences while addressing perception barriers that limit current market size. Sixth, create tax incentives for corporations sponsoring independent music artists, encouraging private sector cultural investment beyond government funding.

These policy recommendations require substantial government commitment and financial resources but reflect standard cultural infrastructure support in countries with thriving jazz scenes. Thailand's aspiration to develop its creative economy must extend beyond commercially viable sectors to include artistic forms requiring institutional support for sustainability. The absence of such infrastructure constitutes policy failure that cannot be compensated through individual artist entrepreneurship, however skillful.

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, as a single case study of Sri Band, findings may not generalize to all independent jazz artists in Bangkok or Southeast Asia. Second, the cross-sectional design captures perspectives at one point in time, unable to track long-term sustainability outcomes. Third, the sample comprised primarily highly educated young professionals (average age

34.3), potentially underrepresenting older or more diverse jazz audiences. Fourth, data collection occurred during an extended performance hiatus, which may have influenced perspectives on marketing effectiveness. Finally, while triangulation across band members, artist relations, and audiences enhanced credibility, the study did not include venue owners, policymakers, or other artists' perspectives. Despite these limitations, the study provides valuable empirical evidence for marketing models designed for independent artists in niche genres operating under resource constraints.

Future studies should test the proposed marketing model across multiple independent jazz artists in Bangkok to validate its generalizability beyond the single case study. Longitudinal research tracking artists who implement this model would provide valuable insights into long-term sustainability outcomes and identify which specific strategies prove most effective over time. Comparative studies examining independent music marketing across different Southeast Asian countries could identify regional patterns and cultural factors that may require model adaptations. Quantitative research measuring the effectiveness of specific marketing tactics (such as patron programs, content frequency, or performance optimization strategies) would complement this qualitative foundation. Finally, research exploring audience development strategies specifically targeting younger generations could help expand jazz's listener base while maintaining artistic integrity, addressing the genre accessibility challenges identified in this study.

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