

A renewed focus on community through exclusive content and livestreaming

 By [Tecla Ciolfi](#)

7 Jan 2021

I'm not one to blow my own trumpet - well, not too much anyway - but all of the #BizTrends that I made last year came to fruition. A focus on independent artists, the rise of TikTok, the continued domination of streaming services - all featured prominently in shaping the global music scene.



#BizTrends2020: From the rise of independent artists to the age of TikTok

Tecla Ciolfi 13 Jan 2020



Of course, there was no way I could have predicted the absolute abomination that was 2020, however, as the music industry continues to feel the devastating impact that Covid-19 has had on it, we waded into 2021 the same way we would uncharted waters – slowly and with caution.



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Allow me to re-introduce myself, my name is livestreaming

What's that you might ask? Well, allow me to explain. Ah, I kid, I kid. After global lockdowns kept us inside for the better part of 2020, promoters, event organisers and musicians had to find alternative ways to keep their audience engaged while still keeping themselves busy and relevant. Enter the livestream, which, in 2021, isn't going anywhere. In fact, expect it to get a super expensive facelift in the hopes of being used by a growing body of artists as a genuine revenue driver.

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It's bigger than TikTok

When I mentioned the continued rise of TikTok in 2020, I had no idea just how intense things were going to blow up for the app. As lockdowns forced a record amount of people online and the interest in the app quadrupled overnight, TikTok broke artists, manifested chart-topping hits ("Death Bed, Coffee For Your Head") and spawned dance crazes (#JerusalemChallenge, #TootsieSlide) the world over. And as Covid-19 continues to pose a threat to countries around the world, expect TikTok to enjoy an extended run of success in 2021.



The rise of Gen Z

Regardless of how you feel about them, Generation Z is without a doubt the most tech-savvy generation yet. They've grown up with apps integrated into their everyday lives, in fact, the majority of their socialising and social identities are tied up with their social media profiles. Is that healthy? That's for their psychiatrist to decide. But what this means is that they're dictating the market, the charts, what's hot and what's not (see aforementioned TikTok dance crazes) and their consumer habits will no doubt shape the music industry moving forward.



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Micro-communities emerge

Imagine a small audience of dedicated fans who consider it an almost duty to support their scene. That's a micro-community and South Africa is full of them. Cape Town's psych scene, Johannesburg's SoPunk (Soweto Punk) scene, Gauteng's heavy metal scene – you may not see them on TV, hear them on the radio or even turn a page on them in

whatever glossy mags are still left in this country, but their micro-communities are thriving and continue to drive their demand both on and off stage.



Exclusive content, members only

So this relies heavily on the strength of the micro-community, but the rise in subscription-based models that provide an artist's audience with exclusive content is a legitimate way for musicians to generate revenue. Platforms like Patreon helps artists earn a monthly income by providing rewards and perks to their subscribers. DJ, producer and double bassist Shane Cooper spoke extensively about his experience with Patreon [when I interviewed him recently on *Texx Talks*.](#)

ABOUT TECLA CIOLFI

Tecla Ciolfi is founder and manager of music news website Texx and the City has been a part of the music industry in South Africa for the last 10 years in various capacities, namely journalism, radio presenting, event curation and artist management.

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