

MUSIC, ADVERTISING, & GOOD

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

Rothco together with Warner music and Apple explores what happens when the advertising and music industries work for the greater good – through the lens of “Saylists”.

INTRO LOGO GRAPHICS.

SFX: Audience Applause and Cheers.

GLENN: Good evening, and welcome to Hard Talk with Glenn.

Taking on hard topics...
...with hard talk.

Tonight is a tale of two industries, music and advertising. Two perhaps, very different industries. We want to know what is it about music and ads that are similar? What have they got in common? And we're going to explore this by talking a little bit about something called Saylists.

Never heard of them? No problem, we've got someone here who is going to explain it for us.

Let's give it up for our first guest - managing director of Accenture Interactive Ireland, Zara Flynn!

SFX: Applause

GLENN: Zara, welcome to Cannes.

ZARA: Thanks

GLENN: So tell us a little bit about this project, Saylists.

ZARA: Well Glen, Saylists is a project with Warner Music UK designed to use popular music to make practicing problem sounds for people with speech impediments a little less boring.

GLENN: That's good. So boredom is the enemy here?

ZARA: Yeah, I mean if you go to speech therapy to overcome a speech sound disorder, you'll know that repetition is vital. You have to keep practising that problem sound over and over and over.

GLENN: Which is boring.

ZARA: Yeah and particularly if you have to use some of the material that's like, you know, 'Someone's sister said a silly sentence super sadly' – it's kid's things. It's exercises.

GLENN: And no one likes exercising. Don't tell my cardiologist I said that!

SFX: Laughter

ZARA: Exactly. So we wanted to create a world where repetition is vital but also a world where repetition can be fun.

GLENN: Music.

ZARA: Music, right.

GLENN: Let's have a look.



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GLENN: graphics: The burger bearer roared
The burger bearer roared

I have trouble with pronouncing those words.

The burger bearer roared around the rarer
wearer

ZARA: So we created an algorithm that analysed
popular music for particular sounds in a
particular pattern that would aid speech therapy.
And what we did is we curated and ranked those
songs, that created Saylists. Saylists are
essentially playlists that you can sing along to
that will help you with your speech.

GLENN: That's fascinating. And they're popular
songs?

ZARA: Yeah absolutely there's Dua Lipa, Lizzo,
Beyonce, Bowie.

GLENN: Phil Collins?

ZARA: I'm not sure about Phil Collins actually.

GLENN: So it's a real meeting between the
music world and the advertising world. Would
you say they're very different industries?

ZARA: Yes and no. There's always been
advertising in music but there's certainly always
been music in the world of advertising.

GLENN: Phil Collins.

ZARA: Yes! Phil Collins and Cadbury's Gorilla.

GLENN: I don't think I know that one. But you're
both in the same market really, isn't that right?
You're performing the same task?

ZARA: Yeah, absolutely. Essentially it's
communication. Artists are all about connecting
with people, and that's what we do too.
Musicians, they empathise. They get people,
and they speak to them in a way that shows that
they understand.

So, great artists have a connection with their
audiences. I think great ads do that, too. You
have to understand who you're talking to before
you can say anything that's going to resonate.

GLENN: Have you ever thrown a TV from a hotel
window?

ZARA: No.

GLENN: Maybe later. Communication is
definitely a similarity, I agree. Musicians have
big audiences, but advertisers do, too, isn't that
right?

ZARA: Yeah, there's a tremendous reach in the
advertising world. I think even more so today,
because there's so many more ways of
connecting with people, through new media, new
formats and new platforms.

TITLE: HARD TALK!

GLENN: We're back and we're speaking to Rob
Maguire, Creative Director at Rothco part of
Accenture Interactive, Rob would you say you're
a bad person?

ROB: No... not consciously.

GLENN: Did you consciously set out to do good
with Saylists, and if so, why don't you do that
with every other opportunity you get to speak on
a world stage?

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ROB: We definitely set out to do something good with this project. It's an interesting position to be in, to have access this kind of data and to have the tools to do something about it.

GLENN: Where does 'good' fit in with the advertising industry?

ROB: Well it's not its primary remit which is obviously to "sell the thing". But it's on the agenda. If you take a look at the kind of work that's awarded by the industry itself over the last few years there's a real thread of 'goodness' running throughout it. IKEA ThisAbles, Fearless Girl, they're contributing, they're giving something back.

GLENN: And if we're talking about ad work that's globally awarded, things getting real acclaim, that surely means most ad work is for good?

ROB: No, no. Probably not.

GLENN: Why?

ROB: We still have the "sell the thing" - we're still paid to 'sell the thing', that's what's gives advertising its platform in the first place.

GLENN: And 'good' doesn't sell?

ROB: I wouldn't say that. Nike's support of Colin Kaepernick, that was really good for business.

GLENN: This is the fact that Nike quietly, with no real fuss, continued to financially support Kaepernick during the period where he was out of work due to the 'take a knee' protest.

ROB: Exactly and they later did a campaign together, it was a big success.

GLENN: It got awards.

ROB: It did, it did. And it earned them money.

GLENN: But it's not yet 'the norm'?

ROB: No, it's not yet the norm but we're getting there.

GLENN: Getting there.

ROB: Getting there.

GLENN: Getting there. Yep. Just not quick enough. Ok let's talk about music. Do you like Phil Collins?

ROB: Of course.

GLENN: Where does music sit with 'doing good'?

ROB: Well historically there's a lot of great work been done there. Live Aid is the obvious example, but musicians have a history of sticking their neck out to bring their audiences a message of good. Even if that message isn't necessarily safe or good for business.

Sam Cooke's 'A Change is Gonna Come' helped to power the Civil Rights Movement. Pussy Riot ended up in prison because their music criticised the Russian Government. You've got Nina Simone, Joan Baez, NWA, The Clash. Woody Guthrie made it his business to 'weaponize' the protest song.

GLENN: I have a Woody Guthrie here...

GLENN (reading): 'This Machine Kills Fascists' Strong stuff. And in the advertising industry – you're a machine...?

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ROB: Our machine sells things and other things.
Other good things too.

GLENN: Right, you're getting there.

ROB: Yeah.

GLENN: This photo is from when?

ROB: It's the 1940s.

GLENN: Right.

GLENN: I'm going to move on to another guest!
Please put your hands together for Tony
Harlow, CEO of Warner Music UK!

SFX: APPLAUSE

GLENN: Tony, I hear you are very special and
important, tell me why?

TONY: I don't think I could call myself special or
important. I am quite lucky
however I get to be the

GLENN (over Tony): You can go.

TONY: head of Warner Music UK and as such I
get to fulfill a lifelong dream of working with
talented artists and their creative output and
that's been a wonderful thing. As head of that
organisation I'm able to help with the Saylists
initiative a little bit and that makes us all at
Warner UK feel quite pleased and proud.

GLENN: Tony, what is it about music that artists
have a history of seeing it as more than just 'a
nice soundtrack for your day'?

TONY: I don't think it's about artist intention but
music is a special thing. Music connects us all
and we respond in different ways. It can free us,
it can give us messages, it can give us ways to
behave but music has an ability to communicate
with everybody, that's very special. In the case
of Saylists we hope it helps people overcome
challenges that they face and free themselves to
reveal their real talents in the same way so many
of our artists have revealed their talents.

GLENN: What do you think of Saylists as a tool?
Are you happy that the relationship between
music and speech therapy has been formalised?

TONY: I can't speak to that because Saylists,
you know this the result of experts and how
experts think about it. But I hope so. I mean, I
think that if music can empower and help people
overcome disadvantage and make them think
differently about themselves, that would be a
great result for us all. For everyone at Warner
Music and our artists.

GLENN: Do you think music has the power to
change the world?

TONY: Actually I do think music has the power
to change the world. I'm really lucky to have
worked in a business for a long time that is a
business but has so much more cultural
significance.

And of course you know we can all point at really
obvious times when music changed the world
like the Vietnam War, when music carried
messages that were counter-cultural and made
change.

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But I think it changes the world all the time, I think insidiously, music allows new generations to bring new ideas into play and it may take time for those to work through society but they make change all the time at the moment musicians and their music are changing the way people think about all sorts of elements of our community and from that point it's incredibly powerful.

GLENN: Interesting. They say that David Hasselhoff brought down the Berlin Wall. But there's a school of thought that the CIA sped things along by writing 'Wind of Change' for the Scorpions. Though you didn't hear that from me. Particularly if it's the Scorpions asking.

GLENN: Nothing but respect for the Scorpions on this show.

TITLE: HARD TALK!

GLENN: Now finally we're joined by Jen Speirs, Executive Creative Director at Rothco, part of Accenture Interactive Ireland. Jen,

JEN: Yes

GLENN: Do you think advertising can change the world?

JEN: Well I mean why not? I guess. Now I get it, does that seem a little bit arrogant?

GLENN: The ad industry is famously not arrogant.

JEN: Ouch. Look, I mean of course I get that. But the point is, we have a lot going for us. And I think as an industry we do try. Absolutely could we up our hit ratio? For sure.

But there has been plenty of times where advertising has actually really made some significant changes in the world.

From small everyday things to bigger things. You know there was, I think the agency was MullenLowe in Columbia, what they did was to convince over 20,000 FARC rebels to drop their arms and come home. I mean that's massive change, we can make change if we really try.

GLENN: How many of those projects would you say were motivated by awards?

JEN: Look awards... it's such a big conversation for us but for me, work doesn't win an award unless it's had huge impact. So if wanting to win those awards or being motivated by that is what actually motivates change, then look, does it matter? Who cares?

GLENN: Some of advertising's most iconic work has been driven by rivalry. I'm thinking Burger King vs McDonalds, Audi vs BMW, Hertz & Avis. Do you think pettiness could be harnessed?

JEN: Oh I love a bit of pettiness.

Look, I would love to see, I guess, a 'goodness arms race'.

You know, I think people want to see that. We should look to competitor brands and absolutely, viciously, be ruthless about being much better for the world than they are. That's the sort of competition that our industry should double down on and make the most of at every opportunity. I mean, we still have to sell the things. But we have these tools at our disposal and tools that are really good at doing what they were designed to do but actually that have now superseded their original purpose.



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And I think, you know, for us as agencies, for clients, for brands for everyone, that puts us in a really empowering position.

Yes we will sell the things. We do, that's our job. But we can do more.

GLENN: And should you do more?

JEN: Absolutely. When we're this well-placed and well-armed we have to. I think people want that, our clients want that, brands want that. I think the advertisers want that.

GLENN: I wonder if that's what our newly hired strategy department want?

SFX: Mumbles over the ear piece

GLENN: Apparently they just want to unionise.