

BUSINESS WITH THE GRATEFUL DEAD


Est. Time: 75-90 minutes

Subjects: CTE, General Music

Age Range: Middle & High School

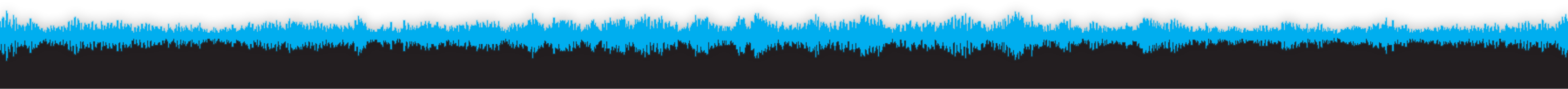
See the full lesson [here!](#)

★ *TEACHROCK* ★




How did the Grateful Dead's business practices create a dedicated fan culture and ensure the financial success of the group?

In this lesson you will:

- Learn how the Grateful Dead created a successful business model
 - Develop strategies for successful band management
- 



Consider or ask a friend:

- What is a live entertainment event you have experienced? It could be a concert, a sporting event, a play, a fan convention, or a live streamed/televised performance or sports game.
 - What were some things that made the event memorable?
 - How might a live event entail more than just the performance itself?
 - How might a live event have a lasting appeal, and help a band, team or artist receive income well after the original event?
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GRATEFUL DEAD FANS: FAMILY, RITUAL, SPIRITUALITY

Watch [this clip](#) to learn about the Grateful Dead's fanbase



Consider or ask a friend:

- What might incentivize Grateful Dead fans to continually want to attend the band's "next show"?
 - What might make a concert both "reassuringly familiar and excitingly new"?
 - Why might the people in the clip compare a Grateful Dead concert to a religious event?
 - In the clip, John Perry Barlow mentions that the almost religious appeal of a Grateful Dead show wasn't coming from the stage. Where might it be coming from?
- 


The Grateful Dead's counter-cultural zeitgeist combined with a relentless touring and performing schedule created a massive fanbase that ultimately gave birth to an entirely unique American identity: the Deadhead.





Business Strategies

Whether consciously or unconsciously, the Grateful Dead's musical and business decisions help cultivate a large and dedicated fanbase. Read on to learn about some of these practices.



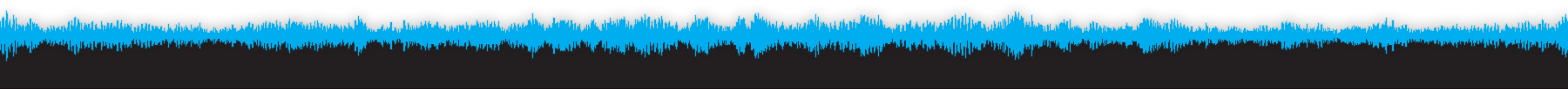


TAPERS

Watch [this clip](#) and read [this handout](#) to learn about the community of tapers and tape trading.



Consider or ask a friend:

- What seemed to be the Grateful Dead's reaction when fans started recording their live shows?
 - What motivated people to tape Grateful Dead concerts?
 - Why did allowing tapers prove to be an effective way of marketing?
 - How might taping have expanded and strengthened the Grateful Dead's fanbase?
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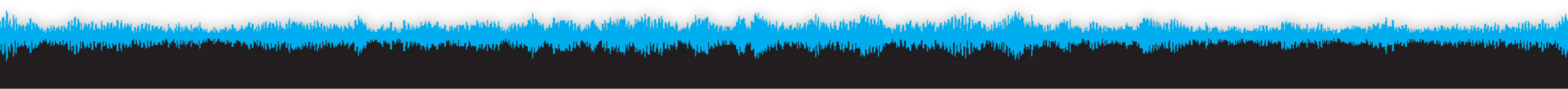
Set lists

Analyze this image from a fan-made website which archives the songs performed by the Grateful Dead at any given concert (“set list”) and allows room for online comments.

<p>01/02/70, Early Show Fillmore East (NYC) Mason's Children Casey Jones Black Peter Mama Tried Hard To Handle Cumberland Blues Cryptical Envelopment Drums The Other One Cryptical Envelopment Cosmic Charlie</p>	<p>01/02/70, Late Show Fillmore East (NYC) Uncle John's Band High Time Dire Wolf Easy Wind China Cat Sunflower I Know You Rider Good Lovin' Me And My Uncle Monkey And The Engineer Dark Star St. Stephen The Eleven Turn On Your Love Light</p>	<p>01/03/70, Early Show Fillmore East (NYC) Morning Dew Me And My Uncle Hard To Handle Cumberland Blues Cold Rain And Snow Alligator Drums Jam And We Bid You Goodnight Jam Jam Alligator Reprise Caution (Do Not Stop On Tracks) Jam Feedback</p>	<p>01/03/70, Late Show Fillmore East (NYC) Casey Jones Mama Tried Big Boss Man China Cat Sunflower I Know You Rider Cryptical Envelopment Drums The Other One Cryptical Envelopment Cosmic Charlie Uncle John's Band Mason's Children Black Peter Dire Wolf Good Lovin' Drums Good Lovin' Dancin' In The Streets St. Stephen Midnight Hour</p>
<p>Selected Comment: Mason's, h2h, Cumberland, all great. TIFTOO>cosmic Charlie total acid rock.</p>	<p>Selected Comment: Fantastic show to kick off one of my favorite years. . .Nearly had one of those flashbacks they've been promising us during this DARK STAR, one of the best you'll ever hear.</p>	<p>Selected Comment: My first Grateful Dead show, on my birthday! One thing you missed. They played Saint Stephen-Midnight Hour, for the encore. You left out St. Stephen. Pigpen was incrdible!</p>	<p>Selected Comment: Im starting my archive i have a good number of things but really no early stuff can any one point me in a direction i know of torrents already.</p>



Consider or ask a friend:

- When and where did these four concerts occur?
 - What do you notice about the songs presented between these four concerts?
 - Why might a fan want to see all four concerts rather than just one?
 - What observations might you make about Grateful Dead fans based on their comments?
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Free Concerts

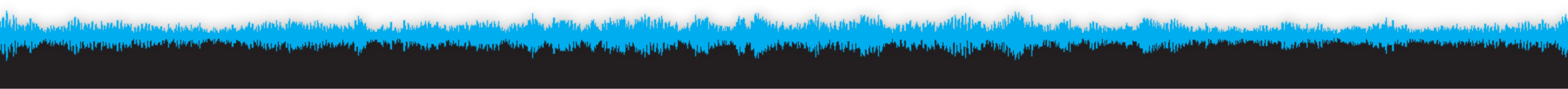
Analyze **this chart** and read **this handout** to learn about free concerts performed by the Grateful Dead.

Free Concerts by the Grateful Dead, 1966-1972

Date	Location
8/3/1966	Stanley Park, Vancouver, BC
9/1/1966	Speedway Meadows, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, CA
10/6/1966	The Panhandle, San Francisco, CA
1/14/1967	Polo Grounds, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, CA
6/1/1967	Tompkins Square Park, New York, NY
6/17/1967	Monterey Peninsula College, Monterey, CA
7/2/1967	El Camino Park, Palo Alto, CA
7/16/1967	Golden Gardens Beach, Seattle, WA
7/31/1967	O'Keefe Center, Toronto, ON
8/6/1967	Place Ville Marie, Montreal, QC
8/6/1967	Youth Pavilion, Expo '67, Montreal, QC
8/13/1967	West Park, Ann Arbor, MI
9/16/1967	Elysian Park, Los Angeles, CA
9/24/1967	City Park, Denver, CO
4/14/1968	Graynolds Park, Miami, FL
5/3/1968	Low Library Plaza, Columbia University, New York, NY
5/5/1968	Central Park, New York, NY
11/23/1968	Memorial Auditorium, University of Ohio, Athens, OH
7/7/1969	Piedmont Park, Atlanta, GA
5/6/1970	Kresge Plaza, MIT, Cambridge, MA
6/27/1970	Coronation Park, Toronto, ON
6/21/1971	Chateau d'Herouville, France
5/13/1972	Fairgrounds, Lille, France
9/30/1972	American University, Washington, DC
10/21/1972	Alumni Lawn, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN



Consider or ask a friend:

- Why might the Grateful Dead have organized and played so many free, large outdoor concerts in their career?
 - How do you think the Grateful Dead benefitted from staging these inclusive, audience-friendly events, often with multiple bands sharing the stage?
 - How is the modern music festival similar to these events?
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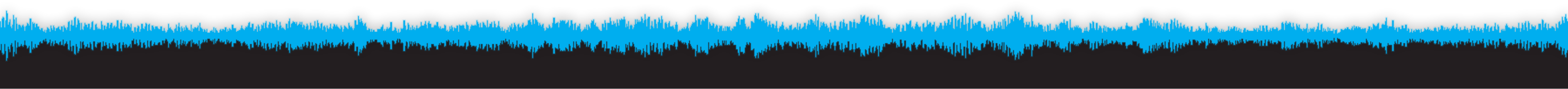


THE DEADHEAD MANDALA

Watch [this video](#) to learn about the special arrangement of fans attending a Grateful Dead concert.




Consider or ask a friend:

- What does the sophisticated arrangement of fans at a Grateful Dead concert tell you about the Deadhead community?
 - How do you think this arrangement came to be?
 - How do you think the band themselves facilitated bonding and proliferation amongst different sub-cultures of fans? In what ways might have the band made their shows inclusive to a broad range of fans?
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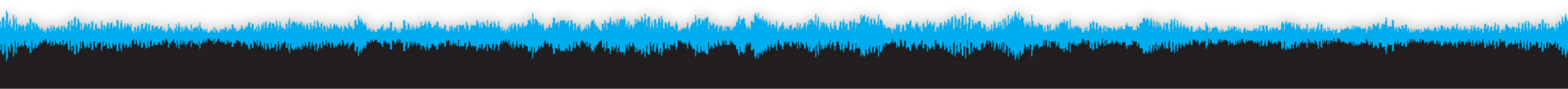


Live Albums

- Analyze **this chart** to see official releases from the Grateful Dead
 - For additional context, keep in mind that the Grateful Dead stopped touring in 1995 after the death of their founder Jerry Garcia
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Consider or ask a friend:

- What is the date range of these live releases?
 - How often did the band release an album? How might this schedule compare to other band's or artist's album releases?
 - What might be the appeal of these albums for Grateful Dead fans? Based on what you learned about the band, why might they be interested in buying recordings of live shows in addition to studio recordings?
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Trademarks

- Read **this handout** to learn about the Grateful Dead's ownership of trademarks
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Consider or ask a friend:

- Why do you think the Grateful Dead trademarked their logos, in addition to their name?
 - What advantages do their trademarks confer to their business?
 - How is the Grateful Dead able to use their trademarks to monetize different aspects of their fan culture?
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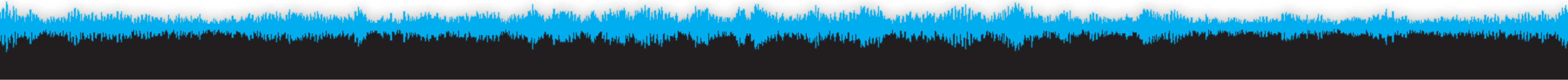


Fashion

- Analyze these pictures of high-fashion products decorated with Grateful Dead iconography currently available for purchase and read [this handout](#) to learn more about Fashion and the Grateful Dead.
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Consider or ask a friend:

- What are some observations you can make about the clothes featured in the image?
 - Have you heard of the brands before?
 - Are you surprised to see these brands making apparel with Grateful Dead logos? Why or why not?
 - Who do you think is the target market for these clothes?
 - What do the styles, brands and prices say about how the apparel companies view Deadheads and the Grateful Dead culture?
 - How do you think the Grateful Dead's ownership of trademarks influenced the development and proliferation of these products?
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SUMMARY

- The Grateful Dead created a business model based on consistent relationship building and engagement with their fans
- The Grateful Dead consistently monetized their brand through a steady stream of product generation and live concerts



BE CREATIVE

Imagine you are a part of a musical group and hope to make a stable income performing and recording your songs. Create a Strategic Plan for Success for your group, taking into account the following considerations:

- How will you grow and maintain your fanbase?
- How will you translate your fanbase's interest into income?
- What will you do to ensure your concerts or recordings hold the attention of your fanbase?
- How can your band supplement its income beyond concert tickets and album sales?



CAREER CONNECTIONS

Interested in the music business? You might be interested in pursuing careers in:

- Production and Managerial Arts
- Business Management



CONNECT

Share your work with us! Share your Strategic Plan for Success with TeachRock on [Instagram](#) or [Facebook](#), email to info@teachrock.org, or Tweet it to [@TeachRock](#)





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