

◦△◦ How To Win Eurovision ◦△◦

The UK has been in it's longest dry spell for a win at the Eurovision Song Contest in the contest history. I have been working on a grand plan for fourteen months, addressing the numerous problems the UK has with the contest, from misinformed public preconceptions, an out of date branding, an upper management that thinks any thing related to the contest is a waste of money and time, and a music industry that sees the contest as a plague. It's time to fight for the contest and the war starts now, **don't be part of the problem** and ignore this, **be part of the solution**.

Approach

The main the problem has is the UK works with what it is given. They have to work around an industry that sees the contest with disdain, with a public that thinks the contest is anachronistic, and approach that doesn't seem to have changed since 1967 when the BBC changed tact in a big way. This is not about how you choose an entry, with either a national or internal selection, but about a going in any direction with a new mindset. Passion. The BBC could probably convince any artist to represent the UK at Eurovision, the BBC just needs to fight the right way to do it and fight for the best music to compete, and not settle for less. **Rule One: Anything is possible, you just need to find the right way in which to do it.**

Big Names

This may seem a bit of stretch, but it shouldn't be. **One of the main reasons we need to attract them is because they make the best music this country has to offer.** That is why they are where they are. The second reason is because they are one of the many solutions to the problem with modernisation. By getting culturally relative artists to take part in the contest they will update the image straight away, and help to show the contest as a modern promotion of modern European music, which it has become "generally" on the contest. **Artists see the anachronism of contest as a reason not to take part, not realising they are one of the solutions.**

What many people don't realise is Eurovision is a bug draw for younger viewers across the continent. Normally the channels that show Eurovision get 11.1 % of the 15-24 audience watching on a typical Saturday night. Eurovision draws in 44.8 % on the night of what the EBU calls the hard to reach age. **Young people watch Eurovision, and they buy songs from these artists.** They love them and will vote for them.

Lastly big names know who they want to be as an artist. They know what stories they want to tell and how to present and promote themselves. **This means they will be able to create a whole package of song and performance with authenticity,** something lacking in many Eurovision songs.

How to Get Big Names to Compete.

Never accept that the UK can't get our biggest names to compete, we used to be able to, **we just have to find the right way** to convince them. It has to be a personal approach depending on the qualms each artist has, for example the Hurts said they will not compete for the UK because lack of artistic freedom, while Olly Murs has described the contest as a poisoned chalice. **We have to get artists to overcome these problems, by working with them in personalised one to one meetings.** These meetings should be about getting the artists on a personal level, and explore with the artist all the reasons to compete at Eurovision. First we should chat about the preconception of the contest (such as being a career killer, and political voting) that they may hold them back, talk about where they come from and the actual truth behind them.

Also within these meetings, should be discussed, the other things the BBC SHOULD be doing to get big names to compete. For example the rebranding of the contest, to make it more modern, (see: branding). There should be a guarantee of artistic freedom. It should also be explained how by doing a national selection is better than an internal selection, as it will seem that the music industry is coming together for charity (see: Comic Relief), but for Eurovision. This will induce a supportive atmosphere, that would not be there if they were chosen to be our artist by themselves.

Another reason for the meetings is to show that the BBC is supporting them in so many ways. Not just by getting to know the artists, but by also showing the BBC will support post-national selection and post-Eurovision. This is the "Thank You" Packages, which the BBC can do with little expense and great reward. **It should be a combination of guaranteed work and promotion that the BBC can arrange.** A smaller one for national selection participants, and a bigger one for our eventual Eurovision entrant as it is seen as a bigger risk. It can include a guarantee of a certain number of follow up singles to be playlisted on BBC Radio 1 to arranging sets at some of the big festivals that the BBC work with, such as Glastonbury. It means that the artists will know that no matter what happens with Eurovision, their careers will continue as the BBC will support them.

The BBC should see this as their responsibility, as one it will kill the career killer myth dead and help in future for finding an entry, but also as we are putting these artists in this spot so we need to look after them after representing OUR COUNTRY, at an international event.

Comic Relief

Numerous people have written about doing a national selection for charity. What most people don't know is that the head of delegation meeting (also the deadline for releasing songs), falls in mid March and therefore falls around the same time as Comic or Sport Relief. **This gives us a perfect opportunity to combine forces to create amazing music.**

The contest itself has been full of humanity over the years, for example, it was created to bring the nations of Europe together after World War Two, the German winner Nicole sang her winning song of peace to battling Israeli troops, Fazler risking their lives to leave Bosnia to show us the horrors of the Serbian invasion at the contest in 1993 and Conchita Wurst showing how liberal Europe truly is towards LGBT issues. **By getting Comic Relief involved will continue this great heritage of doing great things** by raising the international prestige, and helping raise millions for the poorest people in the world and great organisations here in the UK.

What we can do is have a national selection that celebrates British Music, British Generosity, and British Comedy, We can raise an amazing amount of money through telephone votes, an official album, and ticket sales. We could even have our eventual entry be the official single for that years Comic Relief campaign, and that will raise even more money for the fantastic charity.

It will make not only the public but also the artists have more respect for our entries and actually taking part, as it will be seen as a worth while endeavour as they will be doing something that wont just favour them but thousands of other people.

Modernisation of the Eurovision Brand

This is the biggest problem that the UK faces in terms of the contest, as an anachronistic brand does not just affect how the public view the contest, but how artists and the BBC management approach it. Artists wont take part as they see the out of date brand as detrimental to their careers. With everything attached to the Eurovision brand except the Grand Final floundering in the viewing figures, the BBC management is unwilling to invest in the contest. **The BBC are the British brand ambassadors of the contest**, and have the power to change the old fashioned view of the contest.

One way to update the brand is by doing the Latvian trick of updating the National Selection. In 2015 they created Supernova, which helped them get in to the top ten and give them a estimated top five finisher in the odds for the 2016 contest. It became a modern and dynamic brand detached from that of Eurovision, that helped them foster modern artists and music, which has aided their lagging Eurovision, after previously not qualifying for the final since 2008.

By detaching the National Selection brand from that of Eurovision, you can create a brand new modern beast that can draw in the viewers, especially with the big names participating. This will feed into and raise the modern credentials of the ESC itself.

Another branding issue is that the BBC uses BBC Four and BBC Radio 2 to broadcast the contest other than BBC One. While the semi-finals had to move from BBC Three, but BBC Four was the wrong direction. **Whilst BBC Four tries to say it is the home of music on the BBC, it is the home of old music**, which is the wrong thing to do for a competition we should be sending our most modern music too. It also continues the old fashioned branding of the contest as it is know for documentaries and it academic nature.

The same problem comes with the use of BBC Radio 2, while I believe it should continue to broadcast it on the radio, that is all it should do. **By having the radio station involved in song selection, such as previewing the songs, it presents the contest as old fashioned**. Modern artists are not fighting to get playlisted on Radio 2, but Radio 1. If we use Radio 1, it shows that Eurovision is a contest in which your best modern music. **Radio 2 should be about celebrating the past, while Radio 1 should be about investing in our future**.

By updating the branding of Eurovision, you get more younger viewers watching, like they already do on the continent, our biggest artists will see it as on their cultural level, and the BBC management will be able to get behind it and hopefully invest into BBC Eurovision.

Advertising

The BBC shows how much they care about the contest and it's brand by the advertising it gives. For example the Voice had a dynamic advertising campaign, whilst Eurovision either gets an old fashioned camp cut-out party, or a ten second clips show of the 2014 contest. Why should the British public care about it if the BBC does not put any effort to advertise it to them.

Advertising the show with a modern and dynamic approach will also help improve the branding of the contest, and get the nation to rally behind the contest and our entries and raise the viewing figures. We need it to be a rallying cry, like we get when the Olympics are around the corner. **It is an international event, and should be treated as such**.

Song Promotion

We should not fall into the same trap the Spanish fell into in 2015. They got a great song with a big national star, but she did not leave the country until going to Vienna. **You need to create a real buzz around Europe with our song**. We need Europe to be singing along on the night, not just hearing it for the first time. That is why Jade Ewan did so well in 2009, she did hundreds of interviews and appearances around Europe before the contest. This is another reason we should have big names take part, as well as having the name recognition to carry the song, but **it will create and an even bigger buzz if a big name like Adele or Ellie Goulding went to a smaller country like in the Balkans or Baltic regions**. The more song promotion, the more points in the final.

Staging

In this new era of Eurovision, the UK keeps getting unstuck by our staging. We need to change our approach to staging our entries. **Staging should enhance a song**, not create a song. But we need to remember that **we should create a live three minute music video**, as we need to give the best show to those watching through the cameras. The juries and the

public all vote on the show on the screen. That's why we should use, live special effects, lighting rigs and proper camera angles to create a three minute story, but don't use it as an excuse to go over the top.

This is the main reason why **we should move the focus of staging from the producers to the actual artists**. These stars have experience of expressing themselves not just musically, but jointly visually, in order to present themselves as the artist and brand they want to be. Most have experience either producing, or directing their own music videos. For example Jack Patterson from Clean Bandit, has studied in the prestigious the Gerasimov Institute of Cinematography in Moscow, and has directed practically all their music videos and had his own studio with his fellow member Grace Chatto called Clean Films to make music videos for them and friends. **This gives Clean Bandit the authority to create a their own staging**.

If artists create their own staging, they have a better connection to the story the staging creates and in turn it gives the whole performance an authenticity. **Authenticity, with a good authentic song, will connect more with audiences, they will emotionally connect with the song, and then vote for it.**

The reasons the BBC should take it seriously.

One of the biggest problems the UK has is the BBC doesn't take the contest seriously, quite rightly. If we have no hope of doing well and the viewership is down then of course they shouldn't. **You need to show them it can be a banker both in funds and viewers.**

By implementing this plan the viewer figures will go up. When the BBC looks like it is taking the contest the national selection gets good viewing figures and for the final. The National selection for in 2009 got three times the viewers than the national selection did in 2010. The reason was as Andrew Lloyd Webber had at that point succeed in finding amazing talent in his search for Maria, Joseph and Nancy, and was still relevant. This meant that people took him seriously. However the following year, the UK was lumbered by a writer who had not been relevant for at least fifteen years and so the public didn't get behind the appointment, and the viewing figures were abysmal for both the national final and Eurovision itself. **If the UK looks like it is going to do well, and the British Public get behind our entry, then the viewing figures go up.** So if the BBC invests in getting our biggest artists to take part, then the viewing will increase dramatically.

Another thing that the BBC should understand is it can easily afford to win the contest. A good Eurovision song contest costs around the €20 million (£15 million). When you remember that you get a huge amount from the EBU members, it takes a big part of that burden. In 2015 EBU contributions to the contest equalled an estimated £4 million, which would take the overall price to £11 million which equals one series of the Voice.

Also unlike the Voice, you can make a profit from the contest if you play your hands right. Sweden in 2013 made a profit from having a smaller budget, and covering the cost with merchandise, and the ticket sales from a small arena. If the UK had a slightly higher budget and a bigger arena, we could easily cover all the costs. Remember there is nine attended shows. Sweden had an arena of around 11,000, while we could use Manchester Arena with around a 20,000 people capacity. If the average ticket price is £50 you could get around £9 million, which leaves £2 million left.

The BBC, even being squeezed, is one of the most financially secured broadcasters in Europe and the world. If they cannot spare £2 million for the biggest international event of the year for 200 million viewers, with over £2 BILLION for the TV arm of the corporation alone, then there is something horrifically wrong going on at the BBC, and needs to be addressed.

Conclusion

This is a condensed version of a much longer document of 20 pages. The ideas in here are expressed in more detail and with relevant statistics. This will have been worked on since November 2014 and I truly believe that if the BBC took me and this plan seriously, then the UK would enter a second great era of Eurovision domination, that Sweden has enjoyed since 2011. Let's do something amazing, not just for music, but for the great charity of Comic Relief as well.