



**Gorillaz Do the iPad**  
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In November 2010, Damon Albarn, the musician behind the hit animated UK band the Gorillaz, announced that the follow up to their successful release "Plastic Beach" would be recorded on an iPad. In his press release to NME magazine, Albarn said that he "fell in love with the iPad as soon as [he] got it...so [he] made a completely different kind of record." The Gorillaz strategic use of

Apple's product is certainly a novel one. However, their publicized enthusiasm over the iPad is surprising, since the Gorillaz have an extensive partnership with Microsoft to help launch Internet Explorer 9.

The 15-track album "The Fall" was released on Christmas as a present to the Gorillaz fans, and it was available as a free download on their website. The Gorillaz previous album releases came at about once every four years, so fans were shocked to receive a new album only one year after "Plastic Beach." At the time, Albarn was touring extensively, so he wanted to release "The Fall" during his tour to prove the album was recorded solely with the iPad. He used twenty different applications to craft the album, including SpeakIt!, Mugician, Amplitude and Moog Filatron.

The ability to take the studio on the road has completely revolutionized the way Albarn thought about making music. The iPad allowed him to create music that "sounds like an English voice that has been through the vocoder of America." Overall, the album demonstrates both the creative prowess of Albarn and the powerful versatility of the iPad.

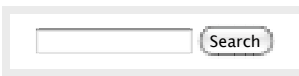
The iPad was not the first of the Gorillaz involvement with upcoming technological advances. In September 2010, Microsoft recruited the Gorillaz to endorse the launch of Internet Explorer 9. Leila Martine, the director of Windows Consumer Business Group in the UK, said that they wanted to "work with a leading-edge artist that used the web as a critical part of their medium to showcase the possibilities that could be created with Internet Explorer 9." She reported that the Gorillaz creativity was perfect to showcase the new opportunities of Internet Explorer 9.

The Gorillaz design team, Zombie Flesh Eaters, used Internet Explorer 9's HTML5 to revamp the entire layout of the Gorillaz homepage. Murdoc's Room, a section of the website named after the fictional bassist Murdoc, was completely dedicated to the new version of Internet Explorer. Murdoc's Room featured the capability to load multiple videos on the same page, which is made possible by HTML5. The page also featured a 7-minute animated video of Murdoc discussing the abilities of the new browser with his new friend "Mike O'Soft." Microsoft released a downloadable Gorillaz-themed layout for Windows 7, in which icons become Gorillaz characters.

Although Microsoft has not released a statement regarding the Gorillaz glorification of the iPad, Microsoft is probably not pleased with the Gorillaz use of an Apple product. In January 2011, after the release of "The Fall," Microsoft made a presentation that encouraged Windows 7 Slate resellers to sell directly against the iPad. The PowerPoint from this presentation was leaked onto the web, and it dictates specific comparisons to its tablet competitor. Microsoft's presentation advised businesses to avoid integrating the iPad into their IT infrastructure, stating that Apple's product lacks adequate business programs and invites security issues. Clearly, Microsoft views the iPad as a threat, and the Gorillaz involvement with the iPad could not have been viewed favorably.

Other artists have utilized Apple products to further their career. YouTube showcases videos of DJs mixing with iPads, and bands performing in subways with only iPhones emulating guitars, synths and full rhythm sections. Artists and businesses are recognizing the benefits of creating partnerships to increase each other's exposure. The Gorillaz are no exception to these artist-business relationships. With the support of a brand and new technology, the opportunities for artists like the Gorillaz are endless.

By Micah Deterville



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