



THE
MUSIC
MARKETING
GUIDEBOOK

HOW TO FIND LISTENERS,
CONVERT FANS AND MAKE
MONEY WITH YOUR MUSIC

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INTRODUCTION

Waiting to be discovered, hoping to be seen, wishing someone else would do the work, wanting to make it big while dreaming of being rich and famous just like your heroes is submissive, passive, foolish, weak, and ineffective. Take your desire for your dreams, your goals, and your ambition, then make them fuel for the fire to light your ass up, to get to work and on the path to make it happen.

- Loren Weisman

WHY I WROTE THIS BOOK

Music Marketing is boring. Not only is it boring, but it is complicated, time consuming and ultra-tedious. On top of that, most independent artists don't know they need it -- let alone, what it is. However, the way the Music Industry has changed over the last few years makes it mandatory for every artist to develop marketing skills. If you're going to make it in today's industry, you need to know how to find your ideal fans and use them to fund your dreams. The Music Marketing Guidebook is here to teach you exactly that.

There is no shortage of Music Marketing information available out there. Most of it falls under one of two categories. The first reads like a Marketing textbook -- an encyclopedia with descriptions of every marketing concept known to man. It overwhelms you and leaves you frustrated, more confused than you were before you started. The second category is a rundown of the latest tools and technologies. "How to get fans quick" and other gimmicky strategies. The problem is that technology changes constantly, and if you don't understand the principles that should govern your use of technology, you'll be at the mercy of the internet forever. Just ask an old MySpace band how far that will get you.

I don't want you to be overwhelmed, and to sell you some get rich quick scheme would do you no good. I've designed the guidebook to give you actionable steps, with just enough background info for you to really understand why you're doing it. Again, this book is designed for you to take ACTION. Sitting with a book in your library ultimately won't

do anything for you if you don't apply the knowledge in it. So in each chapter, there's an activity you can complete in order to see immediate progress and results.

HOW THE GUIDEBOOK WORKS

The Music Marketing Guidebook runs in four parts:

In Part One, I'll teach you the basic pillars of Marketing, and more importantly, give you insight into the marketing mindset.

In Part Two, we'll dig into online marketing strategies you can use to help find your audience and become profitable.

In Part Three, we'll go over offline (aka traditional) strategies that you can use once you've built an audience. These will help you get on the biggest stages and launch your career into the stratosphere.

In Part Four, we'll bring it all together and show you how to plan out a complete album release, including your Integrated Marketing Campaign. We'll also show you how to track your results, so that you know what's working and what isn't.

You won't just read a bunch of theory in this book. I've also included case studies so that you can see how the practices in this book have helped other artists achieve great levels of success. While for legal reasons, I can't make any guarantee on the level of success you'll achieve after reading this book; here is my commitment to you at the time of this writing:

The insights and strategies I present to you in this book are the result of over 10 years of personal experience as an artist, a record company intern, then a manager. They are the result of many personal conversations with successful artists and industry professionals. They are the result of countless

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hours studying both the discipline of Marketing, and the greater Music Business economy. If you apply the knowledge in this book, I know you can succeed.

Each chapter builds on the last, so it's best to read the book straight through. I'll try my best not to bore you. Enough with the small talk. Let's get started.

CHAPTER 1: WHAT IS MARKETING?

“Marketing” is probably the most misused term in business. Ask four people what Marketing is, and you’ll get five different answers. For some, Marketing is about making your products look pretty. For others, it’s about fancy TV commercials and product placement. The reality? Marketing is all these things - and much more. By my estimation, 75 percent of all activity in your music career will be related to marketing. Let’s start by giving the word a definition.

Marketing (mar-ket-ing): The management process by which goods and services move from concept to the consumer.

2.) The action or business of promoting and selling products or services, including market research and advertising.

By definition, marketing involves not only product promotion, but it helps dictate what products are even offered for sale. What does this mean for your music? Everything. Marketing can dictate what music you make, what platforms you release on, and even the price of your music. Effective marketing helps you plan tour dates and offer attractive merchandise. It includes your social media strategy, your media/television appearances, and just about every public facing action you will take in your music career. Are you feeling overwhelmed? Don’t worry. By the time you finish this book, you’ll be well on your way to becoming a music marketing expert.

THE FOUR P’S

There are four distinct pillars - or stages - of the marketing process. They are known as the Four P’s: Product, Place, Pricing, and Promotion. The process itself can be explained pretty simply. First, you decide what product you’re going to release. Through a series of tests (either internal or with small customer groups), you refine that product until it is

ready for mass consumption. You decide on distribution, or what place your consumer will have to go to find your product. You determine the price of your product. Then finally, after all the backend business is set up, you focus on your promotional strategy. Let's go through each of these stages in more detail.

PRODUCT

Since this is a Music Marketing manual, it seems safe to assume your product is your music. This is true, but it's also so much more than that. You are a brand, and you need to see yourself that way. At any given time, you're selling music, live experiences, merchandise, and the general cool factor that comes with being a fan.

PLACE

Once you've gotten your product ready, you'll need to choose your distribution channel(s). As a general rule, you'll want to distribute on all the major streaming platforms, but there a number of other ways to deliver your content including subscription memberships and corporate partnerships. We'll go over how to distribute your music in a full chapter a little later.

PRICING

The Music Industry is unique in that pricing seems to be pretty standard across the board. That's because large companies like Apple & Spotify have agreements with the major labels that determine how much each service can charge you for music. The labels have paid millions to research just how much the average consumer is willing to spend, and just how much will turn someone away. The beauty of being an independent artist is that you can determine the same boundaries for your pown business. Sure, the average consumer is used to spending \$9.99 for an album download. But maybe they'll pay you \$25 for a hardcopy instead of the traditional \$10-\$15. Maybe they'll pay \$500 for a VIP package at a concert. Perhaps your fan base is willing to pay you a monthly subscription fee in exchange for direct access to

new material as soon as you're done creating it. As you get to know your fan base, you'll know more and more about what they're willing to pay to support you. Keep this in mind when you're pricing your products and packages.

PROMOTION

Your promotional strategy is the key to making your music business dreams come true. Some people believe that "If you build it, they will come", but that's simply not true. They'll only come if they know you built it in the first place. Your promotional strategy is key to making sure your music isn't falling on deaf ears. It's what will make your project a huge success, or a huge failure.

A WORD ON BRANDING

One word that is often associated with What is a brand? Simply put, your brand is what your customers and fans know you for. For example, Eminem's brand is edgy, shock rap with the occasional inspirational pop collaboration. Eminem plays the underdog role and everything about his image speaks to that. He doesn't wear flashy clothes or jewelry. When you see him, he looks like he's still fighting his way out of 8 Mile in Detroit. He looks like his back is against the ropes and it's him against the world. People love Eminem for his style just as much as they love him for his music. That's the power of building a great brand.

TAKE ACTION: Take a few minutes to define your brand. What is your music about? What image do you want to convey at all times? If your music persona was an actor, how would he dress and talk in your film? What are your boundaries? Remember -- your brand is just as much about what you choose NOT to do, as it is the things you do.

CHAPTER 2: MAKING GREAT MUSIC

Let's talk about the reason we're all here – the music. If you're reading this book, you're a special type of person. Music is what you live for. It's not just something nice that plays in the background. It's the soundtrack for your most important life events. You remember the music playing during your first kiss. Your first concert is right up there with your wedding night in terms of fond memories. Music completely captivates your mind and has been there for you at every turn. If you're reading this, not only has music been all those things to you, but you also believe you can make something that can be all of those things to someone else. That's a quality that very few people in the world get to experience.

What separates the greats – Bob Dylan, Jay-Z, Drake – from the average person recording songs from their bedroom or garage? The answer is great marketing. But before you can market your music, you must know that it can stand up both critically and sonically to the music that influenced it. You have to hone your craft to the point that you could do great work in your sleep. To become great, you'll have to put in WORK. I can't sugar coat this. At times, the process will be grueling. You probably have a song in your notebook right now that you believe is the best song ever. Three years from now, I'm willing to bet you'll hate that song. I'm sure it will always hold a special place in your heart, but you will have improved your skills so much that all you will think about is how you could've done it better.

If you don't feel your music is good enough, here are three steps you can take until it is:

- 1. Practice** – write and record new music as often as possible. Don't feel pressured to release any of it (unless you want to). View it like practicing Free Throws before the big game.
- 2. Collaborate** – find other artists and producers to work

with. They'll help spark your creativity and open you up to new workflows, production and songwriting methods.

3. Study - study your favorite songs and analyze what makes them great. Listen to new music. Study genres outside of your own. There are lessons to be learned and inspiration to be found everywhere, if you'll allow yourself the time to just listen.

TESTING YOUR MUSIC

“Ok Brandon, I've done all of these things ad-nauseum. I think my music is ready now, but how can I be sure?” There's only one way to find out -- test it. Send the music to your friends and ask for their feedback. Post reference tracks in online forums dedicated to your genre. Perform at Open Mics and local artist showcases in your local area. Get feedback from as many people as possible. The least they know about you, the better. You don't want to base your career off your mom's opinion of your music -- Believe me.

There are many companies online that offer to give unbiased feedback on your music. Submitting to these services is a great way to do market research and see just what music fans think of your music. The greatest of these tools is a service called Crowd Review, by ReverbNation. This tool started out as a separate service called AudioKite, but ReverbNation acquired them in 2016.

With Crowd Review, you order a set number of reviews from real ReverbNation listeners in the United States. They are required to listen to a certain percentage of your song, and provide detailed feedback as well as complete a survey of demographics and listening habits so that you can understand the audience that's most likely to enjoy your track. You'll be judged on metrics like Songwriting, Production Quality and Commercial Potential. This is just the type of information you need to see if your music is ready for the big stage. Once you're sure your music is ready for the big leagues, the real work can begin.

CHAPTER 3: DISTRIBUTION

Once you've made sure your product is up to par, you'll need to figure out your distribution method. Think of it this way -- What places will customers have to go in order to get your product? When we talk about distribution, most people think of the big players: iTunes, Amazon, Spotify. We'll get into all of those soon. But first, I want to get you thinking creatively about the way you release your music.

Since you're not tied to the system of a major label, you have the freedom and flexibility to give your fans a unique experience they can't get anywhere else. Use the same creativity it took to craft your album, to think of interesting ways to present it to the public.

GETTING YOUR MUSIC IN DIGITAL STORES

If your aim is to sell your music to the masses, there is really only one way to do that. You open up shop where there is already traffic. In the case of music, the greatest place to sell it is on iTunes, Amazon, Spotify, and the dozens of other streaming services out there. Luckily, there is an easy way to do that.

Digital Music Aggregators are companies that will deliver your music to the streaming services even if you aren't tied to a major label. There are many of them out there, each with their own pros and cons, but they basically work the same way. You upload your master tracks and artwork, and they submit to the major digital outlets on your behalf. Let's go over the top three.

CD Baby: CD Baby has been around longer than any other service provider, and has always tried to be the one stop shop for independent musicians. Aside from just getting your music into stores, CD Baby can help you print physical CD's, and even collect publishing royalties for you via CD Baby Pro. The price of entry? \$49 per album or \$9.99 per

single. You pay the fee one time, but CD Baby takes a 9% commission from your sales on the back end.

TuneCore: Tunecore is the second largest of the aggregators. Home to artists like Chance The Rapper, Tunecore offers distribution as well as admin publishing services just like CD Baby. The biggest difference is their cost structure. While Tunecore only charges \$29.99 to distribute your album, they also charge an annual fee of \$49 per album to keep it up on the streaming services. The more projects you release, the more you pay them each year to keep your projects available to the public.

DistroKid: The simplest of the bunch. You pay DistroKid \$19.99 per year and get unlimited uploads. If you're someone who releases music more than once a year, this is absolutely the best bang for your buck. What makes the deal even sweeter is the fact that DistroKid doesn't take any of your royalties. The only downside is that DistroKid doesn't currently offer any publishing administration (although they announced this is coming soon).

SELLING PHYSICAL PRODUCTS

As you grow, you will want to look into offering physical CD versions of your music. While it's true that physical albums sales have all but disappeared in the mainstream, people who are your fans will certainly want to buy physical products from you. I recommend starting with a small run of 100 discs or less. You can do this with a local CD Duplication Company, or you can go online to DiscMakers (www.disk-makers.com) and order them. You can sell these CD's as part of VIP Packages on your website, or just take them with you when you perform live. There's a lot of money to be made with CD's, even in 2018.

TAKE ACTION:

Sign up for an account with one of the major Digital Music Aggregators (I recommend DistroKid, but the choice is yours). If you have a back catalog, go ahead and upload it

to their servers to make sure your music can be found on all the major distributors while streaming revenue may not be enough to pay your bills just yet, every penny helps in this business.

CHAPTER 4: CULTIVATING YOUR FAN-BASE

Let's talk about the most important people in your music career -- your fans. There's an old saying about self employment that I want to make you familiar with. "When you're your own boss, everyone is your boss!" This is especially true for independent musicians. Your fans are the force that sustains you and can potentially allow you do do what you love for a living. Treat them well, and they'll reward you handsomely. Neglect them, and they'll desert you. You should treat the process of finding and cultivating fans just like you would making a new friend.

THE INTRODUCTION

Whenever you meet someone new, it's exciting. Perhaps you meet at your favorite diner, or bump into each other at a magazine stand and realize you share similar interests. At first, you're delighted to meet someone who shares things in common with you. You ask each other questions, hoping you'll find even more common ground. Then, you exchange information so you can stay in touch. Connecting with fans should be the same way.

Your music is the bonding point. As people consume your content, they will connect with the themes of your music, as well as your personality as displayed on the web and in media. Eventually, you'll ask for a way to keep in touch on a more personal basis (or even better, they'll ask you.) That will lead them to your email list, and on to the next step on the conversion journey...

NURTURING THE RELATIONSHIP

After you've made a new friend, you take certain steps to develop the friendship. Perhaps you call to catch up every once in a while, or maybe you meet up in person. You should be doing the same with your fans. In the past, fan relationships were extremely one sided. The fans got to know the artist through their music and sporadic interviews.

Artists didn't really interact with fans until it was time for a live show. Now that we're in the internet age, you can (and should) speak directly to your fans via e-mail and social media. The more they get to know you, the more they'll feel invested in your career, and the more they'll be willing to support you with their dollars.

TIP: Don't be a freeloader. You know that friend or family member you only hear from when they need something? That's you if you only speak to your fans when it's time to sell something. STOP freeloading and practice building a connection the right way. It will definitely pay off.

THE SALE

For some, selling is the hardest part of achieving success. As artists, we have a hard time putting value on the things we do, and an even harder time asking someone else to see that value and support it with their hard-earned cash. Here's the truth. If you've built enough of a rapport with your fans, making the sale should be the easiest part.

Making a sale doesn't start when you announce your product. It starts at the very first interaction, and continues with every interaction after. Asking for the sale - or closing, as it's known in business - should be the no brainer at the end of the line.

Your fans love you. They follow the things you do because you mean something to them. They love your music because it helps them escape the drudgery of their everyday lives. It entertains them and reminds them of fond memories. Your fans want to reward you for the way you make them feel. They want to give you money so that you can continue doing what you love, and what they love from you. As you grow, they'll continue to support you because they want their friends to know that connection is real. All you have to do is ask.

CHAPTER 5: SUPERFANS

You've introduced yourself, gotten a fan on your e-mail list, and done what once seemed impossible - making the sale. What more is there to be done? There's another level you can achieve through further nurturing -- the superfan.

THE 1,000 TRUE FANS THEORY

In 2008, Wired Magazine co-founder Kevin Kelley introduced a concept that sent shockwaves through the creative community. The 1,000 True Fans Theory. Put simply, he argues that in order to make a living as a creative of any kind, all you need is a direct relationship with 1,000 "superfans". These are your die hard fans. People who will travel far and wide to see you. They'll buy anything with your name on it - no questions asked. If you can make \$100 profit from each of these fans every year, you have earned a very respectable living. That all sounds fun in theory, but let's talk about how to actually do it.

NURTURING YOUR SUPERFANS

Who is an artist that you will support with your dollars no matter what? For a long time, that artist was Kanye West for me. My first concert was Usher's Confessions Tour in 2004. The opening act? Kanye West. I was 13. I grew up in a very religious household, so Hip-Hop was largely banned - until Kanye came on the scene. Instead of baggy jeans and guns, he wrote songs about self-consciousness and the perils of materialism. He even had a song called Jesus Walks. All those details were part of the thesis I presented to my mom to convince her to buy the tickets. He was the first Hip Hop star I could identify with, and I've been supporting ever since.

You can have the same impact with your fans. As you can see, Kanye didn't have to do much outside of releasing music to earn my support. I related so much to his overall persona, that supporting him felt like supporting myself. If your music connects with people, you won't have to work as hard

to win them over. But what about the rest?

Your superfans have to be nurtured. These are the people who love you the most, and they want to feel like you love them back. There are many things you can do to express your appreciation. Follow your fans on social media. Thank them when they tag you in a complimentary post. Take pictures with them and share from your official Instagram account. These are all deeply personal interactions that make a listing impact on an individual level. The more you grow, the more meaningful each interaction will be to your fans, so never stop.

PRESENTING THE OPPORTUNITY

It's possible that you have quite a few superfans waiting to spend their money to prove their undying loyalty and gratitude to you. There's just one problem. You haven't given them the chance to do it. Let's fix that.

Your superfans value exclusive experiences, and they're willing to pay cash for them. Don't believe me? Beyonce's 2016 Formation World Tour sold front row VIP packages for \$3600 each. Some packages included early venue entry, custom designed merch, a commemorative lanyard, and a backstage tour by Beyonce's mother!

In 2013, rapper Nipsey Hussle released his mixtape Crenshaw for free on DatPiff.com. Soon after, he announced a pop up shop where he would be selling 1,000 physical copies of the tape. The CD's would also grant admission to an upcoming private concert. The price? \$100 per CD. They sold out in 1 day, with Jay-Z himself purchasing 100 copies. Yes, that's \$100,000 of revenue in one day, from a group a superfans who were willing to go above and beyond to support their favorite artist.

To figure out who your superfans are, start offering one of a kind packages of your own. Instead of just selling digital copies of your album, offer an autographed CD or Vinyl with an exclusive T-Shirt, priced higher than normal. Don't under-

estimate how much your fans are willing to support you.

TAKE ACTION:

Create a superfan offer to test the loyalty of your fans. Price it higher than normal, but not too outrageous. You might be surprised to see how well it works.

CHAPTER 6: YOUR WEBSITE

If you're building a music career in today's industry, you have to have an online presence. There's no way around it. The most important piece of your online strategy - bar none - is your website. Your website is where people will go to learn about who you are, listen to your music, buy concert tickets and merchandise, and ultimately, establish themselves as your biggest fans. In this section, we'll break down the benefits of having your own website.

1. A SPACE YOU OWN AND CONTROL

Depending on your age, you may or may not remember MySpace. MySpace was a social media platform that let you show off your personality. You could share photos, videos and music. With a little HTML coding knowledge, you could turn your profile into a space unlike any other on the web. Artists like Cassie, Drake, Adele and Sean Kingston launched their careers on MySpace, partially due to the huge popularity of music sharing on the platform. Then Facebook arrived. In 2007, MySpace was the most popular site on all the web. By 2011, it was all but forgotten. Many of the artists who had amassed huge audiences on the platform struggled to recapture even a fraction of them after the site fizzled out. Even more bands disappeared entirely. The likelihood of something like that happening again is seen as slim because of how much money is backing Social Media companies. Even so, these shutdowns still happen. (Remember Vine?) Having your own website (and training fans to go there for updates) will help ensure that your base stays strong, no matter what social media trends come and go.

2. A CUSTOM USER EXPERIENCE

As your fanbase grows, you'll start to learn things about them. Where they live. What their interests are. Things that make them smile. What numbers to dial. (That was a Biggie reference). In all seriousness, you'll gain incredible insights as your social media and web presence grows, and you'll

begin to cater your content to those you know are listening. Your website provides the perfect opportunity for you to give your fans a one-of-a-kind experience. Want to take your fans on a virtual tour of your studio? Build it on your website.

3. FAN DATA

The major disadvantage that comes with Social Media is that you don't necessarily get to understand who your fans are there. Sure, each platform gives you a limited view of analytics, but you can't dig down to see everything about each visitor. On the other hand, you can use your website to mine all types of data about the people who come to visit. You can see which pages they like best. Outside tools like Google Analytics can track your visitors all around the web and tell you about their browsing habits. You can even target people who have been on the site before and serve ads to them. More on that later.

HOW TO BUILD A MUSIC WEBSITE

There are many options for those wishing to build a website. Gone are the days of having to be a computer programming whiz in order to build a satisfying website that gets you customers. There are a number of options to help you get your site up and running. here are the three tools I recommend most often:

- 1. Bandzoogle:** for easy, drag and drop functionality. No web experience required. Cons: Not many customization options. No power features like Facebook Pixels or entering retargeting codes.
- 2. Squarespace:** provides a quickly growing suite of beautiful, easy to use templates. It doesn't allow a ton of customization, but most of their sites don't need it.
- 3. Wordpress:** my favorite out of the trio. Wordpress is my platform of choice because of its many integrations and customization opportunities. It also has the highest learning curve, by far. I recommend hiring someone to set it up for you, unless you are very tech savvy or have a lot of

time for trial and error.

CHOOSING A DOMAIN NAME

This should be the easiest part of your website building experience. Your first choice should be yourbandname.com. If your band name isn't available, that's when you'll have to get creative. Here are some rules for choosing a domain name.

Make It Catchy - the easier it is to remember your website url, the more likely it is that people will visit.

Make it easy to spell - the last thing you want is a website that no one can spell. Not only will you get tired of repeating the spelling every time someone asks about it, but you'll kill your chances of getting word-of-mouth traffic.

Be Consistent - you want your url to be the same as your social media handles if possible. For example, my artist Kain uses the handle @callmekain on all social media sites. His website url is <http://www.callmekain.com>. That makes it easier for his fans to remember where they can find him. You should do the same thing.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF A BAND SITE

1. Bio - 3-5 sentences that describe who you are as an artist, and why people should listen to you.

2. Photos - you need high resolution photos on your website so that press outlets can download them when they write stories about you. They also make you look more professional in case someone stumbles upon your website.

3. Music Streams - you always want samples of your music available to stream on your website. Embed a Soundcloud, spotify or other web player so that casual browsers can press play and discover something they love.

4. Live Show Dates with Ticket Links - if you have upcoming shows, they should all be listed on your website, along with

links to purchase tickets. You'd be surprised at the amount of artists who don't keep this information up-to-date on the web.

5. Merchandise Shop - this is important. Give your fans the opportunity to show their love and support by offering physical merchandise like t-shirts and CD's. Worried about holding too much inventory? Try using a print-on-demand company like Printful (www.printful.com).

6. E-mail List Opt-In and Incentives - the goal of your website is to help you grow a direct audience that you can convert into customers. This is achieved by directing visitors to your e-mail list. We'll get into e-mail best practices in the next chapter.

TAKE ACTION:

If you haven't already, purchase your domain name and start working on your website. If you're not too tech savvy, I'd recommend starting with Squarespace. They'll let you purchase the domain and hosting all at one time. Choose a template you like, and fill it with each of the pages listed above. Then add the site to your bio on all your social media platforms.

CHAPTER 7: E-MAIL MARKETING

Email marketing is the foundation of an effective music career. Using the power of the internet, e-mail marketing allows you to speak directly to a group of loyal, engaged fans who are waiting to hear from you. E-mail is a form of permission marketing; where instead of interrupting a potential customer's day through commercials or web ads, you ask for their permission to reach out to them directly. By asking for permission, you have the opportunity to separate the people who really want to hear from you from the people who are just casually scrolling by. This difference is key when it comes to monetizing your art.

Did you Know that E-mail marketing boasts a return of \$44 for every \$1 spent? If you don't have an e-mail list already, it's time to get on it.

GETTING STARTED

To get started with e-mail marketing, the first thing you'll need to do is select a service provider. Many people start out with Mailchimp because it is free for the first 2,000 subscribers. As your list grows, you'll need a service provider with more functionality, including segmentation, automation and sequences. Companies update their offerings all the time, so visit <http://kdmr.us/emailroundup> for the latest comparison of e-mail service providers. Once you're set up, you'll want to embed an opt-in form on your website and you're on your way!

LIST BUILDING

List building is the fuel that drives your email marketing engine. Simply put, there's no point in having an email list if you don't have anyone on it. When you're starting from scratch, building a healthy and profitable e-mail list can feel like an impossible task. It's not as hard as it seems though, I promise.

The best way to attract new e-mail subscribers is with a lead magnet -- an exclusive piece of content or information given in exchange for their e-mail address. Your lead magnet needs to be something your fans would love. In the past, a free download of an exclusive song was enough to stoke excitement. Now that we're in the streaming era, music downloads are clunky and inconvenient. Even so, there are a number of things you can do to sweeten the pot.

LEAD MAGNET IDEAS:

- A Free Album/EP
- A Private Fan Club
- Discounts/Coupons
- Fans-only Experiences

YOUR NEWSLETTER

The e-mails you send to your e-mail list subscribers are critical to nurturing them into customers and superfans. The biggest mistake you can make is letting your list lie dormant until it's time for you to promote a new project or show. Your e-mail newsletter should be where your biggest fans learn the most about you. Tell them stories from the road or inspiration behind some of their favorite songs. Share snippets of new songs you're working on. Give them insight into the album process. Treat your e-mail list like you're writing to members of your own family, and they'll reward you like you're one of their own.

TAKE ACTION:

Sign up for an account on Mailchimp (www.mailchimp.com), then create your first lead magnet. It can be a download of an old EP, a private video of an old rehearsal session, or even an exclusive story. Once you've decided on the lead magnet, post your first opt-in form onto your website.

CHAPTER 8: SOCIAL MEDIA

One way to look at your online strategy is like an Octopus. If your website is the bran of the operation, then each social media channel is like a tentacle. Each moving in a slightly different direction, but with the same goal -- acquiring fans and turning them into customers. A well thought out and consistent social media strategy is a great, inexpensive way to expand the reach of your music. Let's briefly discuss each social media channel, plus their strengths and weaknesses. Because social media changes every day, I won't get too specific here. If I did, the information would be outdated by the time you got this book in your hands. Instead, you can visit <http://kdmr.us/resources> to see our latest rundown.

THE MAIN PLATFORMS

Facebook: the granddaddy of them all. With over 3 billion active users each month, nearly 1/3rd of the human population is on Facebook. If there's any social media platform that EVERY musician needs to be on, it's Facebook. While the most active audience tends to be a bit older (25 & up), the consumer insights and ad platform make it a must have.

Instagram: the wildly popular photo-sharing app isn't going anywhere any time soon. Facebook is pumping it up with actionable insights and easy to use ads as well. Use it to share beautiful images, video and behind the scenes content with your fans. Instagram has recently added its own version of Snapchat's Story feature, as well as a new feature called IG TV that allows you to create short form, vertical video content that you release as episodes.

Twitter: great for sharing quick thoughts -- 240 characters or less per post. Content comes and goes very quickly on Twitter. It's all about living in the moment, so if Twitter is your platform of choice, you'll need to post often.

Snapchat: where the teenagers live. Narrate your day, or use the selfie cam to add funny filters to your face. It's a great way to show fans what your life is like on a daily basis. Each post disappears after 24 hours.

YouTube: the king of video, and the second largest search engine in the world. A consistent strategy on YouTube can put tons of eyes on your content in a relatively short period of time. Share music videos, behind the scenes vlogs, or just short updates. It's up to you.

NATIVE CONTENT

The key to being successful on social media platforms is to make sure you understand exactly what each one is used for. You could make one video and just share it to each platform, but that wouldn't be the best use of your time. What works well on Facebook won't always work well on Instagram, and vice versa. Each platform has its own quirks, its own best practices, and its own place in the lives of its users. Use each platform in the way it was intended, and don't cut corners. The result will be a much more engaged following.

It's almost impossible to put effort into all social media channels at one time. I recommend picking one or two as your main platforms for audience growth. If you're overwhelmed, try using a tool like Buffer (<http://www.buffer.com>) or Hootsuite (<http://www.hootsuite.com>). These tools allow you to schedule your social media posts in advance, and even show some analytics so you can tell which posts are performing well, and what time is best to post.

THE 80/20 RULE OF SOCIAL MEDIA PROMOTION

When most independent artists post on social media accounts, they make one HUGE mistake. Every post is a shameless self promotion effort. They tag random people in posts, begging them for attention. They even go as far as to tag celebrities in their posts, hoping for a like or retweet.

“Get my new single on iTunes NOW!!”

“@kanyewest Check me out bro. I’m just trying to be like you.”

Instead of this rude spamming technique, adopt what I call the 80/20 rule. 80% of your posts should be normal, everyday posts. I’m not saying they can’t be about your music. They just shouldn’t include a purchase link or be overly salesy. Share behind the scenes photos in rehearsal. Share a picture of the latte you’re enjoying while catching up on business e-mails at Starbucks. Post about how your day is going. If you’re working a day job, don’t be afraid to post about that too. Let your fans see you for who you really are. Then with the other 20%, you can promote your call to action with a link for fans to follow. This 20% of your tweets will end up being responsible for most of the sales you earn from social media.

TAKE ACTION:

Decide which two social media platforms will be your main growth channels. Log into each and upload your profile art. Follow anyone you already know to be a big fan of your music, then thank them for being your supporters. This will start them on the superfan conversion path, and get you in the habit of giving to your fans instead of just taking.

CHAPTER 9 - PAID TRAFFIC

Social Media is great tool for reaching new audiences, but organic (read: free) traffic will only take you so far. The real power of social media comes into play when you learn how to use paid traffic to drive engagement and sales of your content. While there are a number of ways to pay for web traffic, the best platform for beginners is to start with Facebook Ads.

FACEBOOK ADS

Facebook's advertising platform is one of the most powerful, yet underutilized resources available to independent musicians. Using Facebook Ads, you can reach people across the world. You can target based on age, gender and even specific interests such as TV Shows, movies and other musicians. To get started with Facebook Ads, you'll first need to create your Facebook Ads Manager account at <http://www.facebook.com/adsmanager>. The process is simple. Just enter your credit card information and you're good to go. Inside the Ads Dashboard, you have access to a number of tools. Let's talk about some of the important ones.

AUDIENCES

Audiences are the key to your effective Facebook Ad strategy. An audience is a group of people on Facebook that you select for showing advertisements. You can select demographic data (age, location, etc), interests (page likes), and even life events such as recently engaged or graduating from college. The more you know about your ideal customer, the easier it will be to target people like them using Facebook audiences.

PIXELS

The Facebook Pixel is a small piece of code that you can embed in the header of your website. When the Pixel is installed, your website sends data to Facebook about who browses your website, what pages they visit, how much

time they spend, and even whether or not they purchase from you. By installing the Facebook Pixel and defining 'events' such as purchases or e-mail list sign ups, you can help Facebook understand exactly who your ideal customer is.

CUSTOM AUDIENCES

Custom Audiences allow you to create audiences of your own based on actions people have taken on your Facebook Page, Website or E-mail List. This is where your Facebook Pixel comes in handy. Facebook stores information about the people who have interacted with your page or website, and allows you to retarget those specific people with ads.

LOOKALIKE AUDIENCES

Lookalike Audiences are a powerful type of Custom Audience. Based on the data collected with your Facebook Pixel, Facebook can compare browsing habits from everyone else on their platform, and help you create an audience of people who behave similarly to people who have interacted with your page or website before.

Bonus: Check out this video by SEM Rush about how to find the perfect audience for Facebook Ad Targeting: <http://kdmr.us/fbtargetvideo>

CREATING AN AD

There are three steps to organizing your advertising efforts on Facebook: Campaigns, Ad Sets and Ads. At the Campaign Level, you set the objective for your ads. That objective can be brand awareness, engagement, or even purchases.

The Ad set level contains one or more advertisements. On this level, you'll set parameters for your targeting, budget, schedule and placement.

On the Ad level, you choose your ad copy and the image or video to go with it. It's a good idea to test out different headlines, photos and videos to see what works the best.

SETTING UP A FACEBOOK ADS FUNNEL

There's one major mistake that most musicians make on Facebook. They run sales ads to cold traffic -- people who have never heard of them before. This is the equivalent of seeing an attractive young lady, and instead of engaging in small talk or an introduction, you immediately ask her to marry you.

Instead of this approach, lead prospective fans down a funnel. For people who have never heard of you, try running a video view/engagement campaign, just to get in front of new eyes and ears. Then using a custom audience from page engagement, you can retarget people who watched a certain percentage of that video.

Now that you've warmed up the audience, you can send them another ad inviting them to join your e-mail list, or even a low-priced sales offer. The possibilities and combinations are endless.

CHAPTER 10: DATA & ANALYTICS

The cornerstone of any effective marketing campaign, especially in the internet age, is good data. Without good data, you're basically throwing darts at a wall blindfolded, just hoping to hit something. The more information you have about a customer (or potential customer), the easier it is to plan your campaigns. Instead of throwing money in all directions, you can concentrate your efforts on a well-vetted few and get much better results.

There are two types of data we look at in the marketing world. Demographics and Psychographics.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographics are the external characteristics of your customers. Things you can see without having a conversation with them. A few demographic characteristics include Age, Race, Location, Family Structure, etc.

PSYCHOGRAPHICS

Psychographics look beyond the surface and examine the behaviors of a potential customer. Psychographics tell you where a potential customer shops, what they like to read, where they get their news, etc.

In the past, the only way to get this information was to conduct surveys, hold focus groups or pay third parties a hefty fee to conduct this research for you. The internet has changed this completely. Using Data and Analytics tools available for free on the internet, you can track important information about your website visitors, e-mail subscribers and even your social media followers. Here are my favorite three platforms for customer data:

Facebook Insights: Facebook Page insights give you a great deal of information about your audience on the platform, including age, location, active times and related

pages. The age and location information will be especially helpful when you're ready to plan your first tour.

Social Media Analytics: Each social media platform has its own set of analytics. Behind Facebook, Instagram is the second best. It is great at telling you who is on your page, what your most popular posts are, and even what times your followers are most likely to be online.

Google Analytics: Google Analytics is the most robust of all the data platforms out there. By sticking a tracking code in the header of your website, you give Google the ability to track every single action a person makes on your website. Because so many websites have Google Tracking installed, Google can even tell you what affinities (outside interests) your customers have. This data comes in handy when you're trying to figure out your targeting for Facebook ads.

TAKE ACTION:

Play around with all three of these data tools. They can be daunting to look at, especially Google Analytics. However, if you can learn to read the data and start making educated guesses about it, you'll be able to take your online marketing efforts to astronomical levels.

CHAPTER 11: THE GREAT DIVIDE

In 2001, a peer-to-peer file sharing service called Napster debuted. Allowing people to download other's entire music libraries with just a few clicks, it turned the Music Industry upside down. Since then, the industry has been in a downward spiral. Music Industry revenues declined every year from 2001 until 2016, when finally, streaming revenues brought some hope.

In that same time period, the industry has changed a ton. What was once the Big Four major labels is now the Big Three (RIP EMI Records). Label staffs have shrunken to 1/4 of the size, and everything is being outsourced. In the meantime, tons of artist services companies have popped up to fill in the gaps. Sites like NoiseTrade, Pledgemusic and Patreon have allowed musicians to connect directly with their fans. And while the industry has contracted, many independent artists have been able to carve out successful careers, largely by using the methods discussed earlier in this book. But, there's a disconnect. With the rise of the artist service companies, many Music Marketers teach that the methods employed to make it in the old industry are all obsolete. Here's the kicker -- they're not.

It's true that major labels ignored digital strategies for far too long. It's also true that major labels don't have a solid grasp on maintaining direct to fan relationships. But even as the recorded music revenues have dropped as a result of these missteps; the core principles needed to build a solid foundation haven't. The music business, like all other business, relies on relationships. There are many people outside of just the labels that you'll need help from in order to be successful, and their criteria haven't changed over the years. If you have followed the plans laid out earlier in this book, you definitely have an advantage. But now it's time to use tried-and-true strategies to launch your career into the stratosphere.

CHAPTER 12: NETWORKING

Relationship building, also known as Networking, is a critical skill to your development as an artist. As you start to build a fan base, you'll have to lean on other people to help take your career to the next level. But if you don't know how to network effectively, you're going to end up stuck in your bedroom forever.

Many artists are afraid to go out and meet new people. Let's face it. No one wants to face rejection. You work hard on your craft, and you don't want to feel like you're being brushed off or disrespected. Luckily, there are ways to prevent that from happening in this business. Here are the keys to effectively networking with other artists and industry professionals.

1. Do Your Research: you should know who you're talking to, what they do, and how they can help you in your career. I've been at events in the past where artists have come up to me asking about all sorts of services that I don't offer. You wouldn't call an HVAC specialist to work on your toilet. In the same way, you shouldn't be approaching radio DJ's about getting your music on MTV Jams.

2. Use Preferred Contact Methods: everyone in the industry has a preferred method of contact. Some like to talk via e-mail. Others are okay with you calling their office. One thing's for sure. If you use the wrong communication, you'll stick out like a sore thumb and leave a bad taste in the mouth of the person you're pitching.

3. Communicate Your Value: The Music Business is not a charitable organization. No one is going to hand you anything. If you want someone to do something for you, you'll have to make it worth their while. Sometimes your music is so good that gatekeepers are clawing at the

chance to work with you. They know you're an investment that will pay off. Other times, you'll have to communicate that to them. Be prepared to list how many people are on your e-mail list, cite your social media numbers, or even how many people came to your last even in the city. Those types of facts will make anyone listen.

4. Follow Up: If someone doesn't get back to you the first time, it's not always because they didn't like your pitch. Quite often, e-mails get lost. Life happens, so don't be discouraged. Follow up at least twice. If you haven't gotten anything after your third correspondence, then it's probably time to move on.

Networking doesn't have to be nerve-wrecking. You just have to be prepared before you go at it alone. Do your research, show up prepared and you'll be just fine.

CHAPTER 13 - BUILDING YOUR TEAM

If you've been following along to this point, you've realized there's a lot of work to be done to make your career successful. So far, the strategies we've discussed have mostly taken place online, where it is easy to automate certain tasks and stretch yourself. But that's only part of the equation. As you grow, your workload will increase, and you will eventually need more people to help you get things done. Here's an overview of some of the first people you will need to recruit onto your team.

CONTENT/DESIGN TEAM

In today's industry, content is king. With the rise of streaming services, you are now competing with thousands of artists every week for attention from your fans. Not only that, but the rise of social media calls for much more content than was required in years past. It is increasingly important to have your visual brand together outside of just the music. For that, you'll need a content team complete with a photographer, a videographer and a graphic designer. Having each of those members on your team will help you to craft a signature look and feel for your brand.

MANAGER

The first person you will need to hire is your manager. If your professional music career is a company, then your manager is the CEO. The artist-manager relationship will be the most critical one in your pursuit of a successful career.

Your Manager's role is to help oversee every aspect of your career, and to make sure that every step you take is going to help you toward your career goals. They can help you with creative decisions, negotiate contracts, and recruit other members to your team. In exchange for their efforts, your manager will typically earn a commission between 10 and 20% of your gross earnings.

BOOKING AGENT

We're going to talk about live performances a little later, but once you've become a touring act, you're going to need a representative who can negotiate deals with venues and help route the tours for you. In exchange, the booking agent typically gets a commission between 5 and 10% of gross earnings from any shows they book directly.

PUBLICIST

Your publicist pitches newsworthy stories and announcements to press outlets for you, in hopes of gaining free attention for your cause. Most publicists work on a monthly retainer.

These are just a few people who will be integral to your success in the early days. As you grow, you'll need to hire a business manager, lawyers and even personal assistants. But if you start with these people in your circle, you'll be headed far.

CHAPTER 14: PRESS AND PUBLICITY

As impressive as it is to build fan relationships and income using direct strategies, there is one major thing that separates the world's biggest artists from the mildly successful ones -- press coverage.

Many people only listen to a new artist if they're recommended to do so by a really good friend, or they hear about them from one of their favorite media outlets. For this reason, coverage from the right press outlets can provide a tremendous boost in credibility and open doors that you would never be able to open on your own. Let's talk about how you can secure press coverage for your music and events.

THE PRESS KIT

As you are preparing to pitch your music to press outlets, you will need a way to communicate everything that is important about you. Rather than trying to include your bio and other information as text in an e-mail, you'll need to create a press kit to send to outlets. A press kit is a short document that contains all the relevant information that a writer would need in order to do a story about you.

Essential Items of a Press Kit:

- Bio (both the long and short version)
- Press Photos
- Notable Press Quotes
- A List of Your Top Career Achievements
- Links to Your Music and Videos

Your Press Kit should be attention grabbing, but if it has too many bells and whistles, it could distract from your music and make it more difficult for the recipient to make a decision about you. To avoid this, make your Press Kit simple and functional, with flashes of your personality injected

throughout.

Now that you've created your Press Kit, you're ready to reach out to the outlet of your choice. Like we noted earlier in the networking chapter, it is important to know exactly who you're pitching and understand what will catch their attention before you reach out to them.

Here's a template you can use when pitching press outlets.

[Recipients Name Here],

My name is [Insert Name Here]. I'm a [singer, rapper, etc] in a group called [stage name here]. We're a [genre] group influenced by acts like [insert 2 to 3 influences/similar artists]. I found out about you through [person, interview or other introduction point]. [Insert compliment about specific article, career highlight or other achievement].

I am writing to ask if you would consider [insert your ask here. Remember to be SPECIFIC]. I have included links to the song and our press material below for your review.

[Link 1: Song for Consideration]

[Link 2: Official Website]

[Link 3: Press Kit or Social Media]

If our song isn't a great fit, we would appreciate any criticism you may have to offer. Thank you so much for your time and consideration.

Best wishes,

[Your Name Here]

Remember, the key to great press is having a good story. No one will write about your music just because it sounds good. Be sure that your pitch highlights something that makes your music unique from the hundreds of other pitches they

may be getting. If you can capture a writer with a good story, they'll know their audience would be captured by it as well.

WORKING WITH A PUBLICIST

As stated in Chapter 13, it will eventually make sense to hire a publicist. A Publicist can help you secure press coverage, especially from more selective or high-profile outlets. While no reputable publicist will ever guarantee you a placement on a specific outlet, a publicist is only as good as their network and can usually get you exposure you wouldn't get on your own.

Publicists are typically hired for specific album release campaigns (4-6 months at a time), and will cost you anywhere from \$1,000 to \$5,000 per month starting out. That cost may sound steep, but the exposure a good publicist can get you will open the door to you making much more than that in return.

TAKE ACTION

Find three press outlets you'd like to secure coverage from. They can be local, regional, or national. Practice using the template above to get your first blog/news placements. I'd love to hear how it goes for you, so feel free to e-mail me your results at info@kdmrmusic.com.

CHAPTER 15: PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATIONS

Another way to garner interest in your music is to partner and collaborate with other musicians, companies and brands. Collaborations are great because when done right, they expose you to an audience who may have never heard of you without them. If you can partner with the right person, you can make amazing things happen. Kenan and Kel. Simon and Garfunkel. Nelly and Tim McGraw. You and....?

ON MUTUAL INTERESTS

When reaching out to people for collaborations, it is important to make sure there is a mutual interest. If there's no way the other person can benefit, then it would really be a waste of time, and it comes off as selfish on your part. Always make sure the other party gets something out of the deal. That will give you a great reputation among collaborators and open more possibilities down the road.

COLLABORATING WITH OTHER MUSICIANS

The easiest and most common collaborations occur between musician and musician. Perhaps there's a local act whose music vibes well with yours, but has a slightly different audience. If there's chemistry, you should definitely collaborate to make music with each other. You each get put in front of a new audience, plus you get the creative experience of working together.

Another form of collaboration is throwing joint concerts. This is perfect especially for those with smaller audiences. If you can only bring 50 people to a venue and the other artist can bring another 50-60, that's a packed house that any bar would be happy to have. That increases your chance of booking that date and sharing some of the profits as well.

COLLABORATING WITH BRANDS

Brand Partnerships and Sponsorships are another form of collaboration, this time between you and a brand. When you're starting out, you're most likely to get sponsorships from local brands like music stores and coffee shops, who may allow you to perform in their establishments. But as you build rapport (and your following), you can propose very interesting collaborations.

You could release your album exclusively at their store. You could partner with a music equipment manufacturer and make a project exclusively with their gear.

Sarah The Illstrumentalist (@Sarah2Ill) is a beatmaker, YouTuber and entrepreneur from Raleigh, NC. She currently has just over 8,000 subscribers on YouTube. Every week, she releases 2 or 3 videos that show her making beats, reviewing gear, and even going out and about on adventures to the record store. Because of her faithfulness to her audience, brands have been reaching out to her to place their product in her videos. Sometimes she is paid for the placement. Other times, she is gifted the equipment. I could tell from our interview that no matter what, she's excited because she would be doing all of these things even if there was no YouTube platform.

Being authentic and true to yourself makes it easy for brands to see your value, and makes certain collaborations a no brainer.

TAKE ACTION:

Reach out to a local brand in your area about collaborating on an event. Start small. You'll get a few no's, but I'd love to hear when you finally get that Yes, so e-mail me at info@kdmrmusic.com

CHAPTER 16: CONQUERING THE LOCAL SCENE

While the internet allows you to connect with hundreds of thousands of people all around the world without ever leaving your bedroom, you're going to have to get out of the house at some point. One thing most seasoned industry professionals will tell you is that before you can conquer the world, you have to conquer your hometown.

When getting started in music, most artists have a great desire to rise up the ranks of their local music scene. They want to be like the local acts who get top billing at all the clubs, who get the fancy write-ups in the local papers and maybe even some radio play. How do you become one of those acts? Here are 4 steps you can take that will help you become a hometown hero.

Build Your Audience – There are many relationships you will make in pursuit of success in music. None are more important than your relationship with your fans. A strong fan base is the key that will unlock any door in this industry. Focus on fans first, and they will reward you.

Be Active – You can't be known in your town if you aren't present. The local scene won't support you if you don't support it. Go out to the local venues. Check out open mics, mixers and showcases. Introduce yourself, and become an active participant in the local community. The relationships you build will be crucial in helping you get to the next level.

Always Be Networking – as you become more active in the local scene, you'll become familiar with the gatekeepers and power players of the area. Writers, Club Promoters, Radio DJs, and other, more established artists. Network with them. Not in a self-serving way, but in a way that brings value to all parties involved.

Be Humble – Understand that no one in your local scene owes you ANYTHING. As Grant Cardone says, “Success is your duty, obligation, and responsibility.” Each person in the scene has a different job to do, and the more you speak to people on the scene, the more you’ll understand that. Radio DJs have to play music to appease advertisers. Club Promoters need to get people into their venues. Writers need to tackle subjects that are interesting to the magazine’s readers. If supporting your music doesn’t help them accomplish those objectives, it’s likely they won’t be able to help you.

Becoming the Hometown Hero can be a daunting process, but the results are worth it. Just don’t expect anyone else to put in the work for you. The worst thing you can do is to not take responsibility for yourself, and badmouth others on the scene. You will burn bridges and make it even harder to gain traction for yourself. Approach everyone you meet with respect. Thank them for their support. As the saying goes, people may not remember what you say or do for them, but they will always remember how you made them feel. Good luck!

CHAPTER 17: LIVE PERFORMANCE AND TOURING

Live Performance is by far the most effective way to win fans over, as well as to turn your casual fans into die hard fans. Performing live is so powerful because it allows you to show your fans your full personality, as well as the passion and drive you put into your show. Have you ever heard a song on the radio and thought it was just ok, then seen it performed live and have a change of heart? Most people have. If you take your performances seriously, you can win over the hearts of skeptics too.

Performing live isn't just to win over the skeptics. It's the perfect way to reward your fans and convert casual fans into die hard supporters. By the time you go on a major tour, your fans have been waiting months to see you in person.

CHOOSING WHERE TO PERFORM

One of the primary challenges of planning a tour is deciding which cities to perform in. In a perfect world, every show would be packed, no matter where you throw the show. Unfortunately, that's not realistic, especially if you're just starting out. You can minimize your risk of tour failure by choosing your performance locations carefully.

This is one instance where all the data you've been collecting is key. If you've been selling music and merchandise on your website, you should have a file that includes the names and addresses of past customers. Scan your customer list to see where you have the highest concentrations of fans.

You can also see where your fans are concentrated by viewing your Facebook Insights. Facebook lists the top cities where your fans are located. The only catch is to make sure these are real, engaged fans and not just people who happened to click the "like" button on your page.

The most foolproof way to choose where to perform is to survey your fans. You can do this via social media, or even by sending an e-mail to your list.

“Hey guys. I want to go on the road and play some shows this summer. Where’s your hometown so I can come visit?”

Track the responses you get. If you see a high concentration of fans in any particular city, that’s where you’ll want to be sure to put on a show.

PLANNING THE LOGISTICS

When planning a tour, the devil is in the details. Choosing the cities to perform in is only the beginning. To maximize your profitability, you’ll need to consider a great deal of logistical information when making decisions. For example, how long will the drive be from each city to the next? Will there be enough time for you to sleep between arriving in the city and soundcheck? Who will be driving? Where will you park the tour van? Are you planning to go sightseeing prior to reporting to the venue? If you’re touring internationally, have you secured visas for each country you’ll be touring in?

If you don’t think about each of these things, you could end up spending a lot more money, and that will eat into your profits significantly.

BUDGETING

The most important aspect of touring is budget management. It’s the most important because it’s the easiest thing to get wrong. Touring will be the single most expensive task you take on, and if you make a mistake, you can lose tons of money. Aside from general travel expenses, you’ll need to pay your band members a per diem, pay for parking, do your laundry, and buy food on the road. If you aren’t good at planning out these expenses, you should consider hiring a

tour manager to handle this for you.

TIP: Proper planning is the key to success on the road. Sit down with your bandmates, manager and road manager and try to list every single expense you will encounter on the road. If you don't have enough money in the bank to cover those expenses **WITHOUT** relying on your income from the road, you probably shouldn't be touring just yet.

SELLING MERCH

Every kid's dream is to visit Disney World in Orlando, Florida. I remember my first time going. I was 7 years old. My mom had gotten us tickets by attending one of those time-share presentations. I was ecstatic. I finally got to see Mickey, Goofy and Tigger live and in the flesh! Before that, I had only seen them on TV. Later that day, we passed a merchandise stand that was selling the famous Mickey Ears hat. They were even putting names on the back of them! I begged my parents to get me one, and \$20 later, I had my hat. Were you paying attention? We didn't pay anything to get into the theme park, but we paid \$20 for a custom hat, and even more for food throughout the day.

Much like the Disney example, the biggest money maker on tour usually isn't ticket sales. It's merchandise. When your fans come to see you live, they are coming to take part in a one-of-a-kind experience. Why not give them the opportunity to taking home a one-of-a-kind souvenir to commemorate it?

You should always have merchandise for sale. T-shirts with cool designs or pictures of your band during rehearsals. Hoodies with your band's logo. You can even sell phone cases and stickers. Way back in Chapter 1, we talked about branding. Your brand image is what will help determining what products you sell. If you're a contemporary Christian act, you probably don't want to sell cigarette lighters or ash trays.

Did You Know? Print-on-demand services like Printful and Merchly allow you to design your products online and have customers order them without you having to purchase any inventory up front. This is a great avenue to test out new designs, as it doesn't cost you anything. Try designing a few products and posting them to your website today. If time passes and there's a product doing better than the others, you know you have a winner!

CHAPTER 18: THE ALBUM LAUNCH & MARKETING PLAN

The Marketing Plan is the most important part of your album release. It's important for quite a few reasons. First, your album will almost never have a momentum as great as it did on the day it came out. If you screw up a detail or mess up your release cycle, you won't get another chance until your next album -- that is, if you haven't given up and decided to just deliver pizzas instead.

Your marketing plan is what gives you the direction needed to ensure success. As Benjamin Franklin once said, "If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail." As tempting as it can be to just put out your music as soon as it's done, you need to strategize first if you want to find real success.

BEFORE YOU ANNOUNCE YOUR PROJECT

Define Your Product(s): Are you releasing an album or a single? Both? If you're just starting out, a single is likely the best way to go. It's a great way to engage with new listeners without having to invest the time and money into recording 10-15 songs and releasing them to deaf ears.

Define Your Target Market: who are you hoping to reach with this release? Again, the more you know about your potential customer, the easier it will be to reach them.

Set Your Goals/Objectives and Budget: Every action you take in this business should steer you toward one of two results -- more fans or more money. The best decisions will get you both at the same time. Perhaps your goal for this release is to get more fans in a specific location. Maybe you need \$50,000 to invest in a new tour van. Whatever your goal, it needs to be specific and measurable so that you can track your results once the campaign is underway and tweak things if need be.

You will also need to set your budget. How much can you realistically spend on this promotional plan, and where will it be allocated? Contractors fees? Facebook ads? Merch fulfillment? Remember, you should only spend as much money as you're willing to lose, just in case something is wrong and your plan isn't working. If you bet your whole house on yourself, you just might lose it if you aren't careful.

Choose Your Distribution Channel: Will this be sent to the major distributors? Is it a Soundcloud release only? Are you releasing it as a partnership with another brand? The answer to those questions will help determine what avenues you choose to promote your content.

Set Your Promotion, Press and Publicity Goals: What outlets will you reach out to for this release? How soon will you get them involved? If the outlet you desire coverage from isn't available, do you have backups?

Gather Your Marketing Assets: Get with your content team and create your artwork, photos and any video content you plan to deliver. If you wait until the album is already out,

THE ALBUM RELEASE TIMELINE

As we get further into the streaming era, the album release cycle is getting shorter and shorter. Because most albums aren't being distributed to physical retailers anymore, there isn't a need for a 5-6 month rollout. With that said, The one area that still requires a bit of lead time is press, so you'll want to reach out in enough time to get proper responses. Let's look a little deeper into the album release timeline.

Two Months Before Your Release:

- Start reaching out to national/major press.

- Release your first single.

- Update your website and social media profiles to show fans there is a project coming soon.

If you haven't already, go ahead and e-mail your list to let them know there's an album coming. You can even allow them to opt into a list that notifies them when the album is available for preorder.

4-6 Weeks Before Your Release:

Start a preorder campaign.

Release another single to keep excitement up.

Reach out to blogs and other short-lead press

2 Weeks Before Your Release:

Follow up with any remaining blogs to be sure your premier coverage is secured.

Start a countdown on your website and social media accounts.

Release Day:

Make sure your website and socials are updated to show the album is available, and include all relevant links.

Spend the day engaging with fans on social media, thanking them for their support, and relaxing because the album is finally out.

Post Release:

As the weeks go on, you'll begin to move into the post-release portion of your marketing strategy. Release more singles, more videos and announce your tour. The timeline will be determined by how well each component performs once the album is out.

NOTE: Music Marketing campaigns don't always have to be tied to a new release. You can set up mini-campaigns to draw attention to older catalog items. You can set up a press campaign to promote one-off performances. The key is just knowing how to market your music in the first place.

CHAPTER 19 - EVALUATING SUCCESS

I've stated quite a few times in this book that Data and Analytics are wildly important to both your Marketing efforts and your career as a whole. When you've put so much time and effort into creating music and orchestrating a 6-8 week pre-release campaign, you have to be able to analyze your results to make sure your plan is working.

As you create your marketing plan, there should be certain Key Performance Indicators (or KPIs) created. For example, if your goal for a release campaign is to get more millennial fans in Texas, one of your KPIs could be the amount of engagement your Instagram posts are getting by age and location.

Financial goals are even easier to track. It can be hard to set goals for the success of your first project, but you know that you want to at least break even. If you've spent \$100 on ads, but only made \$15 in sales, you have an 85% deficit to get out of, and you won't be able to keep it up much longer.

As a general rule, you will want to perform an audit at least once per week while your campaign is going on. Monitor your website traffic, your e-mail conversion rates, your social media following numbers, your sales figures and net profits.

If you find that something isn't working, you'll have to do some troubleshooting so that you can tweak things. If your website traffic isn't where you think it should be, check your referring sites in Google Analytics. Perhaps people aren't clicking your link on Pitchfork's album review. Or hopefully, Pitchfork was just using the wrong link.

If you aren't breaking even with Facebook Ads, you'll need to work on your audience targeting first. If that's not working, perhaps your sales copy and post image need to be updated to something more enticing.

Once your album cycle is completed (ie: you've exhausted all your content resources and you're no longer touring), take some time to look at your results as a whole. What did you like about the rollout? What did you hate? Did your music resonate with an audience that you found surprising? If you had it to do over, would you do things the same way? Asking yourself these tough questions will help you get better with each campaign.

CHAPTER 20 - GETTING CREATIVE

We've discussed all the major components of a great Music Marketing plan. But what we haven't done is shown you some of the great advancements of the internet era, and just how creative you can get with your music rollout campaigns. Here are a few examples:

CROWDFUNDING PLATFORMS

Kickstarter - the original crowdfunding platform. Instead of trying to save your money to fund your album and marketing campaign, allow your fans to contribute to a campaign that will fund it. Kickstarter is all or nothing, so it's best to set an achievable goal.

Hip Hop Artist NANCE from Raleigh, NC recently raised over \$10,000 on Kickstarter to support the release of his debut album, *No Excuses*. If you keep your fans heavily engaged, they'll be chomping at the bits to support you in your time of need.

PledgeMusic - PledgeMusic is similar to Kickstarter, but it is designed specifically for musicians. Instead of an all or nothing campaign, PledgeMusic is set up as more of a creative preorder challenge. What's also cool about PledgeMusic is that they report their sales to SoundScan, so you can find yourself on the Billboard Charts if you're successful on the platform.

Note: Kickstarter and PledgeMusic take a percentage of your sales made on their platforms. Be sure to include that figure into your budgeting, or you'll be in for an unpleasant surprise when the campaign is over.

INTERACTIVE EXPERIENCES

You can create and deploy a Custom Website or Mobile App to give your fans a one-of-a-kind album launch experience. Just recently, Kanye West decided to release 5 albums in 5

weeks for the months of May and June 2018. He debuted the albums at live, private listening parties across the country. For those who couldn't attend live, you could listen in via a livestreaming app called Wav. It wasn't the smoothest album or app debut, but it was definitely trendsetting.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Bandcamp Subscription - Bandcamp offers a service where members can pay a monthly fee to subscribe to your members only area. Here, you can serve them content that isn't available anywhere else, much to their delight.

Patreon - Patreon is also a subscription platform that takes its inspiration from the Renaissance era. Renaissance painters used to be paid a salary -known as a patronage - by wealthy donor families. The most famous example is the Medici family, who supported the works of Leonardo Da Vinci and Michelangelo among many others. Like the patrons of old, Your supporters - or patrons - help to fund your art. They agree to donate a set amount per month or per "thing" that you deliver.

J. Filt is a Music Producer from the Atlanta, GA area. He regularly posts beatmaking tutorials on YouTube under the name VerySickBeats. He recently started a Patreon account where people who found him on YouTube can subscribe and get extra goodies like drum kits and sound packs in exchange for their financial support. He's currently making nearly \$200 per month from this one revenue stream alone! The opportunities for you are endless.

TAKE ACTION

Got a creative release idea of your own? I'd love to hear about it. E-mail it to info@kdmrmusic.com and I'll give you my personal feedback. I can't wait to hear from you.

CONCLUSION

If you've made it to this point, I'd like to congratulate you. Not only are you a great musician, but you are now equipped with the tools to find your target audience, convert them into fans, and promote your next album, single or tour effectively and profitably.

The marketing process is never ending. Each campaign will teach you new things about yourself, your fans and your business. There will be new technology invented every few months. There will be new platforms, new ideas and new strategies every month. But now that you're equipped with the foundational knowledge, you can tell the difference between a passing fad and a practice that's here to stay.

This book was meant to be a brief overview. Just enough information for you to act on without being overwhelmed. Great marketing, however, takes practice. Make it your personal goal to get a little better every day. Get better at targeting. Get better at understanding your fans. Get better at writing sales copy. Each incremental adjustment will get you one step closer to living the life of your dreams.

A full time career as a musician isn't complicated. In fact, it's quite simple. Find your fans, turn them into customers, and repeat. It's not rocket science, but it takes drive. And I believe you have that.

Good Luck!
BJ

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

At KDMR Music, We're committed to helping you succeed in the Music Business. We post new content every week to help you navigate the industry. Check out the links below for more info or to stay in touch.

The KDMR Music Indie Blog - <http://kdmr.us/blog>

Our YouTube Channel - <http://youtube.com/kdmrmusic>

The Indie Club - our private Facebook Community just for independent musicians. Network, ask questions, and catch live streams breaking down the latest industry news by joining here: <http://kdmr.us/indieclub>

E-mail us: info@kdmrmusic.com