

MUSIC MARKETING HACKS VOL 1

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT...

# MUSIC MANAGEMENT FOR THE INDIE ARTIST

MANAGING YOUR MUSIC CAREER,  
EXPLODING YOUR POPULARITY &  
GETTING DISCOVERED BY A TOP MANAGER



FREE CHAPTER

ARTISTPR.COM

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## Introduction

Let's face it: making a living as a musician isn't easy. Neither is hitting it big in the music industry. It takes a combination of talent, persistence, and luck. You've got to be willing to stick to it even when the going is particularly hard – even when gigs are hard to come by, people don't pay, and you feel like nobody's ever going to buy your music on a scale big enough to help you support yourself. It's frustrating and it can be easy to lose faith. In short, being a professional musician isn't for the faint of heart.



The mistake that a lot of musicians make is thinking that getting a manager is the magic solution that will transform them from unknowns to superstars. While it's certainly true that having a manager can make some aspects of a music career easier to manage, it's not a cure-all. In fact, the best thing you can do to attract a manager is to act like you don't need one – and the best way to accomplish that is to manage your own career instead of waiting for someone else to do it for you.

### **What You Will Learn in This Book**

The goal of this book is to help musicians learn how to manage their own careers – with the goal of eventually attracting a professional manager. That might sound contradictory, but it's not. Attracting a manager is a little like applying for a loan – if you seem like you don't need money, you can almost always get money. Managers want to represent musicians who have taken control of their own

careers. That means that self-management is the way to go.

To start, I'll explain what a music manager is and what they do. If you've never had a manager you might not understand what the job entails. To manage your own career, you have to know what the scope of a manager's job is – and what it isn't. After that, I'll walk you through what managers look for in the artists they choose to represent. The fact is that no manager wants to deal with a troubled client – especially one who's not going to earn them huge money. It's important to be realistic about that. Of course, it's equally essential to know what you should look for in a manager. Not all managers are created the same. Having a good match in terms of personality and expectations is crucial if you want to have a successful working relationship – and a successful career.

Next, I'll tell you a little bit about the legal basics of signing with a manager. Any reputable manager will

require that you sign a contract to have them represent you. You need to know what's standard in the industry, and what's not – and you also need to know what your rights are as an artist and how to ensure that you are protected. I'm not a lawyer, but I'll give you the basics and then you can run any contract you get by an entertainment lawyer before signing.

After that, I'll tell you when you need to self-manage your career first before you try to get a manager. This point is one that many up-and-coming musicians miss. They think that managers should be falling at their feet. The truth is that, no matter how talented you are, you are going to have to do a bit of hustling and self-management before you get a manager. There might be a story out there about some wunderkind who gets discovered at their first gig – but those stories are definitely the exception and not the norm. That's why musicians who have been on the road for years can sometimes win the “Best New Artist” Grammy – they're new to the general public, but that doesn't mean they're beginners.





One of the most important things you can have as a musician is a detailed business plan. That might not sound sexy or exciting, and very few musical artists want to think of what they do as business. However, if you expect to make a living as a musician, you need to spend at least some of your time thinking of music as a business. If you don't deal with the financial aspects of your career, things can fall apart very quickly. We'll talk about why you need a business plan, and also go over the key elements of a business plan so you can create your own.

After that, we'll talk about a related issue – marketing yourself or your band. The internet makes it easier than it ever has been before to reach a wide audience, but you still need to know how to use it wisely if you want to be successful. I'll tell you everything you need to know, including information on why you need to build a mailing list and how you can use it; how to use social media to engage with your fans; why you need to set up a great website with an online store; how to book gigs and tours; and much more.

In the final chapter, I'll give you some tips on how to get a manager to “discover” you. I put the word in quotes because that term is accepted in the industry, yet there is an art to being discovered. It's much more than simply playing gigs and hoping that a manager will see you. You need to play it smart, finding ways to put yourself in the path of managers when the time is ripe – and then you have to be prepared to let them bask in some of the glory as they claim that they knew

about you first. It doesn't matter if you've been playing gigs for ten years – you still need to be “discovered,” as silly as that might sound.

By the time you are done reading this book, you will have all of the information you need to take a huge step forward with your career. You'll be able to craft an intelligent and effective business plan and come up with a marketing strategy. With those things in place, you can attract new fans, book more gigs, make more sales – and eventually, get the manager who – with a little bit of luck – can catapult you to stardom.

Let's get started.

## **Chapter 2: How To Match Up With The Right Manager**

How do you know if a manager is a good match for you and your band? In some ways, this is a matchmaking situation that's far more stressful than dating. After all, a good portion of your career – and your future success – will be in your manager's hands. It's essential to find someone that you trust and like. You don't have to be best friends, but you do have to be comfortable enough with the person you choose to spend a big chunk of your time with them. Familiarity can definitely breed contempt, so it's important to keep that in mind.

You need to know what you want in a manager. What do you expect the manager to do? What personality types clash with you and your band, and which ones do you think will work? Likewise, you need to know what a good music manager looks for in a band. What do they expect from you? What can you do now to

prime yourself for the day when you do finally get a manager? That's what we'll talk about in this chapter.

## **What Managers Look For In Musicians**

We begin with the characteristics and qualities that a reputable manager wants to find in the artists they manage. Managers are willing to work with bands and musicians to help them hone their images and so on, but very few will be willing to work with an artist who hasn't done – at bare minimum – the following things.

1. Know who you are as an artist. It is not a manager's job to try to carve out a niche for you or help you figure out what you want to do with yourself, musically speaking. It's very hard to market a jack of all trades. You can stretch yourself musically, but you still need to know who you are at your core. Some of the things that you need to know are:
  - a. What genre of music do you play? Of course you can play more than one genre,

or blend genres, but a manager is going to want to know which radio stations to call on your behalf. Are you a country artist? Classic rock? Jazz? You might find musical genres to be limiting or frustrating, but they exist for a reason. It's not reasonable or effective to market to everybody at the same time. Having a target audience helps you narrow your marketing options and connect directly with the fans who are most likely to buy your music and come to your shows.

- b. Do you want to be a huge star, playing stadium shows? Or would you prefer to play smaller venues? Not every musician wants to be a huge superstar, and it can help to know that going in.
- c. What are you willing to do and not do? Are you the type of person who's willing to compromise a bit to make things more

## Music Management for the Indie Artist

commercial, or are you determined to follow a particular path? The more you know about your own boundaries and limitations, the more attractive you will be to a manager.



2. Build up the biggest following possible in your hometown or home region. A lot of managers won't even think about representing an artist who can't sell out the best club in their hometown. Bands who have a dedicated following are much easier to promote than bands who don't. No manager is going to want

to start from scratch with a band. When you have a group of dedicated fans, you have a base to build from. (That's why they call it a fan base!) It's even better, of course, if you can expand your base to surrounding areas. The larger your following is, the more eager a manager is going to be to represent you.

3. Have a significant and well-thought-out online presence. There's no getting around the fact that online marketing is hugely important to any artist trying to make a living today. You can't get away with a bare bones website with content that's three years old and a lackluster social media presence. You need a professional-looking site with a store, and a social media presence that you keep active and engaging. You also need to have a significant number of followers on social media. Having a strong online presence shows a manager that you're serious about your career and that you're willing to do what it takes to engage and connect with



your fans.

4. Master your live performance skills. Shows like American Idol and The X Factor have, in some cases, sold the idea that you can be a successful recording artist even if you've never been on stage.

In some cases, they've promoted that idea even when it's been demonstrably untrue. American Idol winner Carrie Underwood is a prime example. They presented her as someone with little performance experience who had never travelled. The truth was that she had been touring small venues in the Midwest for years. Don't fall into the trap of thinking that live performances don't matter. Being able to put on a compelling show that gets people excited and energized is essential. Perform as much as you can and work out the kinks until your show is as good as it can be.

If you can get these four things on track, you'll be doing quite a bit to help attract a manager when the time is right. However, it's not enough to do things right – you also have to be careful not to fall into some common traps that snag artists and drive managers away.

What do I mean by that? There are some musicians who just have bad reputations. The difficulty of managing them may offset any material gains that the manager hopes to make as a result of managing them. Here are some things to avoid if you want to attract a quality manager.

1. Stay away from drugs. I know that “sex, drugs, and rock ‘n roll” go together and always have, but there are very few managers out there who want to get involved with an artist who's an addict. Addiction is messy business. When a manager is looking to sign a new artist, they're going to be doing mental calculations to help them figure out what their return on the

relationship is going to be. An artist who's addicted to drugs is going to require a lot of extra help and attention – things that an artist who wasn't addicted wouldn't need.

For example, they might run into trouble with the law and need to be bailed out of jail. The manager might need to find a criminal lawyer to handle drug charges. They also have to deal with the negative publicity that might result from being arrested or charged with possession. Finally, they would also have to consider the possibility of you overdosing and ending your career. It's hardly uncommon for musicians to die of drug overdoses. You might look at certain famous musicians such as Janis Joplin, Jimi Hendrix, Michael Jackson, Amy Winehouse and so many more, and think that their musical legacies would be enough to make any manager proud. However, there's no doubt that managing these artists, as talented as they were, had to be a nightmare in some ways.

Keep it clean and you'll have a much better chance of attracting a manager.



2. Don't be a prima donna. Think about some of the most famous movies about bands both real and fictional. One of the most common story elements in those movies is that there is at least one band member who is an unbearable prima donna. The lead singer in *The Commitments* starts off not even thinking of himself as a singer, and by the end he's alienated everybody in the band with his demands and egotistical behavior. There are plenty of different ways to

be a prima donna. Some musicians start thinking of themselves as better than they are, or believing that they're irreplaceable. Others refuse to compromise in any way, adopting a "my way or the highway" mindset that leaves no room for input from anybody else. Even if the prima donna behavior translates to being rude to fans, posting rants on Facebook, or giving flight attendants a hard time, no manager is going to want to take on a problem child as a client. Act like a grown up and you're a lot more likely to find representation.

3. Don't be desperate. Let's face it. There are few things more unattractive than desperation. It's natural to have a strong desire to make it as a musician and to want to be as successful as you can be. However, if you are so desperate that you're willing to do anything, it can actually undercut a manager's efforts and make it more difficult to manage you than it needs to be. Sometimes musicians who are desperate do

crazy things like book gigs behind their manager's back, or hide income. They might even try to do an end run around their manager and call a record label directly, an amateurish move that can make both the artist and the manager look unprofessional. The bottom line is that having a fire in your belly is good, but being desperate is not.

In other words, you want to be as professional and put-together as you possibly can be. The more in control you appear to be, the more likely that a manager will want to represent you.

## **What You Should Look For In A Manager**

Now let's look at things from the opposite angle. What should you be looking for in a manager? It is not a good idea to jump at the chance of having a manager

just because someone approaches you. There are a few isolated stories of family members successfully managing an artist's career (Michael Jackson's father Joe Jackson comes to mind – he managed the Jackson Five and Michael's early career.) However, there are just as many stories of artists who handed the reins over to family members or bad managers and ended up losing everything as a result. You don't want to fall into that trap. It is better to have no manager at all than to have a bad manager.

Here are some of the things you should look for – and verify – before you sign on the dotted line.

1. Make sure that your manager actually has relevant experience in the music industry. You want someone who has a degree in musical management or an MBA. If they don't have a relevant degree, they should have years of experience as a successful music manager or artist. You should be able to verify their experience independently – in other words,

don't just take their word for it. Do your research. Ask around and find out as much as you can about them.

2. A good manager should be able to point to past successes and give you a list of artists they've represented as references. Don't just assume that the artists will give good references – call them and ask questions. Even a string of platinum records on the wall isn't a guarantee that a manager will be a good fit for you. Take the time to talk to the people they've represented and ask how they do business and what it's like. Asking pointed questions might be uncomfortable at times, but you'll be thankful you did.





3. Your manager should have a real business as a manager, not just a side business. You want someone who's successful enough to earn a living managing artists, not somebody who's just doing it for kicks. That means that any manager you consider should have:
  - a. A professional-looking business card
  - b. A real, brick-and-mortar business address that is dedicated to music management
  - c. A verifiable client list

The key here is that you want to make sure that your manager is legitimate and not a pretender. If you don't check these things out –

and I mean go to their office, meet the staff, and so on – you could end up being managed by someone who's working full-time in another industry entirely. Do your homework.

4. A potential manager should have a concrete plan detailing how they will help you grow your career and sign with a label if you haven't already done so. I don't mean that they have to have every single move planned out, but they do need to have a big-picture plan for how they will manage and guide your career. You don't want somebody who's going to fly by the seat of their pants. You want someone who is professional, responsible, and committed.
5. Choose someone who has experience and contacts in your genre, and who really likes the

music you create. This isn't a small thing. There's a reason that most of the country artists who appear on *The Voice* choose Blake Shelton as their coach – and why he makes such a big deal of playing up his Nashville connections when he pitches them. A successful rock manager might be able to help a country artist, but they're not going to have the same connections that a manager who's dedicated to country will. Be smart about it and look for someone who knows your genre inside and out. They should be knowledgeable about music and have plenty of relevant contacts they can reach out to on your behalf.

One of the most important things for you to remember is that your manager will be working for you, not the other way around. The word “manager” can be a bit misleading, but don’t confused it with “boss.” You are the one paying your manager. That means that you have the right to require certain things from them – and to treat the process of signing with a manager like a job interview. That’s what it is. That’s why you should verify everything and take the time to call references and ask around before you sign.



Just as we did in the previous section, let's look at some managerial red flags – things that should send you running for the hills instead of signing with a manager. You need to keep in mind that the person who is managing your career will have a great deal of influence and authority. You need to take steps to ensure that they are trustworthy. Here are some of the things that you should keep in mind.

1. If a potential manager doesn't have a real business, or hasn't earned any money as a manager, then you shouldn't sign with them. Music management is one of those things that everybody thinks they can do. The truth is that most people can't. You don't want to end up with somebody incompetent or who's only in it half-heartedly. Any manager who never meets you in their office or can't provide a list of artists they've worked with – a verifiable list, not just name dropping – is someone you should avoid.

2. Keep in mind that your manager is very likely going to have to wear many different hats, especially at first. Don't hire anybody who's ignorant of essential aspects of what their job will be. For example, you don't want to hire an 80-year-old guy who's never heard of Facebook. You need someone who is savvy and competent, and who has the skills to do everything you require. Again, remember this is a job interview. You are looking for a qualified candidate, not an unpaid intern.
  
3. Run away from anybody who insists that you sign a power of attorney. Power of attorney is no joke, and it is far from standard in the industry. We'll get into some of the legal requirements of a good management contract in the next chapter, but you do not want to do business with anybody who expects you to sign away your right to choose which contracts to sign or where to play.

4. Stay away from a manager who is shy or has difficulty talking to people. It's unlikely you'll run into this trait if you are considering signing with a successful manager, but it's still important to keep in mind. A big part of a manager's job is going to entail getting on the phone. They will sometimes have to call people they don't know, and even schmooze strangers at shows and clubs. If the person you hire is reluctant to do those things, they're not going to get you very far. You need someone who has the personality to get out there and promote your career – not someone who's going to hide.
5. Try to find out what you can about your potential manager's organizational skills. Managing a musical artist is a lot like juggling. The person who does it well has to be able to keep a lot of different balls in the air. If you visit someone's office and it looks like a bomb exploded on their desk, ask yourself how likely it is that they'll be able to keep track of what you need. I'm not

saying that their desk needs to be clear, but chaos is not a quality that you want in a manager. You want someone who has their act together.

6. Just as no manager wants to represent an artist who's a prima donna, you don't want a manager who acts like a prima donna, either. Even a very successful manager needs to understand their place in the pecking order. They work for you, not the other way around. Anybody who gives you signs that they want to come in and take over, or who adopts the attitude that they're the one calling the shots, is someone you should avoid. You want someone who will give you advice, not someone who's going to try to silence you or not listen to your point of view. You can determine whether a potential manager has this characteristic by checking references and also asking some questions about how they see their role. If you get the sense that they think they're going to be your boss, get out while



you can. There's just no way that a relationship like that is going to work because you'd be starting out with things flipped on their head.



I hope you're starting to get an idea of what a manager does and what you should look for. Hiring a manager isn't like ordering a pizza. You need to go into the negotiation with a clear idea of what is acceptable and what's not. Don't get caught up in whether or not you like the person in question. Would it be great if you and your manager ended up being friends? Sure. Is it a requirement? Absolutely not.

You'll want to stay away from anybody who acts like a jerk, of course – if they act that way with you, they're very likely to do it with other people too. When they're representing you, that's a real problem. However, you don't have to be socially compatible.

Sometimes you might meet someone charming, but that doesn't mean that they're competent. Put competence and experience first, and you won't go wrong.

Once you have been approached by a manager, the next step is to sign a contract. This is an area where a lot of musicians make mistakes. They don't know what to look for, or what's considered standard in the industry. In the next chapter, we'll talk about the legal ins and outs of music management so you can evaluate your contract and make the best decision for yourself.

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## **About Us**

Founded in 2005, ArtistPR works with some of the most talented music journalists, published authors, and accredited public relations professionals to promote indie artists to thousands of music magazines & blogs, press, media, radio stations, record labels and more.

### **Our Mission**

Our mission is to provide independent musicians with the best marketing resources and services that will empower them to grow their fan base and sales so that they can make the world a happier place by making more music.

### **Our Core Values**

Our core values are a guiding set of principles that we use to determine our behavior & culture, direct our growth efforts and service our customers.

- **Customer Focus:** To help our clients succeed in growing their online sales so they continue to pursue their passions and focus on doing what they love. To continually find new ways to better serve our customers.
- **Accountability:** To accept 100% responsibility for our actions and results. To see it, own it, do it and improve it. To give our best efforts to right what is wrong.
- **Diligence:** To act with a sense of urgency, enthusiasm and passion. To be organized, efficient and effective. To give 100% attention, focus & effort in everything that we do.
- **Flexibility:** To have the courage to change. To be nimble, agile and graceful when adapting to changes.
- **Growth:** To be committed to improving ourselves both professionally and personally. To consistently create new products, services and processes that will help our clients and our business grow.

- **Integrity:** To act with honesty, sincerity and do what is right. To keep our word and honor our commitments. To treat every person with respect and professionalism.
- **Resiliency:** To be persistent, follow through and never give up. To stay optimistic and resourceful in the face of obstacles and failures. To learn from our mistakes and see them as an opportunity to improve our business and do better for our clients.
- **Results Oriented:** To be driven by achieving solid results for our clients and our business. To take action and strive for excellence.

## **Our Beliefs**

Our beliefs define why we do what we do and why we feel that our work is important.

- We believe that music is one of the greatest gifts to mankind. It touches the soul, it brings people together and it can heal the world.

- We believe that the world would be a happier place if more people had the courage to pursue their music-making passion and became successful at it.
- We believe that in empowering musicians to create financial success doing what they love, we are contributing to making the world a better place.
- We believe that most independent musicians work way too hard for way too little because they have never had the right training, resources and expectations.
- We believe that a solid understanding in business planning and marketing strategy can lay the foundation of success for any talented musician.
- We believe that success does not happen overnight or by accident. It takes time, effort and commitment. It requires serious strategic planning and implementation.

- We believe that greater success and better results are attainable for those who are willing to take action, do the work and put in the time.
- We believe that when we help grow an indie artist's fan base and sales, we set off a chain reaction that has a positive impact on the musician and their family AND the fans who are uplifted by the music and their fans' families.
- We do not exist solely to maximize profits because we realize that profit must be a result of our contribution and service to our customers.

To learn more about us and see if we can help you take your music career to the next level, please visit <http://www.ArtistPR.com>