

HOW TO PROMOTE YOURSELF AND YOUR MUSIC: 10 WAYS

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Someone has to do the leg-work and promote your songs. If not, your songs will remain on your desk or stored in a file cabinet.

Getting someone to take notice of your music is hard work and not all musicians enjoy promoting themselves and their music.

Walking into a music studio and asking to see the boss in order to submit your songs is not an effective way to get your songs marketed in today's music environment. Leaving your demo with the receptionist usually means that it will be "deep-sixed" within hours or minutes!

Unless you know someone who is active in the music industry, it is next to impossible for you to have someone listen to your songs.

Here are ten approaches to getting your music out to the public.

Remember to always identify yourself as the creative director and not as songwriter.

1. Locate a band that plays your style of music. Befriend them and then give them a demo CD or video of your songs. If they should decide to play them at the venues, this will gain exposure for you and your music. They may even be willing to record them for you in a studio or live. I suggest that you make a demo of one or two of your "hottest" songs on a CD and place your very best song on Track one. Make sure that the introductions are short (no longer than four measures) and get the chorus or them quickly. Remember that up-tempo songs get marketed quicker than ballads, and Seasonal songs (Christmas) are almost impossible to promote without a prior track record of hits.

2. Referrals from a friend or acquaintance in the business really opens doors. Always get permission to use their name before verbally dropping it to others, or including it in a correspondence. " _____ suggested that I contact you." or "Your name was given to me by _____" A name of a prominent mutual friend will probably get you past the receptionist. Contacting them by phone or email is a good way to ask if you can submit a song for their

consideration. If the answer is "yes," make sure you send a professional-looking package the very next day and mark it "Requested Material."

3. Make sure that your demo is "hot." If you're not a great singer, hire someone who is. Pay them to sing the song. Most demos can sound professional with a vocalist, keyboardist, and bassist. Most producers have to hear a near finished product to appreciate what the song really sounds like. Make sure you mention a particular artist or band that your songs are most suited for. This will greatly assist the producer to "hear" the song in light of a particular group. If you are sending a vocal that fits a particular female vocalist, don't record it using a male vocalist and vice versa.

4. Use an established music attorney who can guide you through copyrights, contracts, and so on. Make sure that they handle your type of music. Their professional contacts in the music industry are most valuable. Don't waste time sitting in their office until you are offered a deal (contract). Remember time is money!

5. Cold calls can be difficult. These should be avoided, but occasionally it is necessary to contact an industry person who you don't know. It is best to contact him or her ahead of time and ask permission to send a demo of your songs. Include in the package a cover letter on your company letterhead stationery. State what you expect them to do for you. You should include a high-gloss business card listing you as creative director, a short bio, CD or DVD demo of your songs, lyric sheet, and a two-sentence summary of your company and recent successes. Make sure to include your name, address, phone number, email address, and web site address on all items submitted.

6. Attend music industry conventions and meet people in the business. The following organizations hold such meetings: ASCAP, BMI, SESAC, and NARAS, NAMM. Awards events, industry parties, showcases, and fundraisers are good places to meet people in the industry. I suggest that you do not try to market your songs at these gatherings. Get the names of influential people and ask them if you can send them your material. If "yes" make sure to send them the "requested material" within two days.

7. After submitting the CD to a producer, it is wise to follow up with a phone call or email within a two-week period. Call to ensure that your package was received and if there has been any reaction to the material.

8. Obtaining a foothold in this business takes perseverance, persistence and patience. You must be assertive (focused) but not aggressive (annoying). You must project an air of confidence in your ability and in the quality of your songs. Avoid pretense and be yourself.

9. Here are a few calling tips:

- Never call the day after a 3-day weekend.
- .Never call early in the morning.

- Never call anyone on Friday afternoon or evening.
- Never call anyone between Christmas and New Year's or prior to a vacation such as July 4th, or Thanksgiving.

10. Online Marketing is a great avenue to explore.

Today, there are many musicians who are selling their songs and CDs online rather than going through the traditional channels of music publishers and record companies. It is relatively easy to create an immediate "buzz" and market your own songs online. Videos of your songs or group can be posted on You Tube, Google Video, and so many more sites.

You can connect your music to organizations that promote "ringtones."

You can promote, sell and distribute your music through the following networks: iTunes, Amazon.com, Pandora Radio, CD Baby, Facebook, You Tube.com, Last.fm, Twitter, Rovi/The All Music Guide, Live365.com, SHOUTcast.com, and MySpace.com.

It is important to contribute informative articles in your area of expertise through press releases (music news), emails, newsletters, online surveys, and ezines.

In fact, my article "Arranging Music and Sheet Music" was accepted as an EZine article and I earned "Expert Author status" and the article appears on their high-traffic home page.

My final advice for you is to explore every possible avenue to get your music out in the marketplace. If you are a member of a band, appoint one person to handle the marketing of your group and don't leave one stone unturned in your quest to have others enjoy your music.

Every musician should own, study and absorb the excellent material contained in the book, *How to Promote Your Music Successfully on the Internet* 2011 by David Nevue. This can be downloaded as a PDF file and purchased at <http://www.musicbizacademy.com/bookstore>.

With perseverance, adequate research, and a "never quit" attitude, you can produce great music and be a success by making a living at music. Beethoven said; "*Patience, diligence, persistence, and sincerity will lead to success*" (Vienna 1792).