



# ROCK

**BUILDING BANDS**  
**In The**  
**DIGITAL AGE**

**JOHN HARTMANN**

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# ROCK

## BUILDING BANDS In The DIGITAL AGE

John Hartmann

A pure poet walking naked in the woods  
Sings his songs to the birds  
When he chooses to make music the  
Instrument of his survival  
He must then steel himself  
And the poet must become a  
WARRIOR

This Book is Dedicated to  
Ron Levi

“When it comes to music there ain’t but  
two things, good and bad.”

Louis Armstrong

“The object of personal management is  
to build duration into the act.”

Colonel Tom Parker

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# Foreword

I have been a personal manager for over 40 years, and have had the good fortune to be involved in the management of many major artists from Michael Jackson to Miley Cyrus. When I am asked about my occupation, the easy answer is “I’m in the music business.” It is a profession I only mastered through trial and error over a lifetime of practice.

Unlike most professions, there is very little opportunity to learn about the business side of music in an educational setting. Not many colleges actually have music industry related classes; those that do are few and far between. Frankly, most relevant courses are taught by teachers with little or no history in the actual “business” of music. Professor John Hartmann is the exception. He has great, first-hand, personal experience and insight; consequently.... his classrooms overflow!

Sadly missing was a comprehensive textbook that clearly identified and explained the unique process of developing a professional career for a promising act. Now, finally, there is such a book, In “Rock,” Hartmann demonstrates his vision and understanding of the new digital paradigm. His observations are clear, concise, accurate.

This book should be required reading for anyone desiring the unique adventure and ultimate reward of exploring the business of music. Enjoy, absorb the pages that follow and... Rock On!

Jim Morey  
Chairman – Morey Management Group

# Preface

This book is dedicated to disproving the myth that the music industry is in danger of collapse. There are four basic businesses that generate the systems and mechanics of popular music. The most formidable is the instrument and equipment manufacturing sector which represents a permanently stable portion of the gross income. The second most lucrative source of revenue is the international music publishing business which continues to thrive. Third on the list is the global concert business which, although dominated by a few producers, is as healthy as the economy in any given season. The fourth core activity is the postmodern record business.

That particular enterprise is in a state of decline and is being replaced by a new business model. This text addresses that subject by presenting a new paradigm for the creation, marketing, promotion and distribution of live and recorded music. The battle for supremacy will be fought between the extant record business and the global community of songwriters and musicians. The battlefield is the Internet; after a protracted transition the creative artists will win the war.

The journey from the garage to greatness is long and arduous. Undaunted, the young and hopeful chase their dreams of turning music into fame and fortune. They boldly march into the fray with confidence and certainty that their loftiest goals will come to fruition. I write in support of those who harbor that ambition and offer here a map to help guide them on their odyssey.

It is my purpose to neither judge their music, nor evaluate their talent. The advice offered here is designed to lift the fog of showbiz and provide a clear sense of direction for any brave warrior-poet who would navigate the uncharted waters of music and business in the digital age. Only by building new bands will the music renaissance continue to flourish. As long as songs are sung the conflict will be waged and fledgling artists will fight for a place in the pantheon of stars.

# Introduction

The music industry is governed by a set of principles and practices, mastery of which is almost always achieved by trial and error. There are harsh penalties for those who ignore its established traditions. Errors in judgment by performing artists and personal managers always retard career development and inhibit long term growth.

The systems and mechanics of the music industry function in a highly competitive environment. The novice artist covets the same prize that the established stars aspire to win. Only the most talented survive. Ten percent of the contestants earn one hundred percent of the money; less than one percent accumulates ninety percent of the wealth. The rest fail to make a living and eventually give up and go home, surrendering the dream.

Artists and entrepreneurs who aspire to scale the heights of the entertainment industry must demonstrate vision and patience. Success is not always achieved by the naturally gifted. More often than not an obsessively passionate pursuit of clearly defined goals produces the best results. Confidence, desire and focus will almost always eclipse raw talent. Consistent aggressive action is the most viable tool for turning music into fame and fortune.

Dreams of stardom are often illusory. Most artists and their management teams share the same ambitions. Driven by their combined faith in the art they purvey and reinforced by a blind trust in their respective skills, they believe they are invincible. Glory can be found and wealth gained by those who control their own destinies, practice their craft and develop a compelling live act around a body of extraordinary music. Once achieved, the hard part is keeping the flame alive.

To reach the pinnacles of show business, artists need a clear understanding of the fiduciary responsibilities of the eight core professions of the entertainment industry. And, they must learn how to play the music industry game. Most of all they should know the rules that govern the protocols and politics of the professionals with whom they must ally and compete for success.



The principles that govern entertainment never change, but the rules are ever evolving and they are designed to be broken. However, it is imperative that those who intend to succeed in the entertainment industry do not break the rules by accident. Deviations must be of purpose and only after careful analysis and evaluation of the risk and reward factors. All combatants should be armed with a thorough knowledge of the customs of the industry to help guide their decisions and choices.

Anything is possible and there is nothing more powerful than an idea whose time has come; but reality will always dominate over fantasy. Regardless of the height of the ambition, or the perceived degree of difficulty, the right combination of talent, desire, charisma and skill can magically mix to create stardom. Where the stars shine, the tribes will follow.

## **Part I - The Music Renaissance**

# **Chapter One**

## **Career Direction**

There exists an ancient fraternity that goes back to a time when men pounded on logs in caves and their cohorts collected chickens at the door. Those primordial fire-dancers, chanters and log-pounders were the first performing artists. The furry little ancestral doormen, who made sure that each of the showmen received his or her fair share of the drumsticks and buffalo-wings, were the first personal managers.

When the manager learned that there was a giant cave over in the next valley, he sent his emissary across the mountain to make a deal. He wanted his band to perform for the Shaggy Dog people in the big room. That fuzzy little traveling salesman was the first booking agent. He was determined to build his client's reputation, expand their fan base and acquire more dead birds to roast around the campfire.

Upon arrival, the agent discovered that this was not just another hole in a rock. It was a great cavern with rows of logs upon which the patrons could sit and pound along. There were buffets with meads and ales and every manner of roasted beast. The walls were adorned with elaborate paintings and there were a lot of really hot dancers.

The furry proprietor with the red dreads was not your average promoter. Redlocks was an impresario. He was the first theatrical producer and the last member of the team that forms the four primary professions of entertainment.

For thousands of years, the bond between artist, manager, agent and producer has forged the very heart of the music industry. The symbiotic relationship between these core professions has transformed the art of music into the science of commerce. From that union, the multi-billion dollar international music industry has evolved into a permanent institution that provides a constant flow of musical entertainment to an insatiable global audience.

Over the millennia, the marketing and distribution of music has evolved into a monolithic enterprise. The alchemists of antiquity attempted to turn lead into gold and failed to do so one hundred percent of the time. The pursuit of gold in the music industry is only somewhat more promising. The determining factor is the enigma we call talent. I can't describe talent to you, but I know it when I see it and so do you.

When it comes to music, it's easy to tell what's great; conversely, it is often difficult to tell what's not great. Music is intrinsically like apple pie and ice-cream; even when it's bad, it's not bad.

Some contenders will reach gold status each season. Every year there will be a "Best New Artist" in the trade papers and on the plethora of televised awards shows. These moments are fleeting and very few of the winners will develop enduring careers. Great acts are born when the truly talented are well directed. Some artists will have a chance to cash in on their initial success and create fortunes; others will enjoy their fifteen minutes of celebrity and fade away.

The work generated by artists, managers, agents and producers creates opportunities for lawyers, accountants, publicists and crews. They all pool their vision, energy and reputations in support of a body of music that inspires and motivates them. The team's combined passion, faith and desire must overcome the formidable obstacles imposed by the status quo. Over time, through trial and error, they learn how to execute career strategies in the music industry.

Talented management teams, acting in unison and avoiding strategic errors, can translate music into commercial success. Even when the artist and manager understand how to play the game, execute exceedingly well and have superior talent, they still must get lucky to win. Luck is a product of the well-prepared taking action upon the prevailing opportunities, as they emerge, in the course of their business activity. The operative word is action.

Since its origins in the Paleolithic caves, music has remained mysterious, ethereal and majestic. An inspired artist today cannot rely upon the eroding record business to provide the economic infrastructure of his career. When a musician puts on a costume and takes his tunes to town, for the purpose of making a living, he is inevitably forced to create a business mechanism.

Presenting music for paying customers is a process that demands a disciplined commitment to both artistic integrity and sound business principles. To create enduring careers, artists and their managers must be skilled at manipulating both the artistic and the commercial aspects of the ever changing music industry.

In the postmodern era, the high cost of recording, touring and radio airplay held the record companies in power. Rigid control and skillful manipulation of these three elements drove traffic to record stores and created the hits. None of these factors is relevant in the digital age.

Recording is cheap and easy; and touring is far too expensive to be contemplated at all. New music has no place at broadcast radio which is still dominated by the major labels. Even if a baby band got radio airplay, there are no record stores, so the traffic has to be driven to the Internet. Without the benefit of a sizable budget, no new band should anticipate radio airplay.

The single most significant distinction for music in the digital convergence is that it is essentially free. Virtually every song ever recorded can be accessed on YouTube right now. This provides the most powerful tool for the promotion and distribution of music ever created. And, it totally changes the game. In the new paradigm, the artist must become the record company.

The international concert business will continue as it has for the past hundred years, and new artists must rise within its established traditions. The financial fuel previously provided by record companies must be drawn from another source.

The Internet is the power force and has already eclipsed the record business as the number one content provider for music. All talent being considered equal, and it never is, the bands that master the systems, mechanics, protocols and politics of the world-wide-web will achieve the most success in the digital age.

## **Chapter Two**

### **The New Paradigm**

The postmodern record business was built around local artists who excelled in the myriad night clubs, saloons, honky-tonks and concert halls that proliferated around the country. The best of the best prospered and moved to the music centers of New York, Nashville and Los Angeles. There, they were subsumed into the prevailing music industry systems that link the music publishing business to the performing and recording arts.

The singers and songwriters around whom the bands were constructed started young and rose up from the streets. Rarely, if ever, did they stop their quest long enough to acquire a higher education. Today, dozens of colleges and universities in America offer comprehensive curricula on music and music industry studies. This kind of training can help artists and managers recognize and avoid many of the pitfalls built into the old paradigm.

It stands to reason that graduates of these programs are better prepared to deal with the complexities of integrating music and commerce, than a street smart kid learning by trial and error. College educated musicians come to the industry with artistic skills developed over many years of practice. Millions of those little guitar heroes graduate to real instruments early, and they demonstrate highly advanced writing and performing skills by the time they reach the university level.

Through accounting, law, business and marketing courses, young artists and entrepreneurs acquire a completely different set of tools with which to engage an industry in search of a new business model. These contenders for stardom are not lost in the fog of show business. Furthermore, they are not obligated to honor the conventions of the record business. Baby bands are no longer reliant on the corporate power structure to endorse their talents. They exploit their music freely on the Internet.

The paradigm has shifted toward the artist. The record business has consolidated down to three corporate giants that control the manufacturing, distribution, promotion and marketing of ninety percent of Compact Discs sold through brick and mortar outlets. Digital downloads have eclipsed hard copy CDs as the predominant music delivery system.



The glue that holds the old paradigm together is broadcast radio, another industry in transition. When every smart phone is an intuitively programmable, customized radio station, terrestrial radio becomes a default delivery mechanism.

As the radio audience shrinks the power of the major record company evaporates. Artists with business acumen and knowledge of computers, social networking and Internet protocols can build their own labels and publishing companies. They can own and control the various income streams that accrue to music without selling off the long term assets of the company. A non-corporate image is often attractive to potential followers who are searching for their tribal identity through music and the artists they admire.

Digital technology is redefining how we classify the various skills and techniques employed in the production of recorded music. User friendly recording software has allowed millions of artists to present their original music to the public. Free online promotion and distribution provide the other half of the equation. Artists no longer need to gain the approval of the music industry elite, in order to join the competition.

Falling tides lower all boats. A weak economy affects every business enterprise. With less money in play, the amount of disposable income is proportionately decreased. A number one album reaches the top of the charts whether it sells a million units or two hundred thousand. What is drastically impacted is the profit margin. If the same investment produces less profit, the enterprise will fail. Since the purchase of music is an option, not a necessity, when the budget crunch hits, record sales suffer. This constant erosion of compact disk sales is being replaced by a burgeoning market for online music streaming, cloud storage and digital download sales.

Music is the cause not the effect. Thousands of Internet systems have been established to address the monetization of digital content. Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Pinterest, Tumblr, Instagram and iTunes have all become viable links in the chain of events that evolve the commercial promotion and exploitation of popular music. The game begins with the art and craft of the songwriter.

The traditional primary activities of recording and performing are still in play. As always the band is the promotional tool for the song. The big difference is that the airplay is online and the music is accessed primarily through cell phones and other handheld devices. Since the delivery and playback systems are digital in, digital out, there is no need for high cost analog recording.

We are in a music renaissance from which many artists will attempt to enter the professional ranks. The parameters are clearly defined by the concert business and listed every week on the Billboard Magazine charts. Building draw power and rising to a place on the charts will depend on developing a strong Internet presence.

The content you feed into your Internet footprint must be carefully calculated to communicate your message to the established fan base for your genre. The engine of that imagery is your live act. Your credibility must be earned in the crucible of the live arena.

If you can't make it at home, you can't make it anywhere. If you can make it at home, you can make it everywhere. When you become the dominant musical force within driving distance of your home base, the world will come to your door.

## **Chapter Three**

### **The Arbiters of Taste**

The beauty and value of any artistic expression is personal and resides in the mind of the beholder. Each individual has his or her own musical preferences that may even begin in the womb. Our parents' music is the first we hear and it is all we know in our formative years.

This initial exposure establishes a musical matrix in the consciousness of each individual. It is from this early introduction that the enduring soundtracks of our lives are created, stored and remembered. As we mature we are offered the luxury of infinite choice.

Eventually, each of us chooses our own musical preferences. The renowned singer-songwriter Paul Simon said it best, "Every generation puts a hero up the pop charts." The individual judgment of what is great, good, or just acceptable is always a choice made by the listener. Most music is summarily ignored by the populace.

In the age of ubiquitous smart phones, and file sharing technology, every known genre of recorded music is universally accessible, readily available on demand and requires minimal technical skill to manipulate. Thousands of new songs are posted on YouTube every day, most with video components.

In recent years, the boundary between what the postmodern record business calls "stealing" and the digital generation considers "sharing" has dissolved. There is no moral quotient attached to forwarding a song to a friend. The prevailing mind set is that if it's on the world-wide-web, it's free for the taking. Those musicians and entrepreneurs who refuse to accept this fact are doomed to fail.

The Internet is the new promotional mechanism and unlike radio it is readily accessible at minimal cost. As a tool for music distribution, it is infinitely more powerful than AM and FM radio combined. In the future every band and their tribe will be directly connected through the bands personal app.

It is always difficult to define the value of art. Price is determined by demand and demand is created by inciting the curiosity of the fan base. Whether presented in concert, or on record, the challenge is to discover an audience and create a following.

I have never met a musician who didn't think that he was going all the way to the big top. Most believe they are destined for stardom. Ninety percent of them will never earn a dollar in profit from music. Yet millions of aspiring songwriters, singers and bands are engaged in the battle, reaching for the stars from the garages, on stage and over the Internet.

A great song, performed by a talented artist, reminds us of our own hopes, aspirations and search for the truth. It all starts with the power of a great lyric, married to an infectious melody, combined with a primordial rhythm.

The inherent ability of music to inspire passion and emotional excitement provides a singular source of nourishment to quench the listener's ancient and instinctive thirst for music. The sound of war drums and fertility chanting beats in our souls.

Popular music stars provide a vicarious fulfillment of our fantasies, and we penetrate their lives as if they were our personal possessions. Most of us have an exaggerated need for cultural heroes who often provide meaning to our less-than-perfect lives. This insatiable desire of fans to "know" their idols is a driving force that artists and managers must inevitably discover, dominate and manipulate.

Artists' careers are like fingerprints: from a distance they all look alike; up close each is uniquely different. Those who achieve their goals and attain success share certain characteristics. Most all of them pursue their dreams with unbridled enthusiasm and a determined certainty that they will be successful. However, this is wishful thinking and a vast majority will inevitably go down to defeat.

A new band must be obsessively committed to overcoming the multiple challenges imposed by a rigid system. The artists and executives in power tenaciously defend their territory from the intrusion of the next generation. In the new industry paradigm the solo artist is the Chief Executive Officer of his business and the personal manager is his partner and the Chief Operating Officer of their company.

If it is a band, each member and the manager own equal shares of the corporate entity and each has a fiduciary role in the daily operation of their business. All are members of the board of directors and they elect the Chairman by majority ballot. The manager, as COO and president, directs the activities of the enterprise and is in charge of the day to day operation of the business.

If it is a solo artist, the manager should be a fifty/fifty equity partner in the company and is entitled to half of the net profits. This arrangement worked for Elvis and The Colonel, it will work for you. The job is much too difficult, and takes far too long, for the manager to be fired, after success is achieved, just because his contract ran out.

## **Chapter Four**

### **The Historical Trajectory**

Most artists first appear as pilgrims in the music centers of New York, Nashville and Los Angeles. Some have a vague vision of what they must do to get started, but most arrive without a clear game plan. When they reach the music cities, they have two things in common. They are all suddenly aware that music is a cheap commodity; and they realize that there are an awful lot of people competing for the same golden ring.

Starry-eyed artists come to the music industry intent on “making it.” Even though they have no clear definition of exactly what that means, all are committed to their craft and, hopefully, have a modicum of talent. The missing element is a practical awareness of how this very old, deeply rooted industry operates. There is no brightly flashing sign that reads, “Start here.” Square one is not marked on the tourist maps and no traffic cop reminds the aspirants that most competitors tire of the rat race give up and get stuck in their day job.

The writing of songs, scenarios and computer games is the first step in the creation of intellectual property and provides the seed elements in a process that produces the audio/visual content we call product.

The first mass produced music was recorded on paper. Before printing, a composer was required to be somewhat of a calligrapher in order to set down his music in a fixed form. The printing press enabled rapid reproduction of sheet music that gave birth to the publishing business. More importantly, it brought popular music to the masses.

With the invention of the phonograph by Thomas Alva Edison in 1877, recorded music moved from paper to tinfoil, tubes, to wax and acetate disks and eventually long playing vinyl albums, magnetic tape, compact disks and now digital downloads and streaming.

The antiquarian record business crashed during the great depression and returned in the modern era after World War II. With the advent of 45 RPM technology and the introduction of low-cost record players, the modern record business exploded.



The evolution of 33+1/3 high fidelity, stereo playback systems precipitated the postmodern record business which flourished until the digital compact disk eclipsed all previous recording technologies in the 1980s.

The modern record business was born of the marriage of AM radio and “singles” with Elvis Presley as the driving force. Then long playing albums emerged as the dominant music acquisition source through the popularity of FM radio and The Beatles’ explosive career.

As profits soared through acquisition and merger, thousands of local labels were consolidated down to three major record companies: Universal Music Group, Sony Music and Warner Bros. Music. These foreign owned companies, operated by old school record men, lawyers and accountants, control most of the global CD market.

History is not made by the flip of a switch and the postmodern record business will die a slow but determined death. The vacuum created in its wake is being filled by a continuous stream of music exploitation systems. Some will survive and be integrated into the new monetization mechanics of recorded music; most will fail. The future belongs to those who pioneer and master digital distribution.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Out of the Garage**

We are now fully engaged in the music renaissance. The future of the performing and recording arts belongs to the artists and managers who, in cooperation with the other core professions of entertainment, consummate the marriage of the Internet and online record promotion. The superstars of tomorrow will be the progeny of this union.

At some point a new performer will emerge with the right song, charisma, beauty, and performing skills to inspire his or her generation to follow, worship and adore. This modern day pied piper will precipitate an outpouring of affection like that which was showered upon, The Great Caruso, Frank Sinatra, Elvis Presley, The Beatles, Madonna and Michael Jackson. Each of these great artists was succeeded by a generation of emulators who copied their style and evolved their genre.

An artist with massive sex appeal and prodigious talent could attract a universal audience today and they might just avoid the specter of peer-to-peer file sharing. If the digital audience loved such an act just enough to pay for the music en masse, and everybody with a smart phone elected to buy a download on the same day, instant success could be achieved. Through blogging, texting, tweets and search engine optimization, a massive global following could be assembled at virtually no cost to the artist.

Such an event could precipitate a financial avalanche so enormous that vast wealth and world-wide fame could accrue on the strength of one song in a single day. This fact demonstrates the infinite potential of the Internet as a weapon of mass distribution. Any artist who can exploit this possibility would instantly become the most famous musical attraction of all time while gaining enormous economic power and cultural influence.

Every major transition in the music industry, for over one hundred years, was the direct result of such a technology induced phenomenon. It would defy history if the greatest technical advancement in the recording arts and sciences, since the electric phonograph, did not provoke a profound change in the music industry.

It is not at all surprising that the advent of digital recording would cause the demise of the hundred year old record business. It would be totally shocking if any technology could cause the death of the thousands of years old concert business.

Fully twenty-five percent of all human activity is devoted to the creation, execution, observation and pursuit of entertainment. Music is and has always been a significant part of every indigenous culture throughout history. Men and women singing and dancing for victory in war, romance and to appease the gods is an intrinsic human activity that has generated the perpetual evolution of music.

Until these things vanish, our basic need to sing and dance remains a driving force in our nature. Find the musical mavens in your respective target communities; the ones that set the standards and inspire the rest of their tribes to follow. These cultural visionaries play a key role in the building of personal appearance attractions. Creating an act that will appeal to the hard core fans of their specific genre is the primary goal of every musical artist.

The first step is to build a repertoire of songs, by writing, polishing and perfecting enough material to put on a forty-five minute show. That is the traditional length of a set in the concert business and is the minimum time required to compete in the professional arena. At least two or three more songs should be available in case of encores. Only after your music is seasoned by many rehearsals and live performances, should you initiate the recording process. The best music is created by the players who play the most. The ones that play together the most play the best.

When the songs are perfected, choose a digital recording technique and select your best song. Make one record and release it on your own label through iTunes and all other online music marketing systems. Offer it for free on your website; and promise downloads at your gigs in return for email addresses. Add appropriate merchandise through your online store and at your personal appearances as budget allows and the fans demand. Create a booking mechanism and establish a continuous stream of concerts at which you can purvey your product line.

The second step is to establish an Internet presence for your act. There are millions of bands presenting their music on the word-wide-web. If you are not one of them, start today. Establish destinations at all the social networking sites as well, with each one leading back to your home website. The band's site should be dedicated exclusively to the business of communicating directly with the fan base and marketing your branded products. Creating interactivity is the key to success.

When your songs are sufficiently evolved to record, make sure to accomplish this at minimal expense. There is no need to spend a fortune on your record. Digital recording is cheap and efficient, if you have access to a Mac and a microphone. If not, visit any college campus with a recording arts program and you will find somebody who just learned how to use Pro Tools. They will produce your record for free, just to get the practice. Most PCs using Windows will have Garage Band software that will do the same. Digital recording is compatible with all popular playback systems. It's best if you learn how to produce your own records.

Don't waste your time trying to get a record deal. The chase will prove fruitless and erode your resolve. The record companies are no longer in the business of discovering and developing new artists. They have become reliant upon exploitation of their existing content and music publishing catalogs. To gain their attention you will already have to be making an impact on the Internet. By the time you are getting massive attention online, you won't need to sell out to a record company and you will be able to start your own label.

Don't be overly concerned about making a ten song album until there is a demand for your music. It is a one-song-at-a-time business. The only reason to have an album is to sell it directly to your fans at live events and online. The album concept fueled the postmodern record business by selling the customers nine songs they didn't want, to get the one they heard on the radio. Today most music is "shared" and nobody steals what they don't want. Present your music one song at a time like a string of pearls.

As recordings are completed, they should be posted on your website and offered to visitors as free downloads. Think of it as airplay you don't have to pay for. If you are truly talented, exposure to your

music will create a fan base and attract a following to your live concerts. When you have five songs recorded, package an extended play CD; when you have ten, create an album. Make a statement with the artwork that is appropriate for your style. Fans know what they like and your genre is instantly communicated through the image you project in your photography, graphics and design.

In the postmodern era, record companies used several methods to get songs played on the radio. Some were legal and others, known as “payola,” were not. The airplay was stimulated by touring and the shows drove fans to the record stores. Today, radio airplay is almost entirely devoted to the established artists; touring for baby bands is too expensive and there are no record stores. Despite their marketing might, the big retail chains Wal-Mart, Target and Best Buy devote very little floor space to new music.

As the record business crashes under its own weight, an enormous vacuum is being created that will be filled by the rising tide of digimodernization. American pop music has been dominated by the Hip Hop culture for several decades. Rap music has evolved into its classic form and is now permanently ensconced as one of the major genres.

As surely as the blues, country, jazz and rock will never die, rap will continue to be recorded and performed by future generations. Each is permanent and will always have a broad audience of devotees. Music has evolved into a niche business. EDM will be the next style to dominate, but it’s still Rock & Roll.

There is more music in play, to more people, than ever before in history. The fact that it can be acquired for free has provoked a universal paradigm shift in the music industry. Most artists are optimistic about their futures, and are totally convinced they will succeed, no matter how pathetic that dream might be.

Of course, most of them were wrong, but each believed he was one of the ones that would beat the odds and become a star. I do not discourage such thinking. If you don’t believe you are going to make it, you won’t.

The process begins with songwriting and music publishing. Your repertoire can be self-written or “cover” tunes from artists you admire and that your audience will respect. The songs you choose to cover tell a lot about who you are. Performing your own material is by far the higher standard. However, it is more important to excite the live audience with a great show than to worry about who wrote the songs. It’s the entertainment business, be entertaining.

The second vital ingredient is a great live act. If you can mount a band and play your music to a focused fan base, you can build a business. Choose your target audience carefully and demonstrate the elements of style that they value and appreciate.

Your potential for success will be directly related to the perceived quality of your presentation and the extent of your talent. Of course, all talent is not equal and the general public will ignore most music. Only the most gifted artists will reach the survival level, which means you make your living through music without a day job.

## **Chapter Six**

### **Into the Business**



As the old infrastructure collapses, the record business will reinvent itself. The survivors are turning to the Internet as the new A&R mechanism. Whether you are the artist, or the manager, unless your band is getting millions of hits on the web, the major labels won't even look at you. By the time they are interested, you won't want or need them interfering with your thriving little business.

The foundations for the new music industry paradigm have already been fixed in place. The major technology companies are pioneering the effort by developing new systems for content delivery. Eventually the costs will be charged to the fan's cellular phone bill and artists and producers, for the first time in history, will be fairly compensated for their work. These systems and protocols will eliminate the middle man and eventually all but artist owned record companies will disappear.

As fear and despair reverberate around the record business, reduced sales and dismal financial projections have eroded the employment structure. Massive lay-offs have reduced the staff size at most record labels to a small executive corps, entry level employees and interns. Warner Bros. is a Russian owned company that will be consumed, as EMI was, by Universal Music Group and/or Sony Music. Both represent small divisions of giant trans-national corporations that may eventually choose to discontinue absorbing the losses which will ultimately accrue.

In due course, these parent organizations will recognize that the executive structure of their music division is only pretending to have a future in order to prolong their inflated salaries. As the classic artists they now rely on fade, and with new artists refusing to get on the sinking ship, the majors will dissolve into publishing entities which will continue to turn profits. However, after thirty five years, all master recording catalogs will be recoverable by the original artists. The legal apparatus for this transfer of title are already in place and many of the classic acts are actively engaged in the recovery process.

The entrepreneurs of the digital revolution will come from the displaced middle level music executives, who have yet to make their fortunes, and Silicon Valley geniuses who will invent the new

mechanics and protocols. As efforts to re-establish the compact disk fail, low cost cloud access and on demand streaming will proliferate. The old plastic and paper model, which is neither cost-efficient nor ecologically sound, will disappear.

For those who seek to build their careers in music there is only one thing to do: find an act you love and build a business around it. With millions of singers and bands posting music on the Internet, it is impossible to isolate the great ones by surfing the web. It's like trying to find a particular grain of sand on the beach. The golden needles are buried too deep in the haystack to be readily distinguished from the proliferation of the brass.

The established personal managers will not be searching the net for the next big thing. It is just too difficult to evaluate an artist's potential from their online presence alone; and there are far too many choices. Until an act has a solid Internet presence with a large volume of unique visitors, experienced management will not pay much attention. Forget them, find someone you trust to be your partner in business, study the game and start building your act from rock bottom.

When there is no ubiquitous genre, every genre is viable. The blues and gospel did not disappear because rock & roll was born. Country music continues to produce superstars and jazz and classical remain viable music forms. There are hundreds of millions of music lovers embracing their favorite artist's work every day. You don't need them all to endorse you in order to build a profitable music company. It has been proven that a thousand true fans can keep a band alive.

Artists today only need to become dominant in their specific niche. This greatly narrows the range of focus and defines the arena for your Internet activity. Regardless of your musical style, there is a specific target audience for you to address. For every genre there is a clearly defined path to follow. There are definite venues, websites, publications, and compatible artists associated with your musical style. This applies to all established genres and will be the same for any new ones that may be invented in the future.

For artists, the most requisite characteristic to seek in a business partner is trust. That quality is most likely to be found among your family and friends. If you were going to open a candy store, you would find someone you trust to be your partner. You would devise a game plan and rent a store. Then you would buy some candy wholesale, sell it, and pay your bills. The partnership would then split the profits.

The new music industry paradigm embraces that same form of business structure. A young manager should not engage in the enormous task of building a band, only to be told that his contract expired and he is dismissed. Managers must own equity in the enterprise that is being built. Furthermore, his and the artist's professional services must be exclusively and legally obligated to their co-owned business.

The new paradigm follows a simple formula:

$$1 \text{ Artist} + 1 \text{ Manager} = 1 \text{ Enterprise}$$

The music renaissance manager must be an equal partner in the equity ownership of the artist's company. The job requires too enormous an effort to be somebody's part-time profession.

Avoid managers with long lists of clients. They probably have one viable act and their time will be spread across their roster. A truly talented artist capable of surviving in the professional realm is extremely rare. For a manager to think that he or she has a collection of baby bands that are all capable of success is absurd. As a manager, find one artist that you believe will make it, with or without you, form a partnership with that act and bring it to fruition.

The music renaissance will not be built in bunches, it will happen one band at a time and only when enormous talent is present and extraordinary effort is generated. Every business enterprise needs a responsible executive to be in charge and conduct the activity of the company. A manager with more than one act will dilute his energy and fail to deliver for any of them. Or, the strongest client will usurp the lion's share of the attention and the rest will fail for lack of career direction.

When your manager's survival depends on your success, and he owns stock in the corporate entity, he will make every effort and sacrifice to insure the survival of the enterprise. The best person for the job is probably hanging out at your rehearsals, but doesn't play or sing. Invite him or her to join the team. If your mom and dad gave up the garage and are financing the venture, maybe they should be allowed to protect their investment. Who can you trust more than your parents?

Since there is no template for the new paradigm, experience is not a prerequisite. The good news is that the live concert business is stronger than ever. It is from this source that the baby bands will elevate themselves. Every night club, school and concert venue has a booking policy. These systems are always accessible online. Managers must take control of the entire booking process by building a personal appearance attraction that can perform dynamically on stage. They must then manipulate the business environment to get the band on stage and bring their enterprise to profit.

It is a long and hard road. Having a good friend leading the business activity is as important as having a great songwriter in the band. When you choose that person, form a Limited Liability Company (LLC.) It can be set up on [www.legalzoom.com](http://www.legalzoom.com) for a few hundred dollars. This vehicle will provide an umbrella of security and protection for the partners and their products. A legal corporate structure is how most successful entrepreneurs protect their assets and gain the best tax advantage. You should too.

One doesn't build a bridge to get half-way across the river. Design your business presuming total success and construct it to contain the business you will become. Permanent intellectual properties are being created and clear title must be established. It is vital that copyrights, recorded masters, name and likeness licensing and branding rights are organized, classified and registered as the assets of your business.

Copyright protection should be secured by affiliating with one of the performance rights societies, ASCAP, BMI, or SESAC. Copyrights can also be registered with the Library of Congress at minimal expense. Instant access to copyright registration can also be accomplished online at [www.websongs.com](http://www.websongs.com) free of charge.

## **Chapter Seven**

# **Branding Your Band**

When you decide it's time to turn all those music lessons, practice sessions and the ton of equipment you hustled out of Mom into a business, the job is simple. There are only two primary activities, recording and performing. It is the skillful integration of these two functions that creates a career.

You build a band, record at least one EP and have CDs and merchandise for sale at your gigs. When those systems are in place, present your act in local night clubs and on college campuses and sell your music. Promote everything on the web.

Your band is your marketing mechanism. The product is your live act, the recorded music and your branded memorabilia. In the vernacular of the trade, your product line is called "merch." There is a threshold of dignity attached to what is an appropriate item upon which to place your logo.

Check out what other artists in your genre offer for sale and make calculated decisions based on what your fans will perceive as cool. CDs, downloads, t-shirts, baseball caps and posters are generally acceptable as grass roots marketing and are appropriate promotional items.

Exploitation into key chains, bottle openers, bobble head dolls and matchbooks is definitely crossing an esthetic line. When demand is established, band jackets and other logo related, insider items and symbols should also be offered online and at the merch table.

Music fans want to belong; so you should create patches and paraphernalia that indicate membership and status in your inner circle. When the hard core music mavens in a community wear your logo, other members of their group are inspired to follow. Maintain a level of purity that attracts these fans.

Once you have a repertoire and a live act, you are in business. Then you must put in your ten thousand hours of practice in order to become great at what you do. This is accomplished within the commercial concert business which is locally defined but has global reach.

The activities encompass an ascending scale of venues, some as close as your school and in local night clubs, with most concerts presented under the banners of major promoters like Live Nation and AEG Live. House concerts promoted by you and your friends can get it all started. Throw a party and invite everybody you know. Elvis Presley started out singing to his high school class on talent day. Collect email addresses from all the guests and send them a free download.

Drawing an audience to your live shows begins with social networking on the Internet. A clear definition of your target audience is imperative. In the digital age, it should be assumed that everyone under thirty has access to all the music ever recorded. Since the totality of the available fan pool has splintered into genre specific markets, fans are free to select their favorite style from a rainbow of choices. Focus on the existing audience for your genre.

The people who are most likely to appreciate your music are in your peer group. This is an age and culture specific phenomenon. Start your career in your hometown with your family, friends and school mates. If you can build a solid following within driving distance of your home, you can build a business.

By establishing your band as a viable attraction, with an ardent fan base, a universe of opportunities will open up for you. The contenders who reach the survival plateau will pay the bills and keep their bands' business growing. The ones that don't will be sucked down the black hole of broken dreams.

Revolution is accomplished gradually. The postmodern record business is still actively trying to preserve the integrity of the CD. However, the radio, record, brick and mortar distribution system will never recover. The proliferation of free music and digital distribution will eventually obliterate the old paradigm. When an album selling less than 200,000 units in its first week of release enters the Billboard charts at number one, it is proof positive that the current model for the record business cannot be sustained.

Broadcast radio has no room for new music. Securing airplay is a very expensive process and is often illegally conducted under the

table, or behind the scenes. The airwaves are the exclusive domain of the three surviving record companies. If you are not with one of them, you will not be getting any airplay on terrestrial radio. With this comes the demise of the long playing album as the dominant music delivery system.

When music is free it becomes a one-song-at-a-time business and every song you write is not a crystal tear from the eye of Zeus. Always record your best song next and create a strong visual component for each one. In the digital age, music has become an audio-visual medium.

Keep in mind the values and integrity of your core audience, as you write songs, produce your records, create the act's visual image and develop the product line. The fans' investment of their emotional identity, entertainment time and disposable income is your lifeline. Every band has an evolving purity factor that is continuously calculated and evaluated by the fan base. Building a committed following is about inspiring people to join your club and preach your message.

If a band retains the purity that is attractive to fans in the first place, their following will continue to grow. If the purity erodes, the hardcore music mavens move on to their next discovery and the fan base stops growing. Maintain a standard of artistic integrity and personal image that reinforces the devotion of your fan base.

A continuous flow of product and constant Internet presence is imperative in retaining the abiding interest of purists and followers alike. An artist's music should be released in a steady flow of single records that are offered for free on the band's website. When your music is exchanged for email addresses, the fans give you permission to interact with them in the future. Whether dealing with them one at a time, or en masse, always treat the fans as friends, allies, and integral partners in your career.

Your music should also be offered for sale on iTunes, CD Baby, Amazon and through other online distribution mechanisms. Tunecore.com is one of the online companies providing access to such services. Each recording should be radiated across the web to attract traffic to your website.



Present a new song every month and work each one as deeply into cyber-space as possible. This requires a personal commitment of man hours invested on a daily basis. Engage your fans in the process and make them members of the promotion team.

When you have five songs in your catalog of masters, package your first extended play (EP) record. Sell it at your gigs and online for five dollars, or a voluntary donation. Feed the next batch of songs into the system in the same manner and when ready, add another five song EP to your product line. Then package a ten song LP and offer it at a reduced price for the entire collection. Now you have three products for sale at different price points.

This should be conducted on your own record label. One dollar per song is the prevailing rate, but charging less might increase sales. The object is to get as much of your music in the hands of the fan base as possible, as long as you don't go too deeply into debt to do it. The long term profitability of your business enterprise is the ultimate goal.

The skillful marketing of these CDs and t-shirts will create a vital income stream; but the primary source of finances is the live act. This is where the fan-to-band bonding experience is most intense. The energy and excitement generated by electric instruments and amplified vocals, combined with the "party" atmosphere at concerts and in night clubs can create a powerful and enduring personal connection between artist and audience.

The fans at your gigs probably already have your music, or they wouldn't be there in the first place. However, they most likely acquired it over the Internet before they really cared that much about you. It's up to you to convert them from curious observers to paying customers.

Often you will be exposed to the fans of other artists appearing on the same bill. Regardless of what got them in front of you, now is the time to make them fall in love. When they care about you, enroll them in your club and sell them your products.

Through the intensity of the live experience, the fans form a psychological connection to your tribal community. When they wear

your t-shirt they have created a physical attachment to your cause. The fans have seen reality shows on television and are fully aware that buying your merch is what puts food on your table, gas in your tank and strings on your guitar.

If they love you, they will join your army and become warriors in your struggle. A small group of dedicated fans can keep you alive. It is the expansion of that fan base that will allow your business to generate growth and turn a profit.

Responsibility for the promotion and marketing of your band falls entirely on you. Direct your efforts at your age group and the younger fans who always aspire to be like the older kids. Treat them as very precious members of your team. Enroll them to help you build your following. Offer the mavens stickers, patches, free access to gigs and other indicators of membership and appreciation. The hard core fan shows up at every gig.

If you can attract one true fan, you can attract a hundred. If you can attract a hundred, you can attract a thousand. If you can attract a thousand, can a million be far behind? The elements of hero worship linger in all of us, activating them is an emotional and intellectual experience not easily aroused.

Often the initial investment in your company can be generated on group funding websites such as Indigogo, PledgeMusic and Kickstarter. These systems allow fans to pledge money in return for a rewards package designed by the artist. Many bands have raised production and promotion dollars from these sources.

By enrolling fans to fund your project, you retain ownership and develop early interest in your music. Rewards can be as varied as a signed copy of the CD to special access and participation in live events, visits to recording sessions and video shoots. Such efforts can create media attention and generate presales for new product.

## **Chapter Eight**

### **The Digital Tools**

Social networking sites like Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr etc. allow bands to build and service an unlimited list of followers. There are also online systems like [www.webnretail.com](http://www.webnretail.com) that provide comprehensive fan maintenance and promotion programs. These websites are conduits to reach, nourish and expand your email list. Such marketing systems offer a number of packages at a wide range of costs.

Like any other tools they are only as good as their operators. Internet marketing is neither complicated nor difficult. However, it is man-hour intensive and the time must be invested by the band and management. Often fans and college interns can provide valuable manpower. The artist of today is also a business person and each band member should be responsible for supervising and executing some aspect of the business mechanism, as well as making their musical contribution.

Easy access allows anyone with the desire to participate. This does not mean that all competitors have the talent it takes to achieve commercial success. In fact, most music lacks originality and has little or no redeeming value. Millions of musicians and fans are engaged in exploring the web in search of music to share with their friends.

Hyper-linking your Internet activity to compatible artists and media will expand your cyber-footprint and enable search engine optimization. Careful choice of “tag” words and phrases will drive you to the top of the Google search pages.

Artists must create links to as many appropriate sites and music blogs as possible, with all roads leading back to the band’s personal site. This is where the bulk of your music, personal material and basic information will reside. It is imperative that bands run their businesses in a professional manner and use all means available to get their music out to the widest possible audience. Linking to other artists’ sites will broaden your appeal, increase your exposure and drive traffic to your home base.

Establishing new artists is always a difficult process, mostly because many will lack the songwriting skill to impress a discerning

public. The standards of quality set during the postmodern era are not being met by very many artists today.

The bands of the sixties and seventies had to compete with everybody from The Beatles to Stevie Wonder. The music that fueled the civil rights and anti war movements had a higher purpose than today's beats and EDM. Most artists posting material on the Internet do not have enough talent and experience to create universally appealing recordings.

A band may know how to capture a song on a computer, but in most cases what they produce is merely a demonstration of the song. The crafting of that "demo" into a commercially viable record takes skill and experience. A novice producer does not realize that there is a clear distinction between recording a song and making a record. It is a long journey from humming a tune into your phone to a master recording, and the creative process moves slowly.

One-hit wonders often achieve temporary success both online and on the charts, but a good recording of one quality song does not a career make. Only truly talented songwriters, packaged within strong performing acts, can create enduring careers. This requires a series of great records, presented over a long period of time, supported by a strong live show. The quality of a band's work must continuously grow and improve as the personal taste of their fan base evolves.

Managers and entrepreneurs pursuing careers in career management should be aware that the primary source of new executive manpower is the mailrooms of the top, full-service talent agencies. More successful entertainment executives began their careers there than have emanated from any other single source. Although gaining access to these agent trainee systems is very difficult, they remain the best place to receive an education in the operations and politics of show business. At most major agencies, college degrees are mandatory for access to their training programs.

For artists, getting started is considerably easier. All you have to do is pick up an instrument and start playing. Your chances of succeeding are geometrically increased if you write your own material.

Choose a song and rehearse it in front of a mirror in your room. When you think you have it mastered, move into the parlor, and put on a show for your family. If they laugh and walk away, go back for more rehearsal. If they listen and cheer you on, start lobbying to take over the garage.

Native talent and polished skills are not the same for all aspirants. However, any craft can be learned and mastered. Continuous practice is the key to improving your abilities. Mastering any musical instrument takes years and there is always room for improvement; the virtuoso players never stop practicing. Regardless of the effort and degree of talent present, there are no guarantees that you will achieve the results you seek.

Too often, young performers are motivated by the perceived rewards rather than by the work itself. Successful musicians are driven by a passionate need to make music, and a professional vision that honors the art form. If your motivation is to attract the opposite sex or get rich, you will most likely be disappointed in the end.

If you are a brand new band with a record, a website, postings on social networks and videos on YouTube, you have a toe in the door. A commitment to live performing and a perpetual marketing campaign will improve your odds of creating a business mechanism that will support your survival. If you have great music, charisma, sex appeal, and you expose it to the vast global music community, they will most likely discover your band sooner or later and spread the word one click at a time.

## **Chapter Nine**

# **Internet Music Marketing**

As the infrastructure decays, every displaced executive is dreaming about how to reinvent the record business. The slow collapse is industry wide and there is no opportunity for lateral movement. Former promotion and marketing vice presidents often offer their services for fees. Beware! Most of them will be operating in the old paradigm because that is what they know.

Do not let some silver-tongued devil talk you into paying them to promote your record and get you on the radio. They will live on your money and you won't get any airplay. The Internet is your radio. Create an app and start broadcasting. The good news is the business of music will not only survive, it will be bigger and better than ever. Music stars will continue to rise and in most cases they will own and control their commercial ventures.

The digital convergence has fired the shot heard around the world and the transition to a new paradigm is already in motion. The evolution of music is intrinsic to human nature and cannot be stopped. The artists and their audience are now forever connected through the Internet, without the imposition of middle-men who have less than artistic motives. The challenge is how to monetize the future.

Cross cultural communication is exploding over the web and music is at its forefront. It should be noted that music plays a unique role in the lives of today's youth. To their parents' generation it was a "fuel" that fired their passions, ideals and dreams.

Young people today use music as more of a "tool" to grease their way from one activity to the next. Music is less of a ritual and more systemic in the digital age. This does not make it less important to the youth-culture, it just makes it less valuable.

Vast digital systems are hyper-linking social networks and enabling the exchange of millions of songs and videos every day. This "sharing" of music is expanding the global audience at a geometrically accelerating rate. The net result will be an increased interest in songs, songwriting, recording and performing. The perceived values will accrue to the artistic community and the business model will be redefined. This progression is moving at an enormous pace and new



methods of exploitation and support are constantly being introduced. The best will survive and provide the cornerstones of the new paradigm.

As stated previously, reliance on record companies is no longer a viable option. The traditional funding mechanism for the development of new artists has disappeared. The process has gone back to the street from where the next cycle always begins.

Newly minted Internet entrepreneurs can only operate within the parameters of their personal experience. This usually means finding someone to invest in the act. With very few record companies still in the artist development business, no new bands get signed until they have a substantial online following. By the time the labels are interested in a baby band their potential contribution is negligible. If you are consistently drawing a significant audience you are probably already in profit.

Corporations are not “persons” and they have no artistic integrity. Their sole purpose is to make money; and with constantly declining record sales, they have little incentive to invest in artist development. The cost of breaking new acts far exceeds the return they can anticipate from traditional record sales.

This has led to the imposition of so called, 360-degree or “all rights” deals, where the label becomes a partner in every income stream. Although they can provide a launching pad, in the long run, such deals do not serve the artist’s best interest. Even if they deliver, the penalty is that they own your masters and control your publishing.

Motivated solely by profit, the three surviving record companies impose terms that are even more artist averse than the contracts used in the postmodern era. Fully aware that they cannot perform their primary function of selling records, they now demand participation in all income regardless of the source. In the past, all these rights were held sacred to the artist and manager. This is nothing less than indentured servitude and should be avoided at all costs.

The music industry has been forced to take a digital leap backwards in order to surge forward into the new paradigm. The

demise of record companies does not portend the end of recording as an art form. The two primary activities of recording and performing will always prevail. Their symbiotic relationship will continue to flourish as new music is discovered and shared across the Internet. There is no practical reason to give a record label a partnership in your business.

The development of a new system for the monetization of music will endure many attempts, some will survive and most will fail. There is a plethora of business models dedicated to this purpose, some are actualized and many are still in the development stage.

These include streaming on demand, subscription, advertising based and bundled concepts that despite enormous investment, can at best be considered experimental. Just a few short years ago, myspace.com was the uncontested frontrunner and today it is far less relevant. Facebook, You Tube, Twitter, Pinterest, Tumblr and iTunes are the dominant forces.

Nobody knows for certain how the music fans will ultimately react to the sudden freedom of expression and interactivity the digital world provides. Their ability to choose any amount of music, from any genre, on demand at no charge must not be taken lightly. The concept of “free” music is deeply entrenched in the youth culture. It will not be easy to get them to pay when they are accustomed to sharing music for free. Getting into the game is easy, but making progress is as difficult as ever.

The financial stability of the music industry is tied to the major manufacturers and their relationship to the band in the garage. The instrument, amplification and tech companies do not depend on the professional musicians to purchase their equipment.

The top tier and emerging artists secure endorsement deals which provide them with gear, through sponsorships. In return, the artist authorizes the use of their name and likeness in the advertising and promotion of the company’s products. Often, sizeable fees are paid to the artists for promotional rights.

Many musicians form bands for the pleasure of making music and often have no desire to achieve commercial success. This makes music a hobby, not their profession. The most gifted artists will inspire admiration and respect. Those that include virtuoso musicianship, combined with good theater, tremendous desire, and obsessive personal effort will always have a shot at achieving stardom.

The shock wave from the digital assault has not only decimated the record business, it has fragmented the fan base as well. As music fans adjust to their new found access to every song ever recorded, they will discover the wonders and delights of the historical music archives. Within the millions of possibilities lurk many inspired artists struggling to find their voice and direction. When the star rises, the public turns toward the light.

The hard core fans back home that discovered this new star years before, will rise up in support of their local hero finally being recognized by the masses. The ensuing media frenzy could inspire universal support. The unknown subject artist might suddenly make millions of dollars, and the impact would bring instant global attention and unprecedented glory.

At this juncture, the trans-national corporations will move in and try to capture the phenomenon with their check books. Much to their dismay, the character of the new superstar, that provoked such massive adoration in the first place, will hopefully shine on through and they will reject the unnecessary shelter of corporate largesse.

Instead, the artist and manager will contain and control the explosion, keeping the profits within their own enterprise. Selling out would be an integrity violation and a direct assault on their public image. This artist's success will provoke a legion of emulators that will attempt to duplicate and elaborate on the style of the originators.

Although no superstar of this magnitude is visible on the horizon, one will inevitably arrive. Such a musical event always comes just when nobody thinks it could possibly happen. This revolutionary attraction will probably initiate a new genre or provoke universal interest in a dormant style of music.

## **Chapter Ten**

### **The Music Publisher**

Regardless of the state of the record business, publishing remains one of the four pillars of the music industry. The ownership of music copyrights is a particularly lucrative business with a relatively low overhead. Mechanical royalties and synchronization licensing fees continue to accrue long after the artist has hung up his instrument and abandoned the studio and the road. When artists retire from career pursuits the publishing continues to generate income. A song is forever.

Although there is no pension in rock & roll, publishing royalties can provide a permanent annuity to support songwriters and recording artists in their retirement. By current statute, music copyrights endure for the lifetime of the writer plus seventy years. After that period expires, the songs enter the public domain and may be published by the artists and producers utilizing any particular composition.

The long-term nature of copyrights, and their enduring cash flow, establishes publishing as the most important first step in building your own music business. The postmodern system of “build a repertoire, create a band, get a record deal, take a single to radio and sell a million albums,” is over. A new technology driven machine is already in motion.

The future belongs to artists and managers who can build a live attraction, control the income streams, and retain ownership of their publishing and masters. When singers and bands write, produce and perform their own material, the costs of being in business are vastly reduced. Those that can book and manage their own careers, or partner with competent executives will reach profit sooner. A band paying commissions, royalties and fees for those services, will grow more slowly.

Establishing a music publishing company is relatively simple. There are three performance rights societies in the United States that enforce the rights of songwriters and publishers. The American Society of Composers Authors and Publishers (ASCAP,) was founded by a composer named Victor Herbert in 1914. Early members included renowned songwriters like Irving Berlin, Jerome Kern and legendary composer John Philip Souza, whose compositions are still performed

by virtually every military, high school and college marching band in the world.

As radio became the preeminent source of musical entertainment in the 1930s, record sales suffered. Regardless of the amount of music used, ASCAP required that broadcasters pay “blanket” license fees demanding a fixed percentage of a station’s revenue. Broadcast Music Incorporated was founded by the National Association of Broadcasters in order to provide a low cost alternative to ASCAP’s monopolistic control. Following World War II, as the modern record business and rock & roll created massive sales, income from mechanical royalties soared.

The Society of European Stage Authors & Composers, now known as SESAC was founded in 1930 and is the smallest of the three performance rights organizations operating in the U.S. Based in Nashville, it is the fastest growing collection service and, like its rivals, deals with various aspects of copyright licensing, and administration of performance royalties.

SESAC operates on a “smaller is better” principle; whereas ASCAP and BMI are designated as non-profit corporations, SESAC is a for profit organization. Another distinguishing characteristic is that SESAC does not maintain open membership; a songwriter must be approved and invited to join.

All of these societies can be easily accessed online; and for minimal fees one can enroll to secure copyright protection. You must submit a name for your publishing company. Once it is cleared, and membership is established, you may register your songs.

Whether you are an artist, manager or producer, establishing a music publishing entity is your best opportunity to create a long-term asset that will grow, commensurate with your overall career success. Hit songs enhance the importance of a catalog. The presence of a bona fide hit on your song list increases the value of the rest of the copyrights.

The performance rights organizations monitor monies that become due to writers and publishers, from the commercial

performance of music. They trace, calculate, collect and disburse royalties and licensing fees to their members. The PROs are not engaged in the collection of monies due from mechanical record royalties, film, TV, ringtones, downloads, jingles, video games, or elevator music.

Each country has its own revenue collecting organizations that maintain a constant vigilance over the global use of music. The enduring system provides a vast international blanket of protection for songwriters' and publishers' rights. Based in Cannes, France, MIDEM is an annual gathering of the global music publishing community that also attracts a wide range of record executives and artists.

When all the road dust settles, the act no longer tours and the records are out of print, what remains is ownership of the intellectual property. The "deed" to a song is known as a "copyright." This appellation is clearly established in the legal and practical vernacular of the music industry. The administering publisher controls the exploitation of a copyright.

What constitutes the ownership of a song is clearly defined in the federal statutes. The equity automatically accrues to the songwriter when and as he, she or they create the words and melody. When the song is "fixed" in a manner that can be reproduced, the copyright exists. Until the song is assigned to a publishing entity, the writer is both author and publisher.

Most of the songs posted on the Internet are never formally registered. Ninety percent of the material has no commercial value and the writer's website and YouTube will be the only place where the song is exposed to the public.

Many artists and bands believe they are bound for glory. Some will take the initial steps of creating a body of music, developing an act, and establishing a booking mechanism. A few will actually compete in the professional arena. Their survival will depend heavily on the quality of their material. The next most important element will be the passion, excitement and dynamics a band is able to incorporate into their live performances.

The three major record companies have consolidated enormous publishing catalogs and they have always coveted the performing artists' copyrights, because live attractions stimulate the marketing process. The custom of the industry is for labels to demand ownership in the artist's publishing company, in return for granting a recording contract. This can usually be confined to a co-publishing arrangement whereby the writer retains fifty percent of the copyrights.

In the early sixties, America's greatest contemporary songwriter, Bob Dylan, first challenged his label, Columbia Records, on this issue. Reinforced by strong personal management, he stubbornly held out and was able to secure the first co-publishing agreement between a star and a record company. Since then, many artists have duplicated the process and demanded participation for their own publishing entities.

Dylan established a precedent that eventually became common practice. Some artists have been able to exclude all publishing rights from record company participation. Most often the labels' publishing company negotiated for administration rights, which gave them the ability to dictate how a song could be licensed and at what price. In any negotiation, you are only as strong as your ability to say "NO."

Another sticky point for the artist-publisher is that labels seek, and almost always secure, a twenty-five percent reduction in the mechanical royalty for compositions controlled by the artist. This is known in the vernacular of the trade as paying "three-quarters of statutory rate." There is no practical reason for an artist to accept this penalty.

Labels demand this right purely out of greed and almost always get away with it. Managers should strike this clause from artists' contracts and they should never allow the labels to cross-collateralize publishing and record royalties. An act can avoid all this and many other potential problems by never signing with a record company.

Music publishers seeking to acquire copyrights must develop an array of services that justify the association. The primary inducement is a monetary advance against royalties. There is a tremendous amount of information on the Internet about these matters, and there is no



excuse for ignorance of the mechanics and protocols that govern publishing deals. When in doubt, consult a music industry attorney. The generally prevailing rule of thumb has always been to “never sell your publishing.”

There are two times when a publishing deal might be considered advantageous. One is at the beginning of a career when the songwriter needs income to stay in the game and can benefit from creative help in polishing his craft. The second time to consider selling is when the presence of one or more hit songs in your catalog creates extraordinary value. This is a financial consideration that should be carefully weighed.

The purchase price for established publishing companies is extrapolated from the calculation of annual projected earnings. The selling price is usually determined by multiplying the yearly income by a number that justifies the sale. The buyer would not make an offer if he didn't think he would eventually realize an overall profit.

The major attraction is money. Lacking investment, there is little reason for songwriters to sign with a music publisher. If a company has a roster of talented writers with whom they partner a novice writer, the opportunity to work with professionals could help develop a young songwriter's skill set.

If a writer is also a performer, most income will be generated from the artist's personal career. If that is not the case, publishers must be able to facilitate the placement of songs with producers and recording artists, music supervisors and A&R representatives.

In the digital age, the publishing industry has lost considerable income as a result of diminished record sales. But they have many other ways to exploit their copyrights. One of the significant outlets is the licensing of synchronization rights for television and film. These license fees are not controlled by statute and every price is negotiated between the publishers and the music supervisors for the various productions.

If publishers are in doubt as to how much money to ask for, they may employ the services of The Harry Fox Agency to negotiate

the synchronization license fees. When a song is performed on the soundtrack of a movie or television show, the catalog of the performing artist sees a significant bump in activity. In the end, it's all about a great song, well sung.

# **Chapter Eleven**

## **The Audio-Visual Age**

The new global music medium is audio-visual content. The strictly aural experience is not enough for the cyber generation. The digi-kids have been in front of the ubiquitous screen since they left the womb and their smart phones never leave their hands. Sound alone will not create followers in the music renaissance. Every recording should have a video component.

We receive eighty percent of our data through the eyes and to excite the music mavens in any given community, moving pictures are the most powerful weapons available. The video is the most important sales tool for the promotion of music.

When fans hear a song they like, the next stop is YouTube where they go immediately to see who had the audacity to create this exquisite recording. That is the hardest won click. The first ten seconds of the video they land on must tell your story, or the next click is on to something else. Genre, image and style are instantly established through context, color and costumes. Lyrics and instrumentation tell the rest of the story.

Virtuosity will be measured in the next three seconds, melodic skill in five more and the substance of your message in ten. If you haven't hooked them by then, they will be gone forever and you won't be adding them to your fan base.

A clear visual message for each song in your repertoire is imperative. Production value is not as important as the image. Cleverness of concept is the key. A great idea can be captured just as effectively on your smart phone, as it would be if shot with comprehensive high definition production values. Budget is the great dictator.

The recording industry is not totally dead; it's more like in a coma. It could wake up at any time. Some new technology or system could rescue it and provide a completely new business model, or it could remain on life-support forever. In the interim, downsizing has decimated every division of the record labels including video. This puts a lot of video producers and directors on the job market and a small budget can buy a lot of great footage.

Bands with millions of hits on their websites will be offered large cash advances to sign. But they should be prepared to surrender their artistic and economic freedom if they do. One must sell a hundred records through a label to make the same profit you get from selling one copy directly to a fan. It's better to start your own record company and keep the lion's share of the profits. It is not a very difficult thing to accomplish.

Ninety percent of artists fail because of weak songs. Real songwriters practice their craft every day. They write constantly, one in a dozen is worth recording and one in a lifetime might be a hit. Irving Berlin, considered by many to be the greatest American songwriter of all time, wrote four hit songs out of every one hundred he composed.

No matter how wonderful your friends say you are, remember that music has an intrinsic appeal. When it is offered by a friend the magic is magnified. The simplest music introduced to the least sophisticated ear can still generate a profound elation.

Music is the mathematics of the masses. It generates a vibration of energy that creates a cognitive connection that leaps out at you; it tickles your brain, gives you goose-bumps and makes you stand up and dance. A hit song must create emotion and inspire the listeners to want to hear the tune over and over again.

The impact of a great live performance moves the listener to bond with the act. The challenge is to get in front of the most people, in order to demonstrate your magic. This activity is known as a personal appearance. Its nickname in and out of the trade is a "gig." The future belongs to the artists who play the most gigs and turn them into high profit merchandising events. An artist must treat the act as a do-it-yourself business enterprise. Each band must compete for market share with the others of its genre.

When different bands seek the same customers, survival depends on reaching the profit point sooner than your competition. It is always an endurance race full of pitfalls and disappointment. Hopefully, the occasional victories are enough to keep you in the game.

Most new bands will be consumed by the failures, give up and walk away, blaming their managers. Good managers can make you, and they can also be the cause of your failure. The primary source of career death is your songs were weak and you just weren't talented enough, or sufficiently aggressive to win.

The role of the Internet in creating the new music industry paradigm cannot be over emphasized. Start by building the band's website and learn as you go. You may be flying blind, but at least you will be in action when the opportunities arise. Your website tells the story, your gigs display your talents, and merch pay the bills.

The degree of difficulty is very high, and competition is fierce. The fan doesn't say you're "good, for a baby band;" they like it, or they don't. Every new act must conform to the standards set by the best of the best. Constant practice and continuous songwriting are imperative. If you don't enjoy these integral parts of the process, you should reconsider your choice of profession.

The nomadic lifestyle of travelling performers is not as glamorous as you might think. A musician must have the constitution and stamina of an athlete to endure life both on stage and on the road. Many quit out of sheer exhaustion. The true professionals love the process and create a personal relationship with their audience by building the fans into the infrastructure of their business activity. They accept that wars are won a single battle at a time and armies are recruited one soldier at a time.

The various online music marketing and promotion sites offer free, and pay systems for every band with a brand. Careful and considered use of social networking and search engine optimization methods will continue to play a major role in artists' ability to control their own destiny.

Baby bands should project their songs and videos as deep into the fan base as possible. The pre-teen audience has access to the same technology as a teen-ager. Teens turn into adults, and artists must be symbols of change and able to grow within their fan base.

If you stand still creatively, they will leave you behind. Change your image carefully by leading your fans, not following them. It is an amazing achievement to attract a large audience to your music; it is an equally compelling challenge to retain them.

The postmodern record business was built on the backs of great artists evolving the recording and performing arts through technology. When radio ruled, knowledge of the audio experience may have been enough to compete in the core professions of music. In the music renaissance, film and video are equally important ingredients. When every terminal in the system comes with a screen, “iBalls” are king. Fans are never more than inches away from watching you perform. Radio is dead, long live The King.

## **Chapter Twelve**

### **Playing the Game**



That music has become a loss leader in its own universe is revolutionary; it requires a revolution in systems and protocols. Musicians and managers must create and conduct this transition. Those who engage in the process must be persistent, because even though bands seem to explode over night, they rarely ever do. Successful careers usually take decades to evolve and lifetimes to fulfill.

The game is not fair. Only artists with an extraordinary combination of talent and desire survive. Get the most out of your research and development phase. Your survival begins when you attempt to make a living from music. Until then, everything you do is preparation for the war ahead. Your best lessons will be learned by engaging in the process.

This is where a warrior mentality is required. You must be committed to your career as a desperate act of survival and be willing to overcome all obstacles. Artists must always be willing to abandon people, organizations and former allies who no longer serve the cause.

Each new artist is solely responsible for the initial application of the various duties of the eight core professions that govern every career. They are artists, managers, agents, producers, lawyers, accountants, publicists and crews. Until someone else is assigned the function, there are seven things for which artists must assume responsibility:

1. Create & Own a Repertoire
2. Create & Mount a Live Act
3. Create & Control a Booking Mechanism
4. Create & Operate a Publishing Company
5. Create & Operate a Record Label
6. Create a Merchandising Apparatus
7. Create a Powerful Internet Army

With these seven bases covered, a talented band with confidence, passion, obsession, optimism and a game plan can pursue making a living through music. If they can inspire public support, they might enjoy enduring careers and build a business that will maintain their lifestyles. Those that reach this level of survival have already won. Expanding to an ever wider audience can increase the prospect of creating wealth, beyond the survival level.

The booking process is one that has a built-in gravitational force that holds the new act down. You are a one-man band until you can enroll sidemen to join you. This is an expensive proposition. You must either pay musicians for backing you, or make them partners. Both are very high prices to pay for baby band leaders without income.

There is also the possibility that musicians will work for free if you are a compelling artist with an obvious potential to succeed. If you hire your players, then you are in charge and can direct the show. If the band members are shareholders in the enterprise, then your group becomes a democracy. Under this arrangement each member has equal rights, responsibilities, and most importantly, they have a vote.

The concert promoter wants to hire an act that people will line up around the block to see perform. The more customers you can “draw” to a given venue on a specific date, the more money the promoters will pay you.

One of the most coveted opportunities in the concert business is the opening act slot on the bill. This is a prized possession of the headlining act. It is also a political football that is passed between agents, managers and promoters as leverage for favor and advantage. Record companies also compete to get their artists on shows that are appropriate to their style.

The act on top of the bill is the “headliner” and they usually dictate who will be on their shows. This is given a lot of thought, but mostly relates to how popular a given band is in the markets that will be played. If the tour is a sure sell-out, then the opening act is chosen for compatibility, esthetic value and often, political favor. If the show is not sold out, support acts are chosen for their ability to draw fans and

sell the last of the available tickets.

If you can't draw, you have no value on the bill and will probably not get the job. This makes new artists eligible for only the smallest gigs. As your following grows you will rise in the food chain and your income will increase. Most night clubs are not in the music industry, they are in the liquor and restaurant business.

If you can pack the house with food and drink customers, you are entitled to, and should demand, the cover charge. As your fame grows and the draw power increases you can negotiate for more, and sometimes all, of the box-office receipts.

A performing artist will have many bands during his or her lifelong career. Some players will come and stay, while others will perform briefly and move on to the opportunity that is closer to a pay day. Virtuoso players often play in two or more bands simultaneously, hoping to find one that might gain some traction.

Putting together a band of musicians is complicated enough; holding them together is even more difficult. The general axiom is that all bands break up sooner or later. Having a band is a luxury that few can afford. A strong manager with a good pitch can convince musicians that his client-partner is going to be successful. This possibility is attractive to younger players looking for a way to gain access to the game.

The American Federation of Musicians designates that bands must have a leader. This is usually the singer-songwriter whose material is at the core of the creative process. Sometimes it is the strongest player, and it can also be the member with the most powerful personality.

The best songs and singers attract the most formidable players. The quality of live shows depends on the virtuosity of the band members and the impact of the material performed.

Rehearse your material every day, preferably in front of people, but at least in a rehearsal environment. If there is nobody to perform to, sing in front of the mirror. Study what you look like while playing. Try to avoid looking at your instrument. You should know your "axe"

so well that it becomes an extension of your body.

Find a way to co-write with people more experienced than you. Learn the songs of the great writers from Irving Berlin to The Beatles. Write about what you know best: your own life. Turn your personal experiences into the emotional content of your work.

A song begins with an idea which is expanded by metaphor and simile into a story. Re-write every line many times and never settle for the wrong word. Search for the perfect combination, in short phrases that communicate the most truth. Select titles that tell the story. The object is to say more in fewer words.

Study your rivals and competition. Do what they do, only faster and better; keep what works and abandon what doesn't. Develop a vigorous and enthusiastic sales pitch. Learn how to convince anybody in the industry that by supporting you their business will benefit from the collaboration.

Build a powerful web presence that will impress the talent buyers when they explore your viability as an act. Figure out which venues are appropriate for your genre and style, and find a pathway to secure bookings. Every concert venue has a booking system online; play it their way and don't expect them to adapt to you.

Be confident, but not arrogant. You need them more than they need you at the beginning; this reverses as your draw power increases. There are many acts seeking every gig. Be persistent; sooner or later you will make the booking.

By being in action on a clear goal array, you will recognize the opportunities as they present themselves. Your career will be going at the right pace to evaluate the options, and make the correct choices from the ever evolving possibilities.

## **Chapter Thirteen**

### **Who to Trust**

Trust is not assigned or awarded; it is earned through experience and reinforced over time. Honesty and integrity are vital components of any business relationship and they are requisite ingredients between partners.

Performers come to the music industry blinded by self-confidence and driven to succeed. They quickly learn that building a career in music is a team activity. Their first loyalty is to a personal manager. He or she is their partner and responsible for operating the business.

The person to whom artists entrust all their hopes and dreams must demonstrate a number of qualities and characteristics. Business acumen is at the forefront of the requirements for CEO of your corporate entity. Also included are a combination of social skills, power personality, accumulated knowledge and experience in the industry. Although there are exceptions, most musicians need a “business” partner. Managers should lead with a smile and have a great sales pitch.

Personal values define who we are to our friends, associates and fiduciaries. An artist wants his or her manager-partner to be honest, intelligent, charming, creative, flexible and visionary. If a potential manager advocates honesty, it can be presumed that he or she will be honest in his dealings with you. If one suggests you lie, cheat or steal, it should be expected that he might treat you in a similar manner. Honesty and integrity are imperative in business partners.

It is the manager’s sacred obligation to always tell the client the absolute truth as he perceives it. Protecting your partners’ feelings by shielding them from the tough stuff is not doing anyone a favor. No human enterprise ever goes perfectly according to plan. Success accrues to those who adapt to the changes.

Errors and omissions provide opportunities for managers to prove their honesty. Claiming responsibility for your mistakes, rather than shifting blame, demonstrates strength of character and personal integrity.

Empathy and caring, backed by constant devotion to the artist's business and personal concerns, reinforces the artist-manager bond. The job is of personal service; and nothing is off limits. Meticulous attention to the details provides the cornerstones of the relationship. The trusting is the hard part; everything else needed to build a business enterprise around a body of music can be learned.

The relationship between artist (the corporation) and manager (the CEO) is essentially a partnership. Both pledge to devote their careers to their common goals. As partners, the joining of their business interests presents a wide range of obligations and fiduciary responsibilities. Neither should ever act against the best interests of the other.

In traditional artist-manager relationships, the manager is engaged primarily to give the client career analysis, advice and direction. Every act has a certain vision of where they stand as artists. The manager is selected because he or she shares that perception. They define their common goals during the seduction stage of the "pitching" process. Once the terms of the engagement are resolved, the action can begin.

The personal manager is only one facet of the management force. Although experience is the primary attraction that draws an artist to any given manager, trust and confidence in his personal commitment are vital. If a manager has been previously successful in bringing an artist to the pinnacles of success, it can be presumed that he might be able to do it again. Therefore, artists crave relationships with veteran managers.

The first challenge for baby bands is that experienced managers are hesitant to engage unproven talent. It takes three years to determine if an artist has a viable career in the professional realm. In the waning days of the postmodern record business, the top managers don't want to invest the time and effort it takes to find out if a new act has the songs, talent, character and ambition it takes to compete.

Regardless of the path taken, artists and managers must conduct their careers from the same page. A clearly defined game plan,

carefully executed, offers the best chance to succeed. However, game plans rarely come to fruition exactly as projected. What is more likely to happen is that by being in action you will be moving at the right speed, and in the optimum direction, to take advantage of the opportunities that present themselves. Flexibility and rapid adjustment to the changes are requisite qualities for those bands that choose to operate in the professional realm.

CEOs should build an appropriate amount of time for rest and recuperation into the artist's schedule. Careers must be conducted at a livable pace. The act needs days off, when touring, and extended vacation periods at home. Often aggressive managers are eager to have the act working in order to keep the income streams flowing.

One must try not to kill the golden goose by burning the act out on the road. Managers are responsible for conducting the business of the band, but they are not necessarily totally in charge. The artist must be actively involved in the day to day business of the company and they should make their feelings known at all times.

Offers of employment are presented by booking agents who negotiate terms and conditions with the promoters. It is up to the artist to decide when and where he or she will perform and under what conditions. Managers are not dictators and artists are not slaves. If the band and the crew need the income, psychological pressure is often used to compel the act to perform outside the schedule laid out in the game plan.

It is incumbent upon artists to defend themselves and protect their vacation periods, regardless of the wishes of their fiduciaries and partners. Conscious artists learn to protect the financial integrity of their support system and still preserve their personal lifestyles.

Good managers recognize that the act has the power to choose or reject the opportunities. Although there are exceptions to every rule, it is best to agree on a game plan and stick to it.

Always be willing to turn down a gig if acceptable terms cannot be negotiated. Every employment opportunity you reject creates a space for another one to take its place. The prevailing principles dictate that if you have the talent and you don't give up, you'll make it.



## **Part II – Hartmann’s Laws**

### **The Warrior’s Code**

# Fifty Rules of Engagement

The entertainment industry revolves around an infrastructure that was originally created for the marketing of live music. Success in the music industry is achieved through the skillful coordination of the two primary activities of recording and performing. As the quest for new technology imposes its inevitable changes on manufacturing and production techniques, new methods of content delivery are continuously being offered.

The emerging system demands the surrender of the old paradigm. The old and the new must both fight for their survival, as each competes for the favor of an insatiable public. Historically, only the innovator prevails.

Silent movies were doomed, as soon as Al Jolson sang “My Mammy” on the silver screen. However, it took almost another decade for the motion picture studios to convert to “talkies” only. The postmodern record business was over, once it rejected Napster.

Show business is an unforgiving game. Contenders always face the challenges imposed by technological innovation. Whether one chooses to abide by the rules, bend or break them, it is imperative that the players understand the systems that influence the progression of the game.

The rules presented here have been tested throughout my fifty plus years managing bands and operating in the music industry and academia. During that time I have practiced the mechanics of every aspect of the game. This list is designed to help integrate your business practices with the customs of the industry that govern how popular music is marketed today.

Although centered on the business of music, these rules are applicable to the career pursuits of actors, writers, directors and producers of motion pictures and television as well. They are designed to inspire confidence, create growth, and provide a set of guidelines for

how to conduct the affairs of creative artists and entrepreneurs in the entertainment industry.

## **1. The Show Must Go On**

When artists make an agreement to perform at a certain time and place, he/she/they are under a sacred obligation to honor that commitment. The producer spends money to inform the public that the show will be presented. The fans make a social investment, pay to be present and anticipate the event. When a contract is made, the artist and manager have a moral and legal responsibility to fulfill the agreed upon terms and conditions. They must ensure that the band and equipment are at the venue and ready to perform according to the agreement specified in the contract negotiated by the booking agent. All responsible musicians dedicate themselves to this rule. If you agreed to play the gig, make it happen. No matter what it takes, the show must go on.

## **2. Get the Dough**

Collecting the artist's fee is the responsibility of the personal manager and the agent. Artists plan their bookings months in advance and do so under a set of guarantees and obligations dictated by the American Federation of Musicians. Talent agencies are franchised by the union and licensed by the state. The agent negotiates the details of exactly what the artists will deliver, in regard to their performance, and the precise compensation they will receive. It is incumbent upon promoters to honor the contract that got the artist there in the first place. Managers must be aggressive in their enforcement of the contractual obligations and the collection of the monies due. The agent is the middleman in the negotiation and should interface with the buyer in the event of conflict or disagreement. If you throw a dance, you have to pay the band. Establish clear collection procedures and pursue them vigorously until the act is duly compensated.

### **3. Never Sell Your Publishing**

The copyrights created by songwriters are intellectual property and a permanent asset that can keep generating income in perpetuity. Long after the artist is retired and the records out of print, the song remains. The great songs are recorded over and over again by new and established artists. The performance royalties continue to accrue, providing a long term income stream. Most publishing dollars will be generated by the songwriter's personal career activity. The catalog earnings are an accurate barometer of the success achieved. Keep your publishing. It's worth more than you are being offered, or they wouldn't be trying to buy it. Publishing assets should be licensed, but not sold, so the copyright always reverts to the writer at the end of the licensing term.

### **4. Never Sign with a Record Company**

The business model for the three major recording empires was built on a merry-go-round of expensive recording, low-cost touring, pay-for-play radio promotion, and precisely timed distribution of product to a vast network of record stores. That system is broken on all levels. Recording is no longer expensive. Touring is prohibitively high priced. Radio is rigidly locked to tight play lists and the record store is a fond memory. Anyone can easily distribute music online. It is better to be your own record company than to sell out to one. There are countless companies providing production, manufacturing, record promotion and distribution services on the Internet. Be your own indie label and never sign with a record company. If you do, make it a licensing deal not a purchase.

### **5. Don't Make Friends at the Expense of the Act**

The personal manager of a star attraction is the shield between that artist and the rest of the world. The bigger the artist is, the more protection he/she/they require. Besides building and maintaining the team that will execute the artist's career, the manager has two primary responsibilities: the supervision of touring and the execution of the

recording process. Often, third parties seeking favor will approach managers with offers that are not in the best interest of the act. A manager must not engage in any activity that might harm his artist personally, artistically or financially. He must never take payments, gifts or advantage without full disclosure and approval of the act. The favor you do today may turn out to be the mistake you made yesterday. Always serve the client first and never use your business relationship for under-the-table personal gain, kickbacks, or secret advantage. Your honor, integrity and reputation are at stake.

## **6. If It's Not Good Live, Dump It**

The business of entertainment is about putting on a show. A concert performance should be designed to inspire a specific emotional response from the audience. Elements of music, hero worship, sex appeal and charisma harmonize to create attraction. That magnetism brings audiences back for more. Without it you cannot sustain a viable career as a performing artist. Your show must earn the audience's attention and inspire enough excitement to compel them to bring their friends next time. A great live act is the key to success. Build your band from players and vocalists that best suit the style and content of the music you write. You will know the right combination has been found when the audience stands up and hollers for more.

## **7. Look for Virtuosity**

Virtuosity means more than just excellent playing skills. Superior instrumental technique is most obvious to another accomplished musician who has a solid grasp on the standard of measurement. However, a superior performance is not lost on the average listener. Music is a mathematical statement in which precision, speed and dexterity combine with the performer's creative choices to enchant the listener. The best players command the most respect from their peer group. Enroll players who are better than you and they will drive the band to grow as a unit. The presence of a virtuoso player sets a standard of excellence that the other band members must aspire to

achieve. Great players provide a center point around which the other members can focus. Only after they lock in to the virtuoso player can the band proceed to develop as a team.

## **8. Look for Symmetry**

Symmetry is the essence of beauty. If a band standing on a stage is awkward and members don't seem to belong together, there is a subliminal distraction imposed upon the audience. This anomaly will cloud the viewers' attention and distort their perception of the show. When building a band, seek attractive people with harmonious style and age ingredients appropriate to your prospective audience. Avoid the extremes of height, weight, hair, instrumentation, costumes, make-up and special effects. Where they exist, feature them. Don't try to hide obesity by putting the singer in a muumuu. Don't wear a head band to conceal baldness. Be natural. Design your image symmetrically and make it beautiful to behold. Maintain this image consistently through your live performances, videos, online presence, and branded materials. Build balance and harmony into all visual media and stage dress.

## **9. Look for Poetics**

Performing acts are built around bodies of music. A band must have at its core at least one serious songwriter. The action is storytelling and the lyrics are the most important element. Poetics is that carefully constructed combination of metaphor, simile and rhyme that makes a song flow and the story clear. Strive to understand the value of poetic structure and learn to construct word combinations that inspire the imagination beyond color and tone. Discover the idea behind your song and lead the listener through the beginning, middle and end of the story you are telling. Infuse the lyrics with the truth you wish to convey. Describe what the song is about in the fewest number of words that inspire the clearest visual imagery. A song is a musical poem and the Aristotelian rules apply.

## **10. Embrace the Cycle**

The evolution of popular music has a cyclical nature. The cultural significance of a new generation choosing heroes to worship must not be underestimated. Music is not the only common denominator shared between artists and fans. Ideals, values, integrity and societal issues are embraced as well. The business of music is directly tied to the emergence of the next generation as it rejects parental influence, shifts to the new cycle and chooses the music of their time. Music entrepreneurs must be conscious of these generational transitions and synchronize their artists' careers with this inevitable change. It's better to be early for the next big thing than late for the previous one. Successful careers start in the garage and only those who catch the wave get to take the ride.

## **11. Honor the Dress Code**

Dress for the occasion. If you are meeting with the President of the United States or the president of a record label, booking agency, television network, or movie studio, there will be an appropriate standard of dress. Calculate whether your situation calls for suit and tie, or t-shirt, shorts and sneakers. Respect for the host and your ability to bridge cultural comfort zones can determine future executive access. To be safe, always carry a suit jacket in your car so you can adjust when necessary. Don't be the guy who got put down because he wouldn't dress-up. Consider your long-term goals and dress appropriately for each situation. Generally speaking, if you are selling, dress up. If you are the buyer you set the standard. Have a versatile wardrobe that is stylish more than fashionable.

## **12. Own Your Blame**

Nothing ever goes perfectly well. There will always be errors, as every scheme has flaws; and the unexpected often alters the game plan. Good managers honor their errors and embrace their shame. If you broke it, don't try to hide or shift the blame. Every mistake is an opportunity to demonstrate character. If you are at fault, claim it. Don't

engage in denial or attempt to sweep it under the rug. Even if it is your partner's mistake or the assistant's error it's still your responsibility. Honesty and forthrightness will inspire loyalty, command respect and enhance your reputation. If it's your mistake take the blame and live with it. You will be perceived as stronger if you do.

## **13. Protect Your Reputation**

In a business of relationships your reputation is everything. When you walk from the room, what remains is an adjustment to the perception of you held by that community. An awkward glance, a raised eye-brow, a snide quip or a smile and a word of praise can all influence the collective opinion of who just left the meeting. Your personal behavior, vocabulary and style dictate how you are perceived by others. The collective regard with which you are graced by your peers is a source of power. Your character is measured by your performance. Build your reputation around the persona you would like to be known as and present that person to the industry through elegant and consistent behavior.

## **14. Have Vision**

Your mind is a goal striving mechanism. Just like a computer, by feeding it an array of clearly defined goals, your brain will devise a method of pursuing and achieving the desired consequence. This creative process is reinforced by your desire; the more you want it, the harder your mind works at achieving the goal. Feed your aspirations with as much detail as you can imagine. Aim higher than your expectations and convince yourself that you can achieve your most ambitious goals. Enroll a team of allies to engage in the process of fulfilling your vision. Stimulate your imagination; if you can think it, you can do it. Explore your creative process and develop imaging techniques through esoteric practices like yoga and meditation. Envision the consequences of your actions.

## **15. Cultivate Loyalty**

If you demonstrate loyalty toward your clients, partners,



employees and fiduciaries they will be inspired to be loyal to you. In adversity, it is often the commitment to the team that keeps your business alive. There will be occasions when your client, or your staff, might not agree with your choices. When there are doubts, the personal devotion of your team members can make the difference between success and failure. This carries over to the tradesmen with whom you interact. If a service provider does a good job, offer repeat business and build a long term relationship. It's like putting money in the bank, it generates interest. When possible, do favors. By helping others, you cultivate loyalty not only from the party you assist but from the community that witnesses your generosity.

## **16. Be a Deal Maker**

In every negotiation there are windows of opportunity when the deal can be sealed. There are also strategic moments when the terms can be improved. The closer you are to the end of the deliberations, the easier it is to introduce new deal points. Save the smaller issues until the end. Once the boiler-plate matters are agreed to, it is less likely that additional requests will abort the negotiations. Be realistic and make sure that both parties are satisfied; one sided deals are hard to live with. Remain flexible, be ready to compromise, don't sweat the small stuff and always seek to create win-win situations.

## **17. Manage the Jones**

Everybody is addicted to something. In the music industry there is a prevailing acceptance of drug use as part of the cultural environment. It can be as benign as beer and cannabis or as destructive as injecting cocaine and heroin. And there is a pharmacopeia of ups and downs that are legally prescribed. Personal managers must be aware of the drug habits of the band and crew. Systems and protocols should be established to insure security and limit liability. Prescription drugs should be properly documented. Illegal contraband must be kept private. Management should set and enforce a clear drug policy. Never cross international borders with contraband. Many a tour has come to an abrupt ending when somebody failed to manage the Jones.

## **18. Manage the Mate**

Fans from one-night-stands become significant others; and best friends forever get married and join the management force. The artist-manager relationship is always exposed to the opinion and influence of the spouse, girlfriend, parents, children and pets. Family goals often take precedence over career goals and both needs must be satisfied. Managers should be in tune with the people who are most present in their clients' lives. Their needs and expectations should be incorporated into the conversation and, when possible, implemented as part of the daily business activity. If the artist's spouse doesn't buy your pitch, there is a cancer on your relationship with the act. Make the wife your ally and work her needs into the game plan. She will become your inside man.

## **19. Know Your Adversary**

In negotiating contracts and pitching products, you are always dealing with someone who does not share your agenda. Whether you are buying or selling, you must know with whom you are dealing. The seller is always in the weaker position because the buyer has the ability to refuse the sale. Study your adversaries and learn their personal interests and family status, their likes and dislikes. A quick Internet search can add vital details to enhance your pitch and establish rapport. Consider your adversary's motivations and goals in each negotiation, and evaluate the strategic weight and value of the deal to his personal career. Try to establish a personal rapport that will provide equality in the negotiations and a foundation upon which to build a relationship for future business.

## **20. Don't Believe Your Own Press**

As careers evolve, managers and artists get expanded attention in the mass media. The bloggers, the mainstream press and the paparazzi all impose their twisted sense of entitlement on media stars. Your career and personal life become objects of their obsession. Press

speculation can be positive and supportive; it can also be cruel and ruthless. Punditry is mostly self-serving, and a true star doesn't need the opinions of others to reinforce his or her identity. It is best not to pay too much attention to the press except where it serves to promote your career. Negative media can often provide constructive criticism, but superfluous glorification should be digested with a grain of skepticism. In times of tragedy, or scandal, it is often best to maintain freedom from the press, and avoid contact with the media all together. You don't have to talk.

## **21. Delegate With Care**

When directing the activities of the team, managers must often delegate responsibility to third parties. For each task assigned, there is a convergence of obligations. The manager is responsible for the end result, regardless of who is chosen to complete the assignment. There is little room for error in entertainment. Choose your associates and employees carefully. Know the people you are dealing with and give instructions that are clear and easily understood. Then don't abdicate your supervision of the project. Follow up and make sure the job is accomplished to your personal satisfaction as well as the client's. Enroll interns to do the office work and choose your employees from the best of them.

## **22. Know When to Pick Up the Tab**

Travel and entertainment are cornerstones in the process of conducting business. Many overtures and solicitations are conducted over lunch, at dinner, or for drinks. When a manager induces a meeting by inviting the subject to meet outside the office environment, he becomes the host of that encounter. The host is responsible for the costs associated with the event. If you ask the person to lunch, you must be prepared to pay the check. When the obligation is clearly yours, don't head for the restroom as the bill appears. Usually the power player reaches for it first; a quick, "can I help?" before he sees the total might pull a wave and get you off the hook. When in doubt, offer to split the tab. Always carry cash, or at least one valid credit card that will finesse

your way out of any awkward situation. Be prepared in case the other guy “forgets” his wallet.

## **23. Change Course Slowly**

A good career lasts a lifetime. Sudden leaps into the limelight are often followed by an early dimming of the glow. Create a realistic game plan with specific plateaus and a definite time frame. When the opportunity to reach the next level presents itself, act decisively and hold on to the newly gained ground at all costs. Grow through a succession of small victories rather than giant leaps forward. A career that follows a long, slow rise to the big top has the potential to earn profits for a longer period of time. Take the action today that will precipitate the consequence you seek, and pursue it vigorously.

## **24. Maintain Control**

Artists’ careers evolve slowly. Friends and family have participated in the career development and they have an emotional and vested interest in the outcome. This entourage often includes relatives and other non-professionals who harbor protective and proprietary feelings toward the artist. They also have opinions about what should, and should not, transpire. Managers must honor their participation without surrendering the decision making power. The artist will weigh the collective opinions that reach his ear, evaluate the source of each point of view, and make a decision. They ultimately choose the direction and the manager either executes their wishes, or comes up with an alternate approach. Managers should like being in charge and must never surrender control.

## **25. Avoid What’s Happening**

The music industry is a fast-moving game. Careers are constantly expanding and contracting as popular music dances up and down the charts. The sources of your inspiration eventually become your competition. If you design your act to emulate the style of your heroes, you will be compared to and forever eclipsed by them. By reaching

beyond your musical roots, and developing a unique context for your music and live act, your band will be perceived as authentic and original. If you go on what is popular in the mainstream today, the music cycle will turn and it will be over before you catch up.

## **26. Don't Be Manipulated**

In virtually every human relationship, someone is being dominated and manipulated by somebody else. Managers must develop personal power, and through confidence, charm and intellect, control the business environment. If you surrender to your opponent's domination, you will be coming from behind throughout the negotiation. Lead the discussion with your deal points so your adversary is responding to your agenda. Be aware of the power structure and how you fit into it. Never abuse your power by using a sledgehammer, when a tiny bell will get the job done. When others abuse their power, resist from a calm and centered place. Use anger carefully; you can't take it back.

## **27. Honor the Crew**

Managers provide a unifying force between artists and their employees. The musicians, road managers, and travelling technicians are all indispensable links in the chain. Keeping crew morale high is integral to maintaining continued excellence. Bonus and performance reward systems can provide incentives to inspire extra effort and care. Many things must go perfectly well for a great show to be produced. Share your success with the crew; be complimentary and grateful for their service. If financial rewards aren't in the budget, a little praise can go a long way toward building unity, establishing an esprit de corps and elevating morale. Respect every cog in the wheel.

## **28. Manage the Production**

The most carefully crafted act is only as good as the sound, lights and video components that support the show. The quality of a performance is measured by what is seen and heard. Managers should

insist on sound checks and observe the systems and mechanics being employed by the house and stage mixers. Volume is a crucial element and should be directed by the management at sound check and during the show. Modern sound systems have the ability to produce sound at very high decibel levels. Finding the right volume level for each venue is imperative. The lighting systems and technicians should also be rehearsed with care so they are familiar with the artist's repertoire. Some venues have legally established decibel levels that must be honored, under penalty of the law.

## **29. Take the Heat**

Managers must be good under pressure. There will be times and places where things don't go according to plan. You are the last line of defense when problems arise. Always engage trouble immediately and absorb the situation; come up with a creative solution and resolve the matter. When the world comes crashing down, don't accept that it has to land on you. Quick action on an informed decision will arrest most problems. Get the facts and make your choices when you have all the information. Never try to dodge the bullet. Face the tough stuff head on, take the heat, and the end game will be in your hands.

## **30. Be Accessible**

A person who cannot be reached on the phone, or doesn't respond to emails and texts, is not good for business. Executive access is a vital component in an industry dependent on instant communication. Have a rapid response system that deals with your digital interface. Be reachable and be present when reached. Artists should keep their friends, fans and followers up to date on current events. The band's website should provide direct communication between artist and fan base. A clear method for accessing management and the artist's booking agency should be available online. Managers must be reachable on demand as needed. In the age of ubiquitous cell phones, it's a twenty-four seven profession.

## **31. Limit Your Dependents**

Work to keep the cost of operating your business low. Funding for music based start-ups is very scarce. Each employee adds a specific burden to your profit potential. Every salary comes with additional built in ancillary costs, including taxes, health and welfare benefits, pensions, sick leave and vacation time. There are also hidden liabilities like coffee and smoking breaks, personal business and Internet time wasted on gossip and socializing. Every employee costs more than his or her base salary. Each one must carry a work load commensurate with their total cost to the firm. Personally direct the activities of your staff, so you learn their capabilities and maximize efficiency. Keep it small. Keep it simple.

## **32. Be Honest**

Honesty is always the best policy. Business relationships are built on trust. Truth and integrity are vital ingredients in deal making. Honor your commitments even when it hurts. Don't abandon your obligation because a better opportunity presents itself. For your relationships to endure, your colleagues must know that they can count on you to deliver what you promise. Keep your word and your friends and associates will reward you with the same kind of honesty and integrity. If you have the reputation of being honest, when the terrible moment comes and you absolutely must tell a lie to save the day, you will be believed.

## **33. Don't Whine and Complain**

Whining and complaining are signs of disappointment, regret and failure. They are blaring indications that the process is not working, and they carry the connotations of guilt and blame. Management must maintain an aura of confidence, accomplishment and success. Focus on the positive and see the world as half-full. Devise solutions quickly and expand the systems that are contributing to your success. Discover the flaws in your organization, and instruct your fiduciaries to pursue proactive methods that improve team performance and profitability without whining and complaining.

## **34. Be Graceful in Glory**

With winning comes, various forms of praise and adulation. Managers who are showered in glory for their accomplishments should acknowledge that the entertainment industry is a communal activity and that all success is a product of team work. Sometimes the victories are hard earned; others are a result of pure luck. Regardless of the source of the achievement, a graceful leader accepts accolades with humility, dignity and a sense of sharing the praise with the people who helped create the good fortune. Don't blow your own horn.

## **35. Be Thrifty**

Protect the assets of your business. Keep the costs of running the enterprise as low as possible. Be efficient about the purchase and use of office supplies and equipment. Recycle and avoid wasteful systems. Eliminate expensive family and entourage obligations while touring. Negotiate for more favorable terms when selling, buying, renting or hiring. Always travel at the minimum rates and curtail the luxuries. Managers should lead by example and demonstrate frugality in their personal finances. Artists will expect them to apply the same principles to their mutual interests.

## **36. Be Humble**

Managers receive and transmit the power of the artists they represent. Conversely, they are burdened by the absence of fame and fortune when that exists. As the artist's primary spokesperson, the manager's attitude and personality must reflect the style and values of the client. Humility is the balancing mechanism for abuse of power. Careers are roller coaster rides that must endure both highs and lows. Be humble when you are on top; the friends you make then will help you navigate the hard times, when you are at the bottom.

## **37. Be Kind**



Conduct your business from a positive point of view. Inject grace and humor into your conversational style. Develop a kindly nature that inspires loyalty and invites others to participate. Company morale starts at the top. If management goes about the work with a warm and friendly attitude, that feeling will be transmitted to the staff and will result in a more pleasant working environment. Good managers bring a sense of fun to the workplace. They inspire others to perform random acts of kindness. And they are good for business; people always prefer to deal with somebody who is pleasant and friendly.

## **38. Manage The Man**

The “man” is the heat, the cops, the law, the police. If they are addressing a member of your band, crew, or entourage, the manager is the point person for resolving the matter. If the police show up back stage, on stage, in your hotel or at your vehicle, you must step up immediately and diffuse any potential problem. Weapons and drugs can present serious complications and managers should know where they are located and who is vulnerable. The object is to avoid arrests and confiscations that could result in time lost, shows being cancelled and the burden of legal fees.

## **39. Lawyer Up**

When you need a lawyer, get the best. The legal profession functions on a “star” system just like sports and showbiz. There is an attorney good for the job; there is someone who is better, and there is always the very best. Choosing the right lawyer for your specific problem is like selecting the right doctor. Find the specialist who is perceived to be the expert in his field; they are most aware of the current state of their specialty in the courts. When in doubt, track down the former district attorney who has gone into private practice. If he isn’t the best man for the job, he will know who is, and most likely he already has a seasoned rapport with the judge. Most importantly, when accused, exercise your Miranda rights. Do not say ANYTHING to the police. Whatever you say WILL be used against you. Say nothing in your defense and do not profess your innocence and never admit to

the charges.. Ask for your lawyer in your first sentence.

## **40. Aim for Elvisland**

Great artists are obsessively optimistic and many believe they are destined to be the next big thing. Aiming for the supreme pinnacle can be a powerful key to realizing an artist's full potential. The perennially highest earning deceased person is Elvis Presley. So if you plan to be the biggest rock star ever, it's Elvis you have to surpass. By reaching for the highest possible level, you are sure to discover where you fit in among the stars. Aim high and settle for what you get. Always do your best, regardless of the degree of difficulty, or the size of the audience. Every show matters. Every fan counts.

## **41. Keep it Private**

The public has an insatiable appetite for information about their entertainment heroes. The twenty-four hour news cycle, fed by ubiquitous video and an army of stringers and paparazzi, is constantly scavenging for inside information. Managers must instruct employees on privacy policy. The intimate details of artists' personal and private lives should be protected from public scrutiny. Secure your computers and filing systems; shred dead correspondence. Keep the public conversation focused away from the artist's private life. Feed the media what you want them to know. Protect your client's public image at all cost; and in times of scandal and tragedy be willing to shut out the media entirely.

## **42. Recognize the Evil Men**

You will meet four kinds of men in the music industry: Little men, who accomplish the minor roles and facilitate the functioning of every-day business; Gentlemen, the partners and business associates who compose your team and contribute to your success; Sages, whose wisdom has evolved over protracted experience, and who offer mentoring and guidance; and Evil men, who will lie, cheat, steal and destroy you to get ahead. Beware of people who will do anything to win.

If it sounds too good to be true, it's probably not true. Beware of fast talkers with smooth pitches. Be diligent and judicious when dealing with strangers and investigate everything claimed and everybody involved. It's all on the Internet and a quick search can provide a lot of information about any person or entity.

## **43. Trust Your Instincts**

We are all connected in the realm of mind. Every action begins as thought, and through disciplined effort, creates consequences. Trust your first perception and read the signs. Observe how the mind generates your thoughts and direct your diurnal activities. Torrents of thought expand our awareness with a constant flow of information. Honor your subliminal and extra sensory feelings by incorporating them into your decision making process. Observe how your mind is deluged with torrents of thought directing your activity. Follow the path of least resistance, keeping your goals clear, your options open and your choices deliberate.

## **44. Imitate Success**

The principles of success do not change. Be conscious of your personal victories and how they were achieved. Analyze your systems and protocols so you can incorporate winning strategies into all your career activity. Study your competition and determine where they are operating more efficiently than you are. Every band starts at rock bottom and the histories of the legendary ones are well documented. Study the lives of the great stars. Learn where the pitfalls lay and most importantly, find out what extraordinary actions led to the greatest successes. Observe the great performers; Mick Jagger borrowed his best moves from James Brown. Justin Timberlake learned from watching Michael Jackson.

## **5. Know When to Quit**

Talent comes in many shapes and sizes and its quality can only be measured over time. Assuming an artist has “it,” the presumption is that if he/she doesn’t give up they will make it sooner or later. It is not always the most talented artist who reaches the top of the charts; often it is the act that endures the challenges for the longest period of time. Follow the general rule of persisting against all resistance, but always analyze the numbers and hard facts so you are aware of the true nature of your situation. Sometimes you just can’t win and it is always best to leave the game voluntarily, rather than to be forced out. The sharp sting of reality rains down on every scheme. Consider the facts and weigh the truth; when the party’s over, accept it and move on to your next adventure. Let the fat lady sing.

## **46. Face the Music**

Many people go to enormous lengths to avoid confrontation. They often work against their own best interest by delaying or denying the inevitable. Don’t shrink from the big stuff. Always take appropriate action in a timely manner, and face your problems head-on. Most potential tragedies can be avoided if they are discovered and addressed early enough. Research and analyze your adversities and remember that they are not personal, pervasive or permanent. Every problem comes with its own solution. Fearlessly address the biggest issue first; once that is resolved, the rest of your day will be easy.

## **47. Know Your Options**

Success accrues to those who make the correct choices more often. Keep a running assessment of your options. Be ready to cut back to an alternate position if circumstances change the playing field. If your instincts project that you are headed for failure, be ready to choose the next most advantageous position. Maintain a flexible mind set and be ready to alter your pitch and change course, if your backup plan suddenly becomes the only path you have left. Stand ready to create new options when all else fails.

## **48. Ignore the Impossible**

If you can imagine it, you can almost always accomplish it. However, some things are not practical within the budget, time and space available. Recognize such circumstances and don't waste time and resources nurturing projects that cannot be realized. Dreams shrink in their specific application and reality eventually dictates what can be accomplished within any given situation. A considered knowledge of the state of the industry can help artists and managers define the possibilities. There is a fine line between positive thinking and tilting at wind mills in the pursuit of impossible dreams. You are not always the most qualified to perform every function. If another team member is more suited to deal with an issue, you should assign the responsibility to that person. The central goal is to protect the artist's interests and create career longevity. Avoid fantasy and stand ready to abandon the impossible as soon as a negative outcome is assured.

## **49. Think Again**

What you think will dictate what you do. All action is designed to accomplish a perceived goal. When challenged, we assess the prevailing data and define a strategy to achieve an imagined solution to the problem. Emotion and desire nourish the process, allowing us to create and control our own destinies. Seek out and practice some meditation technique that will quiet your mind and help organize the thoughts that continuously flood your imagination. Think before you act; and when the goal is carefully reasoned out, take action of purpose and with confidence that you have made the right choice. The truth is always clear and easily understood and your conscience is an infallible instrument for measuring right and wrong. Think about it first, then take considered and appropriate action.

## 50. Finish Well

All business enterprises start out rich in enthusiasm and anticipation. Things invariably slow down as the drudgery of the daily routine dampens spirits and forces us to conduct business at a livable pace. The last show is just as important as the first; and energy conserving systems should be integrated into the performing process. Avoid drug and alcohol dependency. Build appropriate dietary and sleep provisions into your routine. Great tours are accomplished by consistent effort at every level and through each stage of production. Push hardest at the moment of completion and cross the finish line with your head held high and all flags flying.

## **Part III - The Digital Music Industry FAQ**





## Frequently Asked Questions - Part III

The following questions have been posed by students, professionals, and the merely curious over the past few years. Some of the answers have been previously posted online. The content of any given response embraces the systems, mechanics, protocols and politics presented in Parts I and II. Any redundancy is related to giving a comprehensive answer to each question. The most important information is repeated throughout the text, just in case you missed it the first, second and third times through. Always be curious.

### 1. Who Killed Radio?

*Have Internet systems like Sirius XM, Radio, and Rhapsody changed the nature of radio? - A.T.*

Back in the early sixties, the postmodern record business was born from the marriage of FM Radio and 33+1/3 rpm albums; The Beatles were the superstars. The meteoric rise of "The Fab Four" was reinforced by a rebellious mind set in the youth of the United Kingdom, America and, as it turned out, the rest of the world.

The peace, justice and freedom movement spawned a radical counterculture across the entire generation. Everybody under the age of thirty carried a chip on his or her shoulder about the government's failure to protect President John F. Kennedy from assassination. This shocking event occurred on the streets of Dallas on November 22, 1963 and represented a loss of innocence from which the nation has never fully recovered.

Every high school senior was vulnerable to getting drafted and sent to Vietnam. It wasn't a pink war like the ones we hide from today. The war carnage was displayed on broadcast television news every night. America's young people watched their friends and families being destroyed on TV and rejected the whole idea. They dropped out, rejected the establishment, embraced the world of music, and rallied around its message of liberty, love and peaceful revolution.

The Hippies and the Black Panthers inspired the battle to end the Vietnam War. Led by The Beatles and fueled by an array of dangerous, and not so dangerous drugs, the flower children of the sixties demanded and achieved an end to that immoral and purposeless misadventure.

When The Beatles offered to hold our hands, we took theirs. As they turned on, so did we; as they tuned in, we followed; and when they said, 'drop out' we gladly obeyed. The flag that inspired an alternate society to rise up and defy the establishment was waved by rock & roll singers and bands. The commercial exploitation of that music created the postmodern record business.

By consolidating the record industry down to three music monoliths, the major labels tightened their choke hold on AM and FM radio. The broadcast airwaves will always exist and terrestrial radio will always adapt to the programming that attracts the largest audience. In the digital age, music is claiming a shrinking portion of the air time as listeners turn to iTunes, smart phones and YouTube for their music acquisition.

From the antiquarian record business to the digital age, record companies have provided radio with content free of charge. The stations do not pay the labels for the use of their product. In fact, record companies invest heavily in promoting airplay for their recordings, often through illegal methods.

The costs of billions of hours of airplay were absorbed by the record labels and the artists. While the broadcasters paid songwriters and publishers for the use of their material, the labels and artists received no remuneration. The business of getting a record on the radio in the postmodern era is cold, cruel and expensive.

Historically, the mechanics of record promotion have been corrupted by various forms of "payola." This is one of the least healthy areas of the business today. With a finite amount of air time, and the requisite commercial advertising, there is only space for the music of the most popular artists. As record sales decline, the cost of discovering and developing new artists has become prohibitive. The pool of new product is diluted further as music lovers continue to shift away from

radio to handheld devices.

The good news is that Internet Radio is a burgeoning business. There are several viable sources providing online customized radio with Spotify, Pandora and Rdio leading the pack. Some systems are free with upgrades for additional applications, while others rely on commercial advertising and subscription fees.

Some services offer computer customized listening posts for members who pay a subscription fee to create their own play lists. Sirius XM offers a wide range of channels devoted to the music of singular artists, as well as stations devoted to a variety of classic genres and cult artists like the Grateful Dead.

Many musicians trying to attract an audience in the professional realm provide their music as free downloads and offer CDs for sale on their personal websites. Some of the service providers will survive, and grow into long-term music industry institutions. A few, like iTunes, Facebook and YouTube, have already become vital cornerstones in how recorded music will be marketed and monetized in the digital age.

Other systems will fall by the wayside and end up as good ideas that couldn't sustain a viable business model. Regardless of which methods dominate and prevail, Internet radio will continue to grow as a primary source for listening, sharing and purchasing records in the music renaissance. On demand music sources will continue to provide streaming content with pay-per-play and advertising models that provide new income streams to artists and songwriters.

The transition from the finite world of terrestrial radio to the infinite resource of cyber-space is good for the artists and bad for the record companies. The ability to present one's music to a global audience at virtually no charge puts record promotion in the hands of the bands and the fans. The best kind of advertising is word of mouth, or, more often than not, texting. The record companies can no longer dictate what is going to be popular. The power is with the people.

Music lovers are free to explore and discover the songs they value and appreciate from an endless supply. The challenge to artists and

entrepreneurs is how to monetize a business where the purchase of the primary product is a matter of choice not necessity. Internet radio will go through many changes, as new distribution concepts come and go.

Streaming and peer-to-peer file sharing will remain the most popular content acquisition methods. Artists will depend on their merchandise and personal appearance income to survive, and the fans will decide what music will be popular and endure. Radio will ultimately be custom designed, on demand and streaming from the digital cloud.

## 2. Are You Singing To Me?

*Since music is composed and released within a short time frame, do you believe that musicians will use popular or current events to gain an audience? - L.M.*

The American dream was invented by the victors of World War II. The idea took root in the late forties and fifties when millions of ex-military personnel received a free college education through the G.I. Bill. The resultant birth of a dominant middle class embraced the idea that, "I went to war so my kid won't have to go." But war as a business was far from over.

The assassination of JFK left the nation dazed and confused by a series of bizarre residual incidents and myriad conspiracy theories. There was a loss of trust that sparked open rebellion against the government and compulsory military service. President Lyndon B. Johnson's acceleration of the Viet Nam War, which Kennedy had planned to bring to a halt, further alienated the youth. They were expected to suffer and die in service to a military industrial complex driven mad by imperialism, greed and paranoia over the hollow threat of communism.

Little consideration was given to the fact that Viet Cong leader, Ho Chi Minh, was considered the George Washington of his country. This hostile environment nurtured an anti establishment movement that prompted the music community to sing out in open rebellion. In

late 1966 police and music fans in Los Angeles clashed over the closing of a favorite Sunset Strip night club called Pandora's Box.

That night Stephen Stills was inspired to write the classic sixties anthem, "For What It's Worth." Shortly thereafter it was added to Buffalo Springfield's eponymous first album. Their only hit single proved to be a prophetic warning of more intense confrontations to come.

The legend says that Stills recorded the song in one night, played all the instruments and sang the vocals. The recording instantly received massive airplay on AM and FM radio. He and many of the other rebels of the folk rock era were emulating the social commentary of Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, Bob Dylan, Peter, Paul & Mary and Joan Baez among many others. This music was at the cutting edge of the labor, civil rights and anti-war movements in the United States.

Traditionally, singer-songwriters have always described the injustices of their times through music. They were an admired force and their opinions were valued and influential. The youth of America abandoned the system that failed to protect Kennedy, and chose new leaders. The rock & roll community became the new international heroes. This resulted in a massive explosion of rebellious music and psychedelic art that changed the world.

Today's artists are more focused on chasing the legal tender than demonstrating leadership. Performers can influence their followers, but first they need to evolve informed opinions; and then they must risk their careers if their ideas are in conflict with the mainstream view.

Artists with the courage to speak out may be forced to endure a back lash from corporate media and an easily influenced public. The Dixie Chicks spoke out against the shameful policies of the Bush administration and were severely criticized for their courageous action. Of course, it only made their true fans love them more.

The song may be mightier than the sword, but someone has to write and sing it, and somebody else has to be listening and take action. The arts are the last line of defense in any democracy, and a

great musician with an inspired message can change the world.

### 3. Will You Love Me When I'm 64?

*Do you think there is music today that will be as enduring as that of the classic rock artists like The Beatles and the Rolling Stones? - D.C.*

“Pop” in the music context stands for popular, and every generation chooses a musical hero. Since the music renaissance exposes more genres to more people, it is reasonable to assume that the historical trajectory will continue along the same path. In the tradition of The Great Caruso, Rudy Vallee, Frank Sinatra, Elvis, The Beatles and Michael Jackson, it only stands to reason that, in due course, a superstar will emerge.

Electronic dance music (EDM) is engaged in just such a movement. It has been an underground phenomenon for more than a decade and is focused more on dance than story telling. This movement is gaining traction every year and many predict that it will evolve into the next big thing in music. Spectacular outdoor events like The Electric Daisy Carnival in Las Vegas, and Ultra in Miami, are just the beginning of a major force in live concert entertainment.

In a format where the DJs, mixers and producers are the stars, a hybrid artist with multiple skills and assets could create a lot of excitement. Superstar Lady Ga Ga has made a huge impact with her army of Little Monsters. Justin Beiber has proven that cute still sells; but his egotistical outbursts and fiery temper will probably bring him down in time. Adele clearly demonstrates that regardless of the popularity of “beats” driven music, a great song performed on real instruments, professionally produced and well sung, is still by far the highest standard.

Major music movements usually have a strong dance component and are often drug driven by youthful fans determined to party all night behind the artificial stimulation. This makes it all quite dangerous and there is usually a strong resistance to the movement from parental, scholastic and political forces.

This feeds into the rebellious attitude of the youth who are rejecting their parents' music to choose their own identity. The underground "rave" culture perpetuates this phenomenon and is moving rapidly into the mainstream. Dance crazes have been going on for over 100 years and they are not likely to stop because of the digital convergence.

## 4. How Big Is Big?

*Could an artist actually represent our entire generation? Or are tastes today too eclectic as a result of every style of music being available on the Internet? - P.O.*

If Aristotle's dictum, "freedom is an essential ingredient of happiness" holds true music fans should be living in a state of ecstasy. When it is possible to hold thousands of songs in your smart phone and be under no particular obligation to pay for them, it is truly revolutionary.

Prior to the advent of peer-to-peer file sharing, musical taste was filtered by the record companies. Their A&R, promotion and distribution systems dictated limited musical choices to the general public. The record business decided which music would get to compete, and the fans chose the winners from a limited palate.

The surviving labels created a continuous flow of product, starting with the sheet music publishers and record companies. They provided a stream of artists selected by committee. The choices made by Artist and Repertoire (A&R) men and record executives were influenced by fads, trends, recent successes and politics. The filtering process often eliminated the most unique, original and creative artists from the competition.

The influence of the digital age on the music industry is overwhelmingly profound. The Internet has brought the postmodern record business to its knees. The entire industry has been consolidated down to three major companies that control ninety percent of the traditionally sold compact disks. Digital sales eclipsed hard copy sales

for the first time in 2012. The infrastructure of the big three record companies was built on a business model that is no longer viable.

Massive shrinking of record company operating costs is in progress. The ability of these companies to discover, develop and maintain long-term careers is in serious jeopardy. Their prevailing system is very much tied to a tight control of AM and FM radio. However, this generation of music fans is not particularly attached to radio. Their music acquisition is handheld, Internet accessed and cloud based.

Today's fans are more involved in the selection process than any previous generation. The music they identify with is chosen through a loosely controlled network of niche groups and online communities. The array of musical styles available covers the entire history of recorded music. There is no genre that cannot be fully accessed and explored on the Internet in minutes. Virtually every song ever recorded can be found and downloaded free of charge.

There is more music in play than ever before in history. The only problem is how do the creators of it get compensated? If songwriters and performers can't sell records, how do they survive? Without an industry geared to the discovery of new talent, how will the next superstar be born? These are questions without obvious answers, but there is an historical trajectory and a new paradigm.

Every previous generation has produced original artists and innovative entrepreneurs, who have combined their business skill and artistic talents to produce a following. The teenagers eventually rebel against their parents' music and choose their own. This process seems to be a natural phenomenon that is part of coming of age in America.

It is unlikely that this rite of passage would disappear just because digital technology has opened more music to a wider audience. It is most probable that a new superstar will rise on the winds of change. It would require that a lot of extraordinary social, economic and artistic ingredients end up in one package for this to happen.

It is equally possible that this scenario may never come to pass.



Music fans could explore all of the great genres on a song by song basis and create the soundtrack of their lives from the Internet archives. Personal choice on demand has become the standard.

The ability to send your entire library of music as a calling card certainly communicates a significant amount of information to a new friend or acquaintance. The amount of personal information garnered from your musical archives can tell more about who you are as a person than can be communicated through hours of conversation. The getting-to-know-you phase of a relationship can be greatly accelerated by exposure to one's musical soul.

Perhaps music has become too big for any one source to dominate. Regardless of what's happening at any given moment, I always keep one eye on the horizon and one eye on what's in my face. I fully expect the next big thing to pop up around the next corner at any time. If freedom is a component of happiness, explore music, because it's free. You will be happy you did.

## 5. Does Music Matter?

*Has the role of music in our society changed and does it carry the same cultural significance as in previous times? - G.G.*

What comes first: the chicken or the egg? Does life imitate art, or are artists describing the world around them? Are the paintings of victorious hunters that adorn the walls of Paleolithic caves predicting things to come, or are they depicting past accomplishments? These ancient questions have been the subject of much debate, and there are no perfect answers.

Dance and music were the first, and remain the most enduring of the performing arts. It is impossible to tell when they transitioned from religious, fertility and survival rituals into show business, but it was certainly a process that evolved over thousands of years. Ancient Taoist philosophers described the pursuit of entertainment as one of man's four basic instincts. They held that fully twenty-five percent of all human endeavors are devoted to various forms of creating, observing

or participating in entertainment.

In the 60s and 70s, music was a kind of fuel that drove a lost generation forward and provided a constant sense of direction and community. It wasn't necessarily that The Beatles were giving out advice on how to live. But the Woodstock generation's focus was so fixed on them that we "interpreted" their lyrics and imagined deep and personal meaning from everything they said and did.

In today's fast-paced, socially active, cultural environment, the role of music is more like grease that enables the smooth transition from one activity to the next. These are significantly different roles that define a distinctly unique place for musical artists in the lives of today's fans.

The cultural circumstances that create the popularity of particular songs are part of a multi-faceted process that is continuously evolving. Every time the technology changes, the entire game must be reinvented. The digital convergence has changed the game one more time.

The freedom to choose has diluted the taste pool and divided the global fan base into a collection of niche markets. No new musical force has emerged with a dominant enough style to galvanize a mass audience. Music as an institution has gained enormous value in the minds of the youth, but universal interest in any one particular genre has been elusive.

For over three decades, mainstream popular music has been dominated by the Hip Hop culture. A majority of the successful product was rebellious in nature and rested on images of misogyny, drugs and the accumulation of wealth. The digital generation seems to have rejected these values and is seeking a more focused message from its heroes. The well entrenched singer-songwriter community is surging forward with a renewed vigor and provides the most viable competition to classicized Hip Hop and EDM.

The artists who were presented at the Monterey Pop Festival and Woodstock were part of an underground music environment

generated by a cultural transition. Many of the performers at these major pop festivals were new artists on the threshold of careers that grew significantly, as a result of the media explosion that followed those seminal music events.

Fame and fortune were not motivating factors for these emerging artists. Most were confident of their talent, but they were not always commercially successful. Furthermore, they embraced a rejection of establishment values. This spawned a drug soaked counter-culture attuned to truth and enlightenment and opposed to the accumulation of wealth as their primary motivation.

A generational reaction to the trying times we endure today will most likely provoke some manner of rebellion in the emerging artist pool. This new artistic community may be willing to advocate change. Songwriters, singers, musicians, bands and music entrepreneurs must imagine and communicate their own vision for a better tomorrow. As long as the primary motivation is the accumulation of wealth, the quality of recorded music will remain stagnant and formulaic.

## 6. Who's On First?

*What is the best point of entry for people wanting to start a career as an executive in today's music industry? - M.G.*

More highly placed entertainment executives began their careers in the mail rooms of the major talent agencies than have emanated from any other single source. This tradition dates back over one hundred years to the founding of the William Morris Agency in 1898. Since then, virtually every agent began his career at this lowly station. The trainee programs not only tested prospective agents' desire, it challenged their intelligence, endurance and fortitude. Competition to rise to the level of secretary, and then junior agent, was always stiff and often ruthless.

An ambitious young man (women were not admitted until the seventies) often toiled for three or four years before escaping from the mail room to the next plateau. Every minute of the process was a test of ego, and an adjustment to domination and manipulation. Only the

most dedicated agent "trainee" prevailed. For those who graduated to agent status the battle to survive and prosper had just begun.

There were many tests and few errors allowed. Sitting at the crossroads of all show business activity agents faced many opportunities and often moved on to the ranks of managers, producers, studio executives, and network presidents. Even to this day, the low paying mail room jobs are highly coveted. Harvard Law School graduates and Stanford MBAs lobby hard to gain access to the most powerful corporate ladder in entertainment. These positions are for business minded people not actors, writers or musicians.

There is no better place to observe and participate in industry activities than a talent agency. They are at the crossroads of all of the core professions of entertainment. Young people in pursuit of careers in the music renaissance can learn from the professionals and develop their business skills if they can get in the door. Nepotism and personal relationships play a significant role in determining who is assigned these coveted positions.

## **7. Where Is That Pesky Record Deal?**

*What are the chances of my college band getting a record deal in the digital age? Can we make a living, selling records? -A.D.*

In the postmodern record business contracts are structured so that successful artists pay for virtually everything out of their minuscule royalties. All production, packaging and even some promotional costs are recouped before the band makes a dime. An artist has to sell hundreds of thousands of records just to break even. When they do sell well, it is impossible to get a fair accounting. The labels collect their share from record one and can be in profit even when sales remain relatively modest.

The good news was that the artist has no further relationship with the record company and was free to pursue a personal appearance career as his primary source of income. In the music renaissance, the record companies want a piece of all income streams in the big pie.

The 360-degree record deal essentially makes the label a partner in all of the artist's earnings from any source.

The monolithic music giants are too big to die. They own far too much content to entirely disappear from the game. Their enormous catalogs of copyrights and recorded masters have ongoing commercial value. The big three will stand up in the digital age and revise their business models. They, more than anyone, know the compact disk is dead and downloads are here to stay.

The collapse of the postmodern record business is not totally about piracy. There are other mitigating factors contributing to the implosion. The most significant factor is the role of music itself in the smart phone and digital recording universe. Music is only one facet of the wireless explosion. Computing, texting, phoning, instant messaging and emails are all part of the digital convergence and have been irrevocably incorporated into our culture.

The analog period produced music that was presented, through the label's A&R filtering systems, and then promoted on radio. The demand created was used to sell plastic and paper in such tonnage that it made the record business extremely profitable. This enabled the labels to spend lavishly, on vast A&R divisions, in order to find the minuscule number of new acts that could succeed. Declining sales no longer justify the cost and A&R execs are the last to know what's happening.

It's hard to say what all this will look like when the digital dust settles, but the big three will discover the best new artists long after the fans are already supporting them. This begs the question, "Do I really need a record company?" The answer is, NO, you don't.

As the relevance of CD ownership surrenders to universal streaming, the fans are turning directly to the artists to acquire their music. This is a vital element in the new paradigm. The high profit from CD sales must contribute to the artist's survival, not add to the per share price of stock in trans-national corporations. In due course these foreign owned companies will sell off their failing music divisions.

The major record companies passed on Napster and directed the Recording Industry Association of America to prosecute peer-to-peer file sharers. The vanity of that pursuit quickly became blatantly obvious. Now the labels have invented the 360-degree record deal to insure that they make money whether they sell records or not. With the collapse of brick and mortar retail outlets and the declining efficacy of terrestrial radio, the record companies don't have much to offer a new artist.

The best song will always win. The strongest attraction will give up its day job first. The records sold should provide high profit income to the artist's own record label; and ownership of the copyrights must be kept in house. Your best chance to build an enduring career, and make a living as a musician, is to build a great live act and never sign with a record company.

The formulae offered in record contracts are designed to keep the artist's share to an absolute minimum. The profit to labels, on per unit sales, is enormous. Most costs are charged back to the artist and the labels make money from record one. It is highly probable that creative accounting will dilute even further the royalties that are earned.

Digital piracy and free music have shattered the postmodern system; the brick and mortar stores are gone. Only the giant "budget" chains and book stores carry packaged CDs and they don't provide a very broad selection. By controlling the flow of product to AM and FM radio, the record companies have imposed their choices on the fan base for decades. They no longer have that power. You do.

## 8. Is My Demo a Record?

*Since technology has made it possible for anybody to make a record, how does the profession of record producer fit in to the new paradigm? - C.D.*

The digital age has reduced the cost of recording music, and the threshold to entry for artists has been lowered to ground level. This does not mean everybody with a tune, a MacBook and Pro Tools is a record producer. Making records is still an art form that requires considerable

skill. This is not going to change because the record business has lost its way. No matter what distribution system is utilized and regardless of whether or not fans pay for music, the records still have to be produced.

In the postmodern era record producers brought certain skills to the studio. Often they just had good musical taste and that justified their employment. Many producers were gifted songwriters and secured their assignments by providing material the artists and A&R men considered viable. Some producers were sought after for their engineering skills. A few combined all of these attributes and labels trusted them to deliver finished product on time and within the budgetary limits.

Practical experience making hit records is the common denominator most often sought. This system keeps a few producers in high demand and leaves many struggling to find employment. If a producer has product on the charts, everybody wants to work with him; and if he gets cold, jobs are hard to find.

The changing dynamic of the record industry has cut down drastically the number of records being released. With fewer records in production, the hot producers will get the work and the new players will struggle to be noticed. All will have to discover, develop and promote new talent. For EDM, the producer is often the star creating product for an array of artists under his direct control.

The music renaissance imposes other demands on producers seeking to build careers in music. Besides songwriting and engineering talent, they are required to demonstrate informed and intelligent business choices. Record companies are losing their grip on the global talent pool, as independent artists create their own records and market them directly to their fans.

More importantly, music mavens constantly surf the web searching for quality records to share with their friends. Since there is such huge volume and so little quality material, it is very difficult to find music with universal appeal. This has produced a multi-niche format that allows fans to make deep explorations into specific genres. Popular music is specific to the personal taste of each community and the fans themselves become the primary promotional tool for new recordings.



Record producers need to partner with artists and create their own record labels and publishing companies. If they can bring personal management services to the project, they keep operating costs low and increase their chances of success. The more control each enterprise has over the various income streams, the sooner the survival level can be reached.

Musicians who write songs, make records and perform shows have a clear idea of what their music should sound like. They benefit by being directly involved in the recording process. Bringing a qualified producer or recording engineer in as a partner and acquiring his services in exchange for stock in the company, will insure a consistent quality and a continuous flow of product without the burden of producer fees. It helps if he has his own recording studio.

As in the past, future record producers will need the ability to get the job. This is about "pitching." The conversation between artists and prospective producers is a sales pitch. The act needs to feel that the producer knows more about what has to happen than the artist himself. Convincing an act and a manager that you can make a record is a skill in itself. Without the ability to sell his or her services, a producer will have a hard time getting to make records. The ability to convince others that you are skilled is a talent in itself.

Record producers should learn to incorporate all aspects of how the business of music is conducted into their conversations with artists. The more details of the process they can include, the more convincing they will be. As in any craft, some artisans are more talented than others and the pursuit of excellence is its own reward. Ally yourself to producers who are perfectionists.

## **9. Who Pays The Piper?**

*How much capital is needed to obtain mass-market exposure for a new artist? What would be the first step in such a campaign? - D.W.*

Investing capital in music acts is like going to Las Vegas for the week end. You can pretty much expect to lose your money, so it is



important to enjoy the process. The cost of producing records in the old paradigm was extremely high; recording budgets up to a million dollars and beyond were not uncommon. However, the potential profits from CD sales justified the expense. An album would have to sell in excess of a million units to reach the top of the charts.

The postmodern record business was a very efficient money machine. Its mechanics were carefully developed from post WWII to the twenty first century. Contractually, recording agreements are extremely one sided in favor of the company. Even when earnings eventually accrued to the artist, it was always difficult to collect. Audits, although expensive to conduct, almost always discover monies due to the artists.

What the act got was access to a system that created fame. The fortune had to be pounded out by the artist on the road. The record companies had no stake in the concert business or the artist's personal appearance career. Radio sold singles, which sold albums and touring stimulated the process. Singles were primarily sales tools for radio and did not generate much in profits.

As long as the public was willing to buy ten songs they didn't want, in order to get the one they heard on the radio, the music industry flourished. The true cost of radio airplay has always been veiled behind the ever evolving illegal barter system known as "Payola." Trust that radio promotion was always, and remains, the most expensive service in the record business.

Today the cost of mass exposure on radio is justified in the careers of less than one percent of the artists. The postmodern system is dependent on an infrastructure that has lost its primary funding mechanism. Record sales of less than two hundred thousand units can install a record at the top of the charts in its first week of release, but it isn't going to recoup the artist's royalty account.

It was all just fine until the Internet opened up the Pandora's Box of "free" music. Now radio has been eclipsed by various music delivery methods. No matter how much the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) lobbies the congress and the world, the digital kids are not going to buy CD's except directly from the artist. And this, only after

a long seduction process has evolved the accidental participant into a true fan.

In the music renaissance, the artist is no longer a pawn in an unfair game stacked against him. The profits that soared in the postmodern era have disappeared. The record business is not as financially attractive as it once was. The executive corps of the big three record companies is engaged in the financial manipulation of their stock portfolios and catalog assets. They are not in the music industry and they are barely in the record business.

Today highly paid executives serve the boards of directors and the shareholders. To them success is measured in tons of plastic and paper. Artistic integrity is irrelevant and the customer is never right. The postmodern record business is over and no credible artist should seek a record deal. They should build and own a catalog of copyrights and masters that they license for distribution but never sell.

This will require that you start your own business. Everything any record company ever did for an artist can be done online right now. Many of the services are free. All you need to build a business around a body of music is to know how to play the game, play perfectly well, have talent and get lucky. You must be obsessive, creative, and relentless in your pursuits.

The important thing to remember is that investment dollars always get something in return. Cash is more expensive than other forms of capital, like blood, tears and sweat equity. If your band is good enough, and everybody on stage is an officer in the company with a job to do, you can avoid the need for outside managers and producers.

If you do require someone to manage your business, make them partners so their survival depends on your success. The job is too long term and too tough to accomplish, for the manager to be fired because his contract ran out. Managers should have one client: the company they own with the act. And one job: to make that company's product successful and profitable.

There isn't going to be a lot of investment in grassroots bands in

the near future. When somebody makes it big on the Internet, capital will accrue. Until then, the baby band has to stand up and survive on its own talent, passion, desire and hard work.

If you understand what you are dealing with and know how the Internet works, you can make a living from music. The investment must come from the artists themselves. Group funding websites like Kickstarter.com can provide startup money to help launch your enterprise.

Stay close to home so you don't spend the money on travel and hotels. Book your gigs within a one hundred mile radius of your base. If you can dominate the music scene in your area, the world will come to your door. You are the Piper and you are going to pay.

## 10. Where's My Video?

*Do you think it is still a good idea for artists to invest in making videos since they are rarely aired on television anymore? B.C.*

When it was still in the video business, MTV provided exposure that was the cherry on top of a successful radio promotion campaign. Record companies would risk large capital investment for videos if they knew the album sales would justify the cost. In most cases, fifty percent or more of video production dollars were charged back to the artist. This business has virtually collapsed in sync with plummeting record sales.

In the music renaissance, the role of video has changed, but it remains vital to the process of building a public image for an artist. It's now about do-it-yourself; and video is more important than ever. With the advent of digital media platforms, records can be promoted and marketed instantly. When no one is ever more than inches away from a screen, every song should have a video component. The music experience itself has been transformed into an audio/visual data feast.

The simplest form of video is documentary in nature and can be created by passing the camera around the band and adding some

creative editing. Imagination is the greatest source of production value. Make the videos cheap and personal, to appeal to the heart of your true fan.

Post them on your website and YouTube and let the fans see you living your life. Live web casts of your intimate and creative relationships will inspire interest. Show them rehearsals and your writing process. Involve them in your struggle. Make it all a joyful experience.

These homemade videos are also called micro-movies, webios, vimeos and min-docs. The fans are looking for honesty, fun and personality. These elements don't cost much if you have them. Without them, you aren't going to win anyway. It helps to be clever, and many artists have inspired interest in their music by putting up videos that go viral.

There are two reasons bands keep making videos, even though they are not being seen on TV. One is ego; bands want to see themselves as "rock stars" and a video is one way to revel in the fantasy. Second, and more important, is that video still provides the best way to demonstrate an artist's music and image simultaneously. Since the Internet is the primary promotional tool, video will continue to be a very important component.

Budgetary restrictions will force bands to create their video personality themselves, and the giant profit in producing high priced videos will be confined to the one percent of artists still in the record business. Fortunately, there are a lot of film school graduates itching to test their skills. Track down young film makers who will usually work for free to gain experience.

Only record companies had the budgets to create the expensive video product formerly seen on MTV and they're not coming back. A lot of video directors and producers are moving into documentaries and narrative film making. Music video will continue to be a point of entry for young movie makers and musicians looking for promotional tools to inspire interest in their music.

## 11. What's An Indie?

*Should I sign with an indie record company? - P.R.*

There is no practical difference between the big three and the dozens of sub labels they distribute. Both are crashing and burning and neither has a realistic business model. Sales don't justify operating in the old paradigm and the labels seem to lack the vision to reinvent themselves. The effort to preserve CD sales has done more damage than piracy and theft combined. It has alienated the customer base.

The purchase of music is a personal choice resulting from an intimacy that builds up between the artist and the fan. This process takes years to evolve and the record business is an instant hit or miss, fast paced game. Even so, historically rapid successes fail rapidly.

The record business is shedding its executive corps. Every ex vice president is taking his experience into the Internet and devising a service based on his expertise. Most are designed to reinforce the old school system and they often want you to finance their fantastic idea. If you pay them they will execute a vague effort on your behalf, but are not likely to be successful when competing with the big three. Do not get dazzled by a fancy pitch. There is no easy way to build an act and nobody can do it but you.

There is no future in being with record companies. They don't sign or break new artists any more. To interest them, you have to be happening on the Internet and in concert. If that is the case, you don't need them. Recording is not expensive, and your only promotion should be on the world-wide-web. Start an independent record company and own your masters and publishing.

## 12. What Comes First, the Record or the Road?

*Do you think that the decline in CD sales is forcing artists to focus their careers on the concert business? - M.H.*

If it ain't good live, forget it. Careers in music can no longer be built from the top down. For decades the Artists & Repertoire staffs from hundreds of record companies have scoured the cities, towns and villages of America, in search of what they perceived as commercially exploitable talent. In most cases the process required some vision and risk taking. Often the A&R choices were about local music trends and movements. Almost always the focus centered on talented individuals who were making a significant impact in their home communities.

If more than one star appeared to be rising from one location, the industry flocked to that city and signed up every act in sight. This tradition spawned the British Invasion of the early 1960s, as The Beatles and the Rolling Stones achieved global fame simultaneously.

The Byrds, Buffalo Springfield and The Doors inspired a similar explosion in Southern California later in the decade. Jefferson Airplane, the Grateful Dead and Janis Joplin led the "psychedelic" rock genre out of San Francisco. The "grunge" movement from Seattle was attached to the emergence of Nirvana and Pearl Jam. One hit act is a phenomenon; two or more is a miracle.

All of these popular music trends were born without the stimulation or investment of major record companies. The artists created a grassroots constituency and the record business followed. The infusion of recording industry capital provided the systems and protocols that expanded the fame and fortune of those innovative artists. The net result was a vibrant touring mechanism that allowed performers and bands to gain significant control over their survival.

Personal managers were able to keep the labels from participating in touring income. This was in retaliation for the labels depriving the artists of a fair share of profits from record sales. From the beginning of the antiquarian record business, through the modern and postmodern eras, recording agreements have grossly, if not criminally, favored the label.

Artists should succeed in the live arena before recording. And only make records when the repertoire is tested and extensively rehearsed. The reaction on the road is the best barometer for measuring

which songs are the best ones to record.

True talent is very rare. Anybody can make a record without a governing arbiter to judge the quality of their product. This has created millions of would be artists steeped in mediocrity. The sheer volume obscures the few with the potential to reach a wide audience. A local hero is the one most likely to successfully expand his audience.

## 13. How Do I Focus?

*I become obsessed for a few weeks, then, I get bored and give up. How can I maintain consistent focus and discipline? - J.D.*

Ideas are in the air and belong to those who take action and get them funded. The mind never sleeps, even when your body does. The ancient Taoists described the universe as an ocean of mind in which each drop contains the whole. The cutting edge of modern day physics is exploring the same idea through the quantum universe.

Through our imaginations and the imposition of will power, governed by conscience and emotion, we invent our lives. We are goal striving mechanisms that construct possibilities, first mentally and then on the physical plane. The thoughts that rain on us constantly define what we believe, desire and strive for, just as they indicate things we don't like and wish to eliminate from our lives.

Thought is omnipresent and relentless; imagination enables the thinker to adjust to setbacks, correct course and implement solutions. Despite these amazing mental tools, most of us fail to bring our most passionate goals to fruition. Everything has its opposite, and every effort meets a gravitational resistance from the status quo. Overcoming this gravity requires that you adopt a method of implementing discipline in your personal and business life.

Achievement of goals is restricted by the limitations of our physical bodies. The body seeks beauty and pleasure, as it strives to avoid pain and work. Consumption, propagation, contention and entertainment are the instinctive pursuits of our physical selves. The

elaborate and ambitious constructs of the mind provide the motivation we need to overcome the body's resistance to work. This requires the use of mental power to dominate the physical body's agenda by enforcing mind over matter.

Desire is like a muscle: the more you crave the end result, the closer you get to achieving it. However, wanting something is not enough. The greater the degree of difficulty, the more challenging the contest becomes. Successful people are able to mentally dominate their physical bodies. Coordinating your physical and mental agenda is the key to developing self-discipline.

There are many extant systems and methods available for increasing mental power. All forms of yoga and martial arts are avenues for developing superior mental faculties. By mentally forcing the body to take creative action, we impose discipline and empower the mind. The practice of yogic breathing, postures, movements and stretches relieves stress and enables deeper transcendental meditation.

Through consistent practice, we can eliminate pain from our bodies, which allows for an enriched meditative experience. From this practice we increase our awareness and enhance our ability to make the right choices. A strong, healthy body, hosting a focused, disciplined mind, is an invincible combination for success.

## 14. How Do I Pass Go?

*I am a singer/songwriter with quite a few songs; what should be my next step? – S.H.*

In this age of low-cost digital recording, there is a huge temptation to put the art before the horse. Everybody with Pro Tools is not automatically a talented recording engineer. Listening to ten thousand records doesn't make one a great record producer.

Novice songwriters should be reminded constantly that every song they write is not brilliant. And, every record they make is not an audio masterpiece destined to scream up the pop charts, spraying



fame and fortune in its wake. Like any craft, songwriting is a skill that is developed through practice. The one true thing is music publishing, and the single source of all popular music is great songs.

There are many elements that contribute to a record becoming a hit, and there is a primary reason why a majority of them don't. Most records fail because the song was poorly crafted and was lacking one or more of the three "Ms" of songwriting. A great song is a meticulously crafted balance of Melody, Meter and Message.

The weaving of these elements into an esthetically pleasing, reproducible work of art is not about the writing, but the rewriting. It is extremely rare for a composition to reach its final form in real time. Most hit songs are assembled slowly from bits and pieces of phrases and notes that are molded into a theme and carved to reveal a musical story.

Young songwriters with extensive repertoires should begin their careers by performing their material before live audiences. The starting point is in front of a mirror. Perform your songs for thousands of hours until you are totally immersed in every lick and lyric. Careful attention should be paid to each detail of how the artist moves and what is spoken before and after a song is performed.

This is show business and nothing should be taken for granted. The attention and respect of an audience has to be earned; and it is not always awarded. More often than not, night club patrons will totally ignore the act on stage. When the volume goes up, they just talk louder. Stopping to listen is a choice, and the goal of the artist is to seduce the reluctant listener's attention with the music.

The artistic quality of the material is what draws a room full of people to surrender to the performance. The audience reaction to any given tune establishes what is working, and repetition is the grind stone of perfection. The more times a song is performed live, the more polished it becomes. The changes that evolve in the composition are subtle and the balance intricate. The words must be forged to the tune and the tempo and the arrangement perfected.

Through this process the many facets of a story are blended to complete the final product. When the repertoire of songs is buffed

and polished the recording process can begin. This doesn't mean one shouldn't produce work records for study during the songwriting phase.

Hearing the material as it is being created certainly helps evaluate the end result and allows for experimentation in the lyrics and arrangements. Turning a finished song into a master recording is another arduous process that requires patience and skill. There are thousands of manipulations and techniques that can be applied to alter the quality and content of sound. A new artist cannot be expected to know all of them. This is where trial and error, experience and talent come into play. Record production is a continuously evolving art form.

Musicians in pursuit of enduring careers in entertainment must master many skills. If you can make a living creating and performing music, you have reached the first plateau. In order to accomplish this, you must control all the income streams. If an artist writes the songs, produces the records and performs the material in the live arena, he or she is well on the way to survival. If they can also manage the band, their overhead will be even lower.

The symbiotic relationship between live performing and marketing music provides the engine of the artist's business model. Drawing a crowd to a given venue, bonding with them and selling them recorded and branded merch is the game. Winning is about providing entertainment in an extraordinary manner that incites an audience to identify with the persona of the artist.

A willing fan supports an act by buying tickets, records, t-shirts, posters and whatever else the artist's dignity will allow them to endorse. A good show will bring fans back for more, and if it is really great they will bring their friends again and again. If an act can become a powerful musical force in their home town, they can spread that popularity nationally and globally.

The invisible ingredient is talent. A bad song poorly sung and weakly presented won't build a career. The audiences are sophisticated and know what they like. Polish your material by performing it live and then record it well.

If you are still making your living from music twenty years from now, you will have proven the point. And you will probably be rich and famous. Start now, work hard, and move your career forward every day. Evolve a clear vision of your short and long term goal structure; nurture it with imagination, passion and action. Get started, keep moving and most importantly, never give up.

## 15. Can You Get There From Here?

*How do you convince a band that wants to go on the road that they are better off staying home and working in their local community? -R.P.*

There are many prevailing misperceptions about the postmodern record business paradigm. For many decades the promotion and marketing of recorded music has been conducted on a national and international level. Hit records have always been the driving force in the process of breaking new acts as well as advancing the fame and fortune of established artists.

The vanguard in these assaults has been the "single" record. One song from an album, usually selected by committee, would be presented to national radio by the promotion departments of the record companies. These singles suffered through an excruciating process that required an enormous amount of systemic coordination and a modicum of luck. This paradigm has shifted.

The ubiquity of digital distribution, peer-to-peer file sharing, and free music has changed the business model that built the postmodern record business. The system can no longer survive in its current form. After vigorous debate on all the causes and effects, every musician with vision must embrace the fact that the once reliable, established path no longer leads to the desired destination.

Touring was once the most effective way for the artist to contribute to the promotion process. The personal appearance induced the record company to take action on the current single in each market where the artist was scheduled to perform. In order to "break" new artists, the record company would guarantee the artist and manager that the

"shortfall" incurred on tour would be advanced by the label. Losses from touring were usually charged to the artist's royalty account.

The major record companies are floundering in a state of confusion that began when they rejected Napster. They decided to sue their customers, instead of embracing digital distribution. Their fears were well founded. In an effort to retain very high profit margins on per unit sales, they tried to stop the proliferation of music itself. That strategic error has precipitated the downfall of the postmodern record business.

Performing and recording are relatively easy things to initiate and very difficult things to bring to profit. Anybody with a guitar and a song can stand on a street corner and sing for his supper. He is immediately a performer and a business enterprise. With the right technology, he is a novice record producer. These two functions provide the core elements of a machine that produces compensation for art, money for music.

The spending of vast amounts of promotional dollars trying to reach a national audience is no longer viable. There are millions of singers and bands that can be accessed instantly on the Internet. If one knows where to look, or gets lucky, he might even find something with artistic value. With so many contenders, it is difficult to separate the greatness from the hopeless. Greatness is always easily recognized; it is the mediocre that clouds our vision.

Music fans that bond with your act in the intensity of the live performance experience will buy your CDs and merch. They will spread your legend by word-of-mouth and text messaging. Your own viral marketing efforts will sustain and grow this fan base. Success cannot be achieved without an aggressive Internet presence.

If you become a popular act in your community and develop a profitable business around music, a national presence will follow. The local promoters and agents will be aware of your ability to sell tickets in your home town. This will get you on the bill with national artists who are eager to move the last thousand seats at their arena shows. If they see your value, they could take you on tour as their opening act and mitigate high touring costs.

An entertaining performance doesn't happen overnight. It requires a practiced integration of musical virtuosity, compelling material, charisma, sex appeal and desire. The passionate pursuit of imagined goals is the most powerful creative process on Earth. If you know what you want and have a clear plan of action, coupled with an obsessive commitment to your eventual success, you are an invincible force multiplier. Desire can even eclipse talent, when the more talented artist lacks obsession, optimism and a realistic game plan.

Stay home, become a big fish in the small pond and you will attract the world to your website. From there the touring of your act will be paid for by the demand for your presence in the marketplace. There will be no need for the artificial support mechanism previously provided by record companies.

Personal identification with artists and their music is an act of choice. It all starts with a song that communicates artistic integrity and aesthetic purity. It ends with a vast legion of followers who will sustain the long term success of their favorite artists. The urban legend is that one thousand true fans are all it takes to keep a band alive. Your fan base starts with the first fan: your Mom!

## **16. Is My Place In Cyberspace?**

*Which is the best way for a band to spend its time, playing small venues with very little exposure, or working their music through the Internet? - T.P.*

In the digital age, you need both to launch an act. There is no proven template for pursuing careers in the music renaissance. Entrepreneurs and artists must recognize that the traditional pathway to the top is eroding. Hundreds of record labels have been consolidated into three monolithic, distribution organizations.

The record labels are sustained by income from their vast catalogs of master recordings and publishing copyrights. The building of new artists is an activity they no longer control. Low cost digital recording and Internet distribution systems, legal and otherwise, have

rendered the old mechanics obsolete.

Millions of artists are in play on various websites. With so many careers in motion, discovering the talented ones has become much more difficult than in previous times. Performing has abruptly traded places with recording as the primary activity of the music industry. The digital switch has been flipped and the power has shifted to the live arena.

Artists must have an on line apparatus under their own control that directly enrolls members in their "tribe." Interactivity with the fan base should offer special programs, music downloads, a merch mart, news and personal information. Building, nurturing and maintaining a constant communication with fans through the band's website is imperative.

## 17. Where's The Work?

*What words of encouragement can you give to graduating recording arts majors who are being thrust into a shrinking job market? - L.P*

Every year thousands of students graduate from the comfort and security of college life into the cold, ruthless competition for survival in the real world. Many of these newly minted alumni are well schooled in the creative and business protocols of the music industry. Fledgling artists, producers and entrepreneurs dive blindly into the business armed with the latest technology and with their creative juices overflowing. The first thing they learn is that the water is running out of the pool.

Forced by minuscule sales, the labels have cut staff, trimmed rosters and release fewer albums, in a desperate struggle to survive. The unemployed professionals and the graduating class meet head-on in an open competition for the same opportunities. Since all the record companies are suffering from the same ailment, there is very little lateral movement for the displaced workers.

The novice record producer cannot afford to wait for the system to reinvent itself. He must be proactive in the core activity of his

profession: making records. And, he needs to be more than a studio geek. He should have an eye for talent, an ear for music, and a nose for business. Willing to fail, he must dive into the universal talent pool, choose an artist he believes in, make his pitch, get the job and produce the record.

Showbiz is about talent. It is hard to define the ingredients and elements of talent. Sometimes we think we see it when it's not really there. The secret to launching your career is to find an act you believe in and turn their recorded music and live performing into a business. That makes the producer an entrepreneur instead of one of the unemployed. Discovering and developing an act is the only way to be assured of ever having a job in the music industry.

If you think you are one of the few who will make a living in music, start now. Do it yourself. Get tough! This is not a game for the faint of heart. It is not about fame and fortune; it's about making music because you have to, no matter what.

Your friends and family are the foundation of your fan base. Enroll them in the process of building your career. They love you most. If you can't convince them you are great, it will be rough going with the rest of the world, as well.

## **18. Where Have All the Players Gone?**

*What is the best way to find other musicians to play with in order to start a band and grow as a musician? - H.G.*

There is a classic joke about the hipster standing in front of one of America's most august music venues. A shiny young man with a guitar case timidly approaches and asks, "How do I get to Carnegie Hall?" The hipster responds, "Practice, man, practice." Novice musicians must remember there is no substitute for continuous practice and rehearsal.

There will always be someone less talented than you, and there will always be someone who is better. Seek the latter. The superior player has more to teach you than a fellow novice. Playing with great

musicians will force you to stretch your abilities. The best players push you to reach beyond your skill level and they force you to grow.

Virtuosity is a technical achievement that, like any skill, improves with repetition. Most importantly, you must love the process. If you aren't intoxicated by the feel of the instrument in your hand, greatness will probably elude you.

Most virtuoso musicians are rarely far from their instruments. Neil Young, Stephen Stills and Zakk Wylde are master guitar players with different styles. They are constantly picking, experimenting and exercising their "chops." The ability to translate the music they hear in their heads, through their instrument, into the audio spectrum is their essential skill. Creative integration of truthful, poetic lyrics into their songs is a demonstration of their artistic talent.

For beginners the best place to start is in school where it is not difficult to focus in on the musicians among their peer group. Hairstyles, logos on t-shirts and guitar cases strapped to backs clearly identify who the musicians on campus might be. If you want to be noticed by them, carry your books around in a guitar case. You will find each other and a jam session will not be far behind. These early connections often lead to life-long relationships and durable professional careers.

Look for virtuosity and develop your own performing skills. Watch documentary films on your musical heroes and emulate their actions. Most importantly try to find the talented song writers in your peer group. These are the people around whom bands are built. The public is attracted to the lyrical content captured in the music, and the resultant copyright provides the vehicle for long term earnings.

The music fan is subconsciously embraced by the mathematics of the masses. The tune provides the cerebral tickling of the mental environment. Tempo inspires the involuntary physical participation demonstrated by the urge to dance. And the tale is the essential truth embedded in the poetic message of the lyrics. The skillful blending of these three phenomena creates the mathematical narcotic of music to which we are gloriously addicted.



## 19. Am I Talented Yet?

*Do you think the majority of recent artists that have found their way to the top have been a result of timing or talent? - K.R.*

Digimodernization is redefining how we classify the various skills and techniques employed in the production of recorded music. Pro Tools has enabled anyone with the inclination to make a record. Auto Tune and other digital manipulations can even make those records sound pretty good, if not technically perfect.

Getting signed to a record company is a controlled process through which allows only a tiny fraction of the performers to participate. The managers, agents and producers in power push their selections into the system, and a formulaic approach dominates the music scene. Originality surrenders to emulation and labels scramble to clone the latest success offered by their competition.

Today's artist no longer needs to gain the approval of the music industry elite to participate. A free Facebook page and a video on YouTube will get you into the game. The timing bubble has burst. Careers are instantly established and personally directed. Expertise and experience are no longer requisite factors. If the music is good and the act motivated, a band can generate its own career.

It is the nature of music that the players find their work beautiful, but the only true judge is the customer. No matter how great you think your band is, without earning public support and stimulating them to pay for your product, you have no business.

An abundance of one requisite ingredient can compensate for the lack of another. Image can stimulate interest and beauty can overcome a less than great singing voice. Passion can often out run talent, allowing the confident, enthusiastic artist to surpass a more gifted peer.

No two careers are exactly alike, but playing the percentages and reducing the failure factors can provide some insurance. By mastering your craft and learning how to mount a live act, you can participate. If

you build a support team and have an abundance of native talent, you can win. It is more about ability and hard work than time. If you have the talent, the Internet is waiting. The timing is up to you.

## 20. Which Way Did They Go?

*Which genre offers the best chance at success in the music industry? - M.G.*

Electronic Dance Music (EDM) is emerging as the next big thing. When no genre is ubiquitous, all genres are viable. Regardless of specific popularity at any given time, all the great music will survive. The dominant artists in each style will perform for the most ardent fans. Classical, Folk, Bluegrass, Country, Jazz, Blues, R&B, Reggae, Hip-Hop, Rock & Roll and all their sub genres are now classic forms. In the digital age, EDM is causing the most excitement.

The next big thing usually arrives with a charismatic superstar who defies convention and frightens the older generation. They come with a certain amount of danger, like sex, drugs or radical dress, hair length and a generally rebellious attitude. Without such a power personality a genre will float around on a cult level but not break into the mainstream.

EDM is unique in that it is not artist oriented; the DJ is the star. When the next superstar attraction appears, the youth will embrace it and defy the establishment's resistance. Then the cycle starts all over again. Usually there are two or more styles vying for popular attention when this phenomenon occurs. Lady Ga Ga has been the dominant artist in the electronic music movement. Adele cannot be disregarded; however it remains to be seen if her monumental success will precipitate a major trend toward the singer songwriter and traditional instrumentation. Certainly, she is the most impressive artist of the 21st century, so far.

Electronic dance music could well be the musical force that will kick off the next major pop wave. However, there is a cloud hovering over this movement that is attached to marathon dancing fueled by

drugs and alcohol. Traditionally as the fan base matures, this kind of social behavior evolves into more conscious living; and musical tastes evolve.

The DJs are demonstrating uses of music previously unexplored and are a vital link in the dissemination, distribution and exhibition of electronic music. They are essentially promoting the work of the originating artists and stimulating catalog sales. This has turned out to be a highly lucrative profession, with the top DJs earning millions in the process.

DJs can garner considerable fees for their personal appearances, and that should make the whole thing worthwhile for them and the artists they promote. One thing is certain, regardless of genre, or style: it will take the emergence of a superstar to consolidate a universal audience.

## 21. Where Does Talent Live?

*Where do you begin searching for the next super group and how do you separate the great from the near great? - M.A.*

The fundamental activity in the entertainment industry is the discovery of talent. A great performance is as easy to recognize as it is difficult to describe. When a talented vocalist sings a great song, there is a physical and cerebral reaction ignited in the audience. The combined emotional charge envelops both performer and patron in a binding cathartic experience. The energy is geometrically increased with the size of the crowd.

Originally the word talent described an ancient unit of weight or measurement. The evolved meaning relates directly to the ability to demonstrate performing skills for remuneration. There are a number of contributing factors required to generate the perception that talent is present. The ability to reveal superior, artistic power and technical skill on demand is the essential ingredient.

The great stars shine in their shoes. They project an aura of

beauty, grace, style, and confidence before they ever open their mouths to sing. These elements, in combination with other key ingredients, contribute to the public image of the act. The first to recognize the star factors are the parents of musicians who sacrifice to buy the first instruments and eventually surrender their garage space to the band.

As artists venture into the professional activities of showbiz, they must constantly reinforce their powers of attraction. The fan base grows as the public turns toward the artists and sees the light emanating from them. If talent is present, the people discover it; they revere the artists and reward them with their affection and financial support. As each new member joins the fan base, he is assumed into the discovery mechanism and becomes a potential connector to other fans.

The “discovery” of the act is generally attributed to a member of one of the primary professions of manager, agent or producer. The personal manager usually gets credit for being the first to see his client’s potential. By declaring the artist a star, a manager risks his reputation and his personal career is invested in that act’s success. Agents and producers compete with their peer professionals to join the artist’s team and expose the act to the widest possible audience.

Singers need songs and a band needs a stage. The practical place for discovering talent is the local night club scene. There is one, or more, in every market and they are the organic filter of talent in each community. The road to success is never easy, so expect that there will be some research and development involved. It may take a while before your band ever earns some applause.

A band must have talented songwriters who play, sing well and understand the challenges of the game. The discovery process begins when the baby star discovers his own artistry and is inspired to reveal his greatness to others. This need to be recognized and evaluated drives the fledgling singer to gamble on his dreams.

Most of history’s great artists demonstrated exceptional ability at a very early age. Their skills were sharp and their charisma palpable, long before they took up careers on the stage. Driven by a passionate

desire to reach a wider audience, each chased his or her dreams and eventually drew the notice of managers, agents and producers.

There are many successful artists who attain fame and fortune who cannot be classified as "super." This title is reserved for the few performers who explode onto the popular music scene in an innovative manner. They are instantly recognized and create huge, often hysterical, followings over night. There is usually some generational resistance to their rise, and they almost always have some cultural stigma to overcome.

Superstars are cast into an artificial world that constantly demands their participation in a process that is more about gossip than factual information. Part of us adores them and craves connection and membership in the artist's private community. Another part harbors a prurient interest in their weaknesses and failures. This places the superstar in a prison of his own creation.

The entourage becomes a wall between the star, his fan base and the media. This separation provides the breeding ground for rumors, innuendo, fantasy and legend. The less the media knows, the more it invents. Eventually the legends eclipse the truth and artists surrender to their own mythology.

They are forced to live their lives in small bubble communities designed to appease their fantasies and keep the real world out. The paparazzi haunt them, and agents and managers press them to feed the star maker machinery. In the end they are all powerful, alone and obligated only to their dreams.

## **22. How Do I Book It?**

*Is it possible to become a successful booking agent without a college degree or much of a background in music? - B.F.*

The Music Renaissance is in full bloom on the Internet. The digital generation has turned its back on the postmodern record business and instead embraces the blissful universe of "free" music.

This cultural migration replaces a business model that "forced" limited musical choices on the public with a new selection process. The net result is more music in play than ever before in history.

The concert business goes back to prehistoric times. In a recent issue of National Geographic magazine, scientists declared that certain Paleolithic caves in southern France were in fact concert halls. A recent scientific theory suggests that the unique configuration of Stonehenge was constructed for the same purpose. It was in these ancient venues that performing artists and managers first conspired with agents to secure compensation for the show. The profession of booking agent has flourished ever since.

Agents are one of the four primary players in the entertainment business. They are the well worn bridge connecting artists and managers with the promoters and producers of live music events. This fraternity is not going to break up, nor is it going to surrender control of the personal appearance marketplace to digital entrepreneurs. As fragile and uncertain as the record business may be, the global concert business is strong, healthy and poised for long term survival.

The major full service talent agencies deal in every aspect of the entertainment industry and represent creators of music, theater, film, television, sports and literary works. There is a prevailing idea that an artist who negotiates for himself is represented by a fool. This generally turns out to be true, and that fact ensures that the profession of booking agent will endure and prevail.

Agents are at the crossroads of all entertainment industry activity. The profession functions at the nexus of artists, managers, and producers. The practical activities of the agent are defined by the three "S's" of signing, selling and servicing. Agents "sign" artists to exclusive representation agreements; they engage in securing employment by "selling" the artists' services to producers; and they "service" the bookings to ensure that the terms of agreement are honored.

The famed William Morris Agency, forced to extinction by merger and acquisition, was founded in 1898 and terminated in 2009. WMA had evolved into the West Point of show business. It is a long

established tradition, at all major talent agencies, that prospective agents serve apprenticeships in the mail rooms and secretarial pools of their respective organizations.

Access to these coveted positions usually requires a college degree and often some manner of personal connection, or nepotism. There is a comprehensive description of the major agency training programs in the best-selling book "The Mailroom" by David Rensin.

## **23. Is Bad Publicity Really Bad?**

*How does a manager protect the artist from unwanted media exposure?*  
- S.F.

There is an old showbiz axiom, often attributed to Colonel Tom Parker, "There's no such thing as bad publicity." Back in the latter 50s, as an emerging artist, Elvis Presley faced a tremendous amount of establishment and media resistance to his exploding popularity. Elvis' brand of Rock & Roll music was "black" in a violently racist America. His performing style was blatantly sexual. He didn't just challenge the moral standards of the day, he shredded them. The more his hips swiveled, the more hysterical the fans became. All they wanted was more.

The Baby Boomer generation abandoned the goals of their parents and sought personal identity through rock & roll music. The growth of Elvis' career was not the product of years of slaving on the road and the careful polishing of his talent. Elvis the Pelvis sprang full-blown from the head of Zeus into the public spotlight with a sudden and spectacular flash.

Presley's raw, animal persona instantly attracted a world-wide audience that has never abandoned him. The international print and television media captured his every move. His records were popular, his films profitable and his concerts sold out. Decades after his untimely death, Elvis' estate still generates millions of dollars annually.

The public reaction to Elvis' warm and gracious personality eventually eroded the negative press, and even the parents accepted

him as a great artist and performer. Throughout this process, Elvis never had to seduce the media. They were captive from day one, and their coverage was more an observation of his life than a product of his personal participation in the public relations process.

The great Ed Sullivan stilled the anti Elvis community when he declared on his television show that Presley was “a real fine boy.” Although he was down home charming and bright, he rarely gave interviews and he didn’t court publicity. Perhaps this reserve only contributed to the media’s insatiable hunger for the King of Rock & Roll.

When America met The Beatles in the early sixties, a similar media explosion dominated print, radio and television. The Fab Four didn’t have to chase publicity; it was all around them all the time. Their manager, Brian Epstein, and their publicist, Derek Taylor, devoted more energy to protecting them from the press than exposing them to it.

In the fifties and sixties, there was no insatiable black hole sucking up twenty-four hour news cycles. There were no roving hordes of paparazzi stalking anybody flaunting their fifteen minutes of fame. Fan magazines were found at the newsstands, not on television, like the full color, multi channel, domination of the dinner hour that we experience today. Elvis and The Beatles were chased by the media, and occasionally they stopped running long enough for us to catch a glimpse.

The rest of the artist community endures a love hate relationship with the fourth estate. They want to expose their new albums, movies and personal appearances to their fan bases; and they, at other times, want to be left alone. Promotion is part of the artist’s professional responsibility to the record companies, movie studios, TV networks, and concert promoters that invest in their careers. It’s part of the artist’s job to help sell the product.

As stars fade into decay, or disrepute, some of the attention is no longer welcome. That very adoration, once chased and cherished, becomes a vehicle for gossip, exposure and shame. But there is no switch on the mass media monster; their appetite for destruction is insatiable and relentless. A tale of ruin and tragedy attracts far more



interest than a story about the artist's halcyon days.

The manager must limit access to the star and control the flow of information to the media. The "official" artist's website is the first source of the "story" which rarely overlaps the truth. When an artist who has built a rapport with the press through years of interfacing suddenly doesn't want to talk any more, the media embraces every possible fantasy.

There is no quid pro quo in the media dance. The artists owe the press nothing and they are only as strong as their ability to say no. In normal times, the media is the artist's ally, and they both enjoy the symbiotic relationship. In times of tragedy or scandal, pretty faces with cameras and microphones descend like vultures upon the scene of the crime.

The mass media asserts freedom of the press and their right to know and tell. I am always saddened to see the grieving family crying on TV the day after the tragedy. They didn't know that they were not obligated to speak, because nobody told them they could refuse to participate and just walk away.

Some publicity is desirable, some is not. Once you become a professional you have surrendered control. Be careful what curiosities you inspire. In a world of instant global communication, there IS such a thing as bad publicity. Careers are fragile and very unforgiving of the damage caused by strategic errors. If there is confidential information, and there always seem to be, security and privacy protocols are imperative. Your darkest secret can become common knowledge in minutes.

Superstars always get over-indulged. The pressure of the media cloud pushing in on the artist's world forces a sheltered lifestyle and a bunker mentality. This creates an "us against the world" attitude, resulting in the star dictating action, and the entourage obeying. Although two of his bodyguards did write an expose, it was not the Memphis Mafia's place to say NO to Elvis, or negate his choices. That enabled unbridled drug use, and the eventual demise of The King.

Excess wealth, isolation, extreme highs, abiding boredom and the illusion of power, all contribute to this cultivated behavior. Managers must often make difficult choices, when faced with hiding, enabling or sharing their client's baser habits.

The media machine is ruthless and incessant. It serves only its own interests. Failure to learn this lesson, and understand the mechanics of public relations has imposed great pain on the famous and their families. Nothing is off the record when a good story lies below the surface.

Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin, Jim Morrison and Amy Winehouse all died in their twenties, due to a failure to adjust to the rigors of the rock & roll lifestyle. Their descent into drugs and alcohol was documented, in real time, by the mass media. These great artists' declines were graphically etched in the gossip tabloids and mainstream press, which tangentially contributed to their decay.

The lives of Elvis, Michael Jackson and Tupac Shakur were tainted by the poisons that lurk in the well. The media captured their stories in mountains of words and pictures. Their legacies are preserved in the detritus of rock history and the archive of public opinion.

Sooner or later, what actually happened doesn't matter; the truth fades and the legend prevails. Fans are, by nature, fanatics in fantasy land. Their perception of the relationship between the artist and themselves is almost always a fantastic delusion.

Artists must create their own story and project it into the main stream media through the Internet. Their managers and partners owe them the truth as they see it. However, honesty is a priceless commodity, and only the most secure fiduciaries risk challenging or offending the boss. Sycophancy is part of every star's relationship with the personalities that occupy their daily lives

It may have been true in the golden age of movies that any publicity was a good thing. The public relations departments at the major studios carefully fabricated stories and arranged relationships to accommodate the promotional needs of the "star" system. The media traded the truth for access and played along, luring patrons

to the boxoffice. The fan magazines perpetuated the mythology, and a gullible public believed everything they read because they wanted needed a glimpse of glamour in their dreary lives.

Sometimes offensive incidents incited an outcry and often they were greeted with acceptance and humor. The public is very fickle and the bond with its heroes is thin and fragile. The long term effect of bad publicity varies from case to case. Behavior that is totally acceptable from one artist may be detrimental to the reputation and popularity of another.

With the advent of multi channel cable, satellite television and the twenty-four hour news cycle, the game has drastically changed. Throw the paparazzi and the Internet into the mix, stir in ubiquitous photography, and universal video, and the dynamic changes completely. Where there was once a shadow of a doubt in the stories of the past, today there's recorded proof of just about everything that ever happens in the life of a media star.

Artists have an image to sell in support of their career advancement. The seeds of their stories are sewn by managers and publicists. They are framed to project a certain aura and to stimulate interest in the performer. The fans digest the seeds and harbor illusions about their personal relationship with their idols. Hero worship is the driving force. In the minds of the fans, a certain feeling of entitlement grows with the bond. The fans expect the artist's lifestyle to match their fantasy vision of what they imagine it's "supposed" to be.

When an artist's sins are discovered and exposed in the media, there is a moment of pause while the public's loyalty is tested. What one believes depends on who it is, what happened, and how they handle the aftermath. If the action is compatible with the artist's image, the attention will not have a deleterious effect on the career. When the artist's behavior is completely out of character with the fans' perception of the person, it can cause permanent career damage.

Personal managers are responsible for how an artist relates to the media. It is a double edged sword. The acts court the media to get the "good" publicity, but fear and avoid them when there is "bad" news

or something to hide. They cooperate to get their promotional licks in, pretend to not want it when out in the world, and abhor it when they get caught with their hands in the cookie jar.

Most artists are insecure, and can be seriously affected by the exposure of their flaws and weaknesses. Fans don't build those elements into their perception of a star. The person they imagine the artist to be is idealized. The shattering of that illusion can be the end of the relationship, or the beginning of a new era of affection and alliance. The difference is in how the scandal is initially addressed by the artist, how it is handled in the long run, and the perceived degree of culpability.

A personal manager in a successful business relationship with an artist should not jump ship because his client gets in trouble. Untoward "incidents" provide opportunities for managers to prove their worth. Very often managers stand between the act and the law in dealing with potentially embarrassing situations. Sometimes containment and control will dictate the survival of the artist's career or personal liberty.

In the residual opprobrium of discovery, one's natural instinct is to deny everything regardless of innocence or guilt. President Clinton would have dodged the bullet, except for the little blue dress. However, if there is absolute, irrefutable proof, because that is your picture and you are doing "it," there are only two ways to go. Come forward immediately and confess, as Hugh Grant did in the Hollywood Hooker scandal. Grant defused the bomb before it went off, by going on television immediately and joking about it. Yes, he looked foolish for a minute but it all blew over immediately. No harm, no foul.

In the face of absolute guilt, it is often better to avoid the media all together, as in the case of Tiger Woods. He did what he did, there was no room for denial, and he was very wise not to throw fuel on the fire. He carefully avoided the media machine until his transgression had cooled down. When he returned to the spotlight, he was humble and contrite, for a while.

Nobody owes the media a story or an answer; not a lie, not the truth or anything in between. Reporters are in business to sell their

papers, magazines, TV shows and blogs. You do not have to participate in the process. The less you contribute, the smaller the historical archive will be.

Whether he is seeking media exposure, or hiding his sins, an artist must invent his public image, or it will be invented for him. Walk as a spy among the media minions: pretend to be one of them, but never forget they are dangerous and self serving. Romance the press for the promotion your career requires. But keep your secrets safe, and don't ever be afraid to protect your right to freedom “from” the press.

## **24. Who Do You Trust?**

*Is there a sure-fire way to develop trust between yourself and a client? - M.M.*

Trust is neither assigned nor awarded; it is purchased by action, earned through achievement and reinforced over time. Honesty and integrity are vital components of any business relationship and they are requisite ingredients between partners.

The person to whom one entrusts all of his hopes and dreams must demonstrate a myriad of qualities to a potential client. Business acumen is at the forefront of the manager's contribution to the career building process. A combination of social skills, power personality and accumulated knowledge prepares managers to direct careers in the music industry. Most musicians need a business partner to deal with that part of the struggle they choose not to address.

Personal values define who we are to our friends, associates and fiduciaries. Our behavior and conversation create the perception of who we are as people. An artist wants his manager to be honest, charming, intelligent, creative, flexible and visionary. It is the manager's sacred obligation to always tell his client/partner the facts as he perceives them. Protecting clients from the hard stuff is not doing them a favor.

No human enterprise ever goes perfectly well, and the best laid plans always go awry. Success accrues to those who can adapt to

the changes. When a manager presents the newest problem with the same grace as the last glory, he is preparing the artist to deal with the adversities they will surely face in the future.

Empathy, backed by a twenty-four hour commitment to the artist's business and personal concerns, reinforces the strength of the artist-manager bond. The job is of personal service, and nothing is off limits. Meticulous care and constant attention are the cornerstones of their relationship. The trusting is the hard part; everything else needed to build a business around a body of music can be learned. When choosing business partners, trust carefully, and when you do, trust totally.

## **25. Will You Supervise Me?**

*How does a manager go about getting his client's recordings into the hands of the film and television music supervisors? - L.F.*

We now reside in an audio/visual universe. High speed digital connections allow a vast amount of material to be infused into the prevailing system that creates, produces and provides music for film and television. The symbiotic relationship between music and film stretches back to the silent movie era, when a live musician sat at a keyboard below the screen and created musical sound effects in synchronization with the unfolding action.

Today every film and television production team includes a Music Supervisor whose basic job is to search for, select, license and synchronize music to a film. The goal is to accomplish the director's vision by securing the music he requires. However, budgets, producers and studios have considerable influence over the process.

Every major movie studio has a significant music department with vice-presidents, efficient systems, infrastructure, and resident music supervisors. Most productions are covered in house. However, a considerable amount of the work is farmed out to independent contractors who service a production's musical needs on a project by project basis. Most are listed in A&R Registry's Film & Television

Guide. A concerted IMDB.com search will provide their history, credits and contact information.

With record sales in decline, the income streams generated from synchronization and master use licenses have become vital to record labels and music publishers. Many major television shows include popular music elements on their sound tracks and as on camera, content. The placement of songs and music in video games is also big business.

The process of choosing a song or composition is varied. A one hour TV show might license half a dozen songs, or more, per episode and do the entire thing in a two week compressed schedule. The same job on a film could take months to be accomplished.

The director or writer might indicate a specific song in a scene; more often the music supervisor suggests possibilities based on an analysis of the script. He “spots” in music that he feels is appropriate. The director accepts or suggests alternates, until the desirable music cue is licensed. The spotting process can include music from any source and may be out of reach because of budgetary restrictions. If the price is out of reach the songs are later replaced by tunes with the feel of the original.

There is a creative aspect to the music supervisor's job that requires sensitivity to comedy, drama and storytelling. A comprehensive knowledge of the available catalog of songs and recorded music is essential. Producers with budget limitations have taken to seeking out new artists willing to license their material cheaper, in return for the exposure. Music can be an extra character in the show; and the most skilled music supervisors add a unique dimension to the entertainment experience.

Every supervisor has a system for receiving and evaluating material. Managers should track them through the film and television production charts in Daily Variety. Once the connection is made, follow the directions and submit your artist's material as directed. Don't send a CD of your album. Instead, research the various productions, find one song in your repertoire that is appropriate for a specific situation,

and send a direct link to the song by email.

If you have submitted a specific song for a particular show, trust that it arrived and was addressed. If you don't hear back, it wasn't for you, move on. Services like YouSendIt.com and DropBox let you see if the songs were downloaded so you don't have to follow up and waste everybody's time. If you deliver a song they like, you will hear from them directly.

Try to establish a rapport with the supervisor's team. Song placement is time sensitive, and working through the staff will show that you are a professional. When you develop friends on the inside, seek their advice on how to evolve an effective approach. The more songs you can put in play, the better your chances of getting one placed. It's a volume game

## 26. What Does Different Look Like?

*Besides good music well played, how would you make an artist stand out from the competition? - M.H.*

For artists to endure they must continuously add quality songs to their repertoire. The most long lived careers are usually attributed to artists who write their own material. However, many successful singers rely on the vast songwriting and music publishing community for their repertoire. With millions of tunes to choose from, it is almost as difficult to discover a great song as it is to write one.

The second most important attribute of enduring artists is "vocal chops." A great singing voice is a virtual necessity when it comes to attracting and maintaining a strong fan base. Each genre has its signature qualities when it comes to voice.

A country artist may not share many similarities with a soul singer, but Dolly Parton and Aretha Franklyn are both able to touch the hearts of millions of fans in totally different ways. The music of Frank Sinatra, Elvis and The Beatles all relied heavily on strong vocal performances, and they remain at the forefront of three different



popular genres.

Charisma is another requisite aspect to adding staying power to the life of a musical attraction. Beauty, sex appeal, charm and a sense of humor are prime ingredients for attracting an audience. Sinatra was considered "dreamy" by his legions of fans. Elvis was sexy, and Paul McCartney, who was dubbed the "cute" Beatle, had millions of teenage girls crying at the mere sight of him.

Although these originators brought the primary ingredients with them, artists who chose to emulate them had to develop the specific qualities intentionally. Each of these attributes provides some part of the overall aura of stardom. The cumulative effect creates a critical mass that projects the public image. Often, particular excellence in one or more of the primary ingredients can make up for a lacking in another area. When achieved, balance and harmony create the most powerful attraction.

Beauty and performing skills often eclipse vocal chops. Beyoncé Knowles, on the other hand, delivers a strong, sexy performance, a great voice, and movie star looks in a dazzling combination. Singing ability can outweigh most of the other requirements. One of the greatest female vocalists, Barbra Streisand, was so strong on voice that the other elements became irrelevant. She sold millions of records, became a major movie star and acclaimed film director.

Every artist comes to the professional ranks with certain native abilities. Talent is measured by one's skill at presenting his or her assets in an entertaining manner. Some of these attributes are fixed and others are able to be enhanced through disciplined training and technical manipulation. AutoTune can cover a myriad of sins. Virtuosity as a musician can contribute a lot to an artist's credibility and durability in the competitive world of music.

Image, personality and attitude are magnetic forces that increase interest and inspire hero worship. When building an act, it is important for a performer to address all of these issues and work diligently on every aspect of his or her career. On top of all these factors a comprehensive knowledge of the protocols and politics of show business are vital to

long term survival.

There is one thing that magnifies the possibilities and reduces the odds of failure. That is the emotional commitment that some people bring to the pursuit of their dreams. A passionate dedication to one's art, an obsessive desire to achieve their goals, unbridled optimism and an aggressive work ethic can eclipse all the other ingredients. Very often the less talented person with more desire wins. Be as different as you feel, but always be true to yourself.

## 27. Who Needs Management?

*At what stage of their careers do artists need personal managers?*

- T.J.

A pure artist walking naked in the woods, singing his songs to the birds, does not need a manager. When the love of his own music inspires him to seek appreciation, remuneration, or lunch, in return for sharing his talents, he becomes a business enterprise. It takes courage and commitment to compete in the professional realm.

Every new artist starts out as his or her own personal manager. They all begin the fight for survival with uncertainty and trepidation. Musicians and songwriters take up an instrument and open the doorway to musical expression. Initially, the process finds them alone in their rooms with their music and dreams of fame and fortune.

At that stage they are probably not aware of the roles of the core professions of entertainment. Conscious of the obligations, or not, artists are responsible for all the activities assigned to each profession. Only the more passionate and driven will pursue professional status. A few, the most talented, will survive and make a living.

At the earliest stage of an artist's development, virtually every person in the artist's life offers positive reinforcement. All your friends and family say, "You're GREAT!" Nobody ever tells you that your guitar playing is less than fabulous, when you know it has a long way to go to even be good. They don't tell you your song sucks, or that you

can't carry a tune. At the beginning, this is probably a good thing; but eventually you have to face the music.

Sooner or later someone has to care enough to tell you that your act needs work. The problem is, no musician wants to hear the bad news; and most wouldn't believe it anyway. Every professional artist needs a manager. No labels, agencies, producers or promoters want to deal directly with the act.

Agents prefer to negotiate with managers because artists are most often not very realistic. It uses up a lot of time dealing with someone who is still learning the ropes. All successful artists maintain a busy schedule and have professional teams executing their careers. The team leader is the personal manager.

The act is constantly writing, recording, performing, promoting, and often participating in television shows and films. The daily business of conducting careers does not stop because the artist is busy doing something else. Every act needs a manager to tend to the mountain of activities that are never ending and in need of constant attention.

The game is not rocket science; anybody can learn how to play. Every business needs a leader to set the pace, dictate the policy and execute the game plan. The sooner an artist starts building his management team, the faster he will be liberated to focus on the creative aspects of his career.

It is never too soon to begin the artist-manager relationship. The challenge for the artist is to find a qualified person who wants the job. Everybody has an opinion, but few want to bear the responsibility for executing another person's hopes and dreams.

An act needs a manager-partner who will tell them the truth and share the risk. Intelligence, flexibility and creativity are the requisite ingredients. If the manager's survival depends on the success of the act, there is a presumption that he will do whatever it takes to achieve the common goals. The traditional goal array has been restructured in the digital age, and it should not be assumed that the way things worked in the past will necessarily deliver the same results today.

## 28. What's Your Jones?

*If an artist believes that he/she is not capable of performing without drugs and alcohol, what does the manager say or do to change this belief? - D.M.*

A manager should never encourage an artist to incorporate drug use into the creative process. When artists and managers put together a professional career plan that includes sobriety as part of the operational procedure, they greatly increase their chances of success. Drug abuse is a serious inhibitor of creative energy. It not only dulls one's perception of reality during the inebriation, but there is always a recovery period, during which, time is lost and efficacy suffers.

There is a prevailing attitude that certain drugs can stimulate creativity by opening the doors of perception and dispelling inhibitions. This has been known to produce some great music. However, if an artist is able to write, produce and perform without the use of mind altering substances, it is best to encourage and support a drug-free lifestyle. Everything that goes up must come down.

Touring bands are engaged in a rigorous activity that requires coordination of the mental and physical aspects of performing. A clear head can see farther, adapt faster and deliver better work. Encourage your artist to go sober. If he is unable to do so, the manager must manage the addiction in order to preclude legal issues and health problems. Historically, artists that rely on drugs create far less product than their clean and sober contemporaries.

## 29. Is a Song Forever?

*When artists or producers make a change in the structure or lyrics of a song; are they entitled to a share in the copyright? – J.H.*

Adjustments in a copyrighted song that relate to chord changes, tempo, arrangements and variations in production do not constitute songwriting and do not change the ownership of a copyright. When lyrics are substantially changed as in the "Weird Al" scenario, you

enter an area of publishing known as "interpolation." This type of usage requires a negotiated adjustment with the writer/publisher and is subject to their approval.

Otherwise the statutory mechanical royalties are due to the original owners of the copyright. If a name artist is making the request, a deal could probably be negotiated. If it is an unknown artist seeking to adjust a valuable copyright, the request is most likely going to be denied. This is somewhat like "sampling," where the original copyright holder is entitled to the royalties.

## **30. Who Needs PR?**

*Is it important for a musical artist to engage a professional publicist? - M.B.*

The publicist is one of the core professions of entertainment. It is an ancillary profession, in that the job of press agents results from the basic activities of the primary players, artists, managers, agents and producers. When these four create recordings and live events, getting the word out is accomplished through the traditional, mainstream media and online channels.

Managed publicity is a vital step in the process of promoting and selling recorded music. Every music industry professional can benefit from exposure in the media, and every singer and band has a story to tell. Public relations specialists are responsible for creating and telling the artists' stories. Most importantly, they have established executive access and liquid channels of communication with the media.

Lawyers, accountants and crew members contribute their expertise and skills to service the various needs that support career development. These professionals provide their talents for retainers, commissions, salaries and hourly fees based on actual performance. Publicists are unique among the team members, because their services require a guaranteed monthly payment before they even begin their work.

At top public relations firms, the fees usually start in the three to five thousand dollar a month range and grow from there, depending on the specifics of the campaign. The money is paid regardless of how effective the effort might be in producing published stories, articles and reviews about the act. It is very difficult to tell just how productive the effort might be.

Most bands get their first taste of public relations when they are signed to a record company. Every major label has an extensive PR mechanism that generates promotional information regarding the product scheduled for imminent release.

Photos, biographies, electronic press kits and videos are compiled months in advance of the record's drop date. Cover stories, editorials and reviews are solicited. The media addresses these materials with varying degrees of interest. They want to interview the big star and have little regard for the baby band.

Since record companies are often providing access to their "star" attractions, they are usually able to leverage exposure for their new artists as well. Publicity departments deal with an endless stream of new releases, and the job of securing press is never-ending. All that can be expected is a burst of effort at the beginning and a sustained pressure if the product shows signs of being successful. Otherwise the focus moves on to the release and promotion of the next artist's album.

The only way to measure the results is to collect the press material generated. Clipping services are often engaged to gather this proof that the story got printed. Online searches will provide indicators of the volume listings on any given subject. It is the personal manager's job to build a relationship with the publicity vice-president and make sure the press department staff is working on behalf of the act.

Online promotion is a little more difficult to measure, as there are so many music outlets to monitor. Bands should have their own websites, as well as posting their music and promotional material on Facebook, YouTube, blogs and other social, marketing and music specific networks.

Independent public relations services are usually reserved for established artists who can afford the high fees involved. Most publicity firms have large client rosters and much more work to do on a given day than can actually be accomplished. This means that somebody may not be getting the effort and attention for which they are paying.

Managers must be in constant contact with the press agents in charge of their client's publicity to insure the money is not wasted. Even then, it is hard sometimes to discern if the press was generated by the efforts of the publicist, or if the article or review might have happened organically. For most new artists, publicity is too expensive and becomes a do-it-yourself process. Regardless of who is engaged to handle the job, the manager directs the activity.

No matter who is at the forefront of any public relations campaign, the job is time intensive. Artists and managers must engage in the dissemination of appropriate materials, in order to sell records and attract fans to live performances. This puts the job in the hands of the act, until such time as success provides disposable income that can be devoted to the hiring of public relations experts. Until then, managers must develop online systems that carry the message to the target audience.

Overall my experience with publicists, whether record company affiliated or independent agents, has been quite good. People attracted to this kind of work are generally warm and empathetic. They sincerely want to help and usually seem to take their role seriously. Publicists require writing and organizational skills and need outgoing personalities, as they are often the first person the media meets when approaching artists.

There is a great book on the subject called "Guerilla P.R. 2.0" by Michael Levine. This bestselling guide to the low cost implementation of public relations systems and protocols is considered the all time best book on the subject. It will inform artists and managers on the creative and fiduciary responsibilities of publicists.

A clear knowledge of the profession helps managers do the job when necessary, and to identify how well the publicist is performing,

when paying for the service.

## 31. What Is the One True Thing?

*If I wanted to start my own music publishing company from scratch, what would be the first step? - C.F.*

Music publishing is the one true thing. Regardless of the decaying state of the postmodern record business, publishing remains a cornerstone of the music industry. The ownership of music copyrights is a very lucrative activity. Royalties and licensing fees from songs and records continue to accrue long after the artist has hung up his instrument and abandoned the road.

As long as a band has a strong personal appearance career, they continuously stimulate the sale of their music and branded products. When they retire from active career pursuits, the income from publishing continues to generate.

There is no pension in rock & roll. Publishing royalties can provide a permanent annuity to support songwriters and recording artists in their retirement. By current statute, music copyrights endure for the life of the songwriter plus seventy years. If a song has multiple writers the copyright endures for seventy years after the last surviving writer's demise.

If the song is a work for hire, the term is ninety-five years from the date of first publication or one hundred and twenty years, whichever is the shorter period. Then the songs enter the public domain and may be published by the artists and producers utilizing any particular composition. The long term nature of copyrights and the enduring cash flow, make publishing the most important first step in building your own business in music.

Establishing a publishing company is relatively simple. There are three performing rights organizations, (PRO) in the United States that enforce the rights of songwriters and music publishers. One of the founders of The American Society of Composers, Authors and



Publishers was the great John Phillip Souza. In the latter eighteen hundreds, every marching band in the world used his material and nobody paid him for the honor.

ASCAP developed the systems and mechanics that reversed that injustice. BMI and SESAC are also engaged in granting performance licenses and collecting performance royalties due to songwriters and music publishers. The primary licensors are radio, television, cable, concert halls, nightclubs, restaurants, colleges, hotels and just about anywhere else music is performed publicly. The PROs in the U.S. do not collect mechanical royalties from record sales, synch licenses, jingles, ringtones or downloads.

Whether you are an artist, manager, or producer, starting a publishing company is your best opportunity to create a long term asset throughout your active career. For relatively modest fees, a songwriter can join a PRO. The creation, acquisition, and ownership of copyrights are carefully monitored by these member owned societies. ASCAP and BMI are non-profit. SESAC is a for-profit enterprise. All foreign countries have one official performing rights organization. When the name of your company clears, you are in business.

## **32. Should I Co-Publish?**

*How does a manager go about asking an artist/band to split the publishing rights to their repertoire? – C.M.*

When all the dust settles, the act no longer tours and the records are out of print; what remains is ownership of the intellectual property. The "deed" to a song is known as a "copyright." This appellation is designated in the legal and practical vernacular of the industry.

The owner of a song is clearly defined in the federal statutes. The equity automatically accrues to the songwriter when and as he creates the words and melody. When the song is fixed in a manner that can be reproduced, the copyright exists.

Prior to some other action being taken, the songwriter is both

author and publisher of his creation. Of the millions of songs posted on various music websites, most are never formally registered. Ninety percent of artists calling themselves songwriters have no commercial viability. Their YouTube posting is likely to be the only place the song will ever be available to the public.

Every artist and band thinks they are bound for glory. Many take the initial steps of consolidating a repertoire, creating a live act and chasing the golden ring. Approximately ten percent of these daydream believers actually develop to a point where they make a profit. Survival leans heavily on the quality of the artist's repertoire and the dynamism they are able to incorporate into their live concert performances.

The big three music companies own major recording and publishing catalogs. They have always coveted the performing artist's copyrights more than that of a songwriter with no act to purvey his wares. The custom of the industry is for labels to demand ownership of the publishing, in return for granting a recording contract.

In the early sixties, America's greatest songwriter, Bob Dylan, challenged Columbia records on this issue. He stubbornly provoked the first co-publishing agreement between a star and a major record label. Dylan was able to establish a precedent that eventually became common practice.

The stronger managers were often able to retain one hundred percent of publishing ownership for their clients, others accepted split copyright arrangements. The labels usually negotiated to retain the administration rights, which gave them the power to dictate how the song would be licensed and otherwise exploited. Some artists were able to gain approval over when and at what price their records would be licensed for film, television and commercials.

Another sticky point for the artist is that the labels seek, and almost always secure, a twenty-five percent reduction in mechanical royalties for use of "controlled compositions" owned by the artist. This is known in the trade as "three-quarters of statutory rate."

There is no particular reason for an artist to accept this clause

unless there is a meaningful price attached in addition to the terms of the record deal. In the postmodern era, managers should resist the pressure to erode the artist's mechanical royalties and keep publishing income separate from record royalties.

Record companies and music publishers seeking to acquire copyrights must develop a convincing pitch that justifies the request. The company must indicate which services they are going to bring to the table. Artists today are not naive about these matters; there has been a lot of chatter around the publishing issue on reality television shows. The emerging artist is conscious of these mechanics and protocols and enters the fray aware of the value of his copyrights. The general rule of thumb is to never sell your publishing.

The latest record company strategy of imposing 360-degree record deals, making the label a partner in the artist's entire career, throws traditional enemies, artists, and record companies into an awkward partnership. This type of deal seems to work for star attractions, since they do strong business and usually recoup the enormous guarantees. New artists are not offered much for their copyrights, since they are unproven.

Acquisition of copyrights isn't just a matter of having a good pitch and a game plan. Songwriters always love their own tunes and it isn't easy to convince them to sign over their copyrights. I'm not the only one advising them not to sell. Only managers, in long term partnership with the act, are entitled to share in publishing revenues.

The big leverage is money. Lacking investment, there is little reason for songwriters to sign with a publisher in a time when it's just as easy to do-it-yourself. If a publisher has a roster of established songwriters, they might attract new writers by offering them co-writing associations with their veterans. An established company can always point to their track record and history of success. A new company hasn't much to offer.

Your best shot at owning copyrights is to find a Band that has a great live act and offer them a management partnership whereby you become an equal partner in all their activities. Then you can set up

your own publishing and record company to exploit the records and merch. As their partner and CEO of the LLC, or corporation, you can seek to place the controlled compositions, through music supervisors, on TV shows and movie soundtracks.

The only other option is to purchase songs directly from the writers. The problem here is most songs are not commercially viable, so you could end up with a catalog full of duds. If fans flock to a band's gigs, there must be something about the material that appeals to them. Rather than trusting your personal taste, watch the audience. If they are screaming and yelling for more, there is something serious present.

### **33. How Many Albums In A Dozen?**

*<http://forum.holodigmmusic.com/showthread.php?t=22> Why don't the best selling artists release more albums? - B.B.*

There are a number of contributing factors that have reduced the volume of albums released today. First, the public has grown more sophisticated in its ability to recognize a quality song. This makes it difficult for artists to create an entire album's worth of quality material. Secondly, in the postmodern era, fans were much more involved with their favorite artists and eagerly anticipated the impending release of the next album.

As the infrastructure of the record business increased in size, there was an urgent demand placed on the system to keep feeding it new product. This resulted in pressure by record companies to demand more albums from the artist. However, to sell records bands had to tour, and this limited the time available to write new songs. Subsequently the quality of the records diminished. The standard of excellence established by The Beatles was very hard to sustain.

Record contracts were written in such a way as to compel artists to hurry the recording process. This resulted in a disappointed customer and began an erosion of interest by the fan base. A formulaic method of producing records for the sake of having product, rather than artists making albums when their songs were ready, imposed an

artificial time frame on the game.

Most music artists today write their own material. It is the only way to be certain that you will have enough songs to support continued growth. Those who don't write are usually performing in styles where covering standards, or previously popular songs, is acceptable. Records are released for a variety of reasons that have more to do with stature of the artist than the quality of the album in the pipeline.

Presenting your music to the public should be conducted on a one song at a time schedule. Peer-to-peer file sharing is the primary promotional mechanism for new artists. Nobody sends ten songs to their friends in a single transfer. They find a song they love, cherish it for a while, and then share it with their friends. When that song is absorbed, they go off in search of the next exciting possibility. The ability to listen on demand is more important than ownership.

There is no way to measure the number of albums it takes to be successful. The war is fought and won a song at time, and it only takes one hit record to start an avalanche. Find a way to record your best song. Make a video component and put it on YouTube. Then, do it again. If you have talent the fans will find you. Work a live act and the attention will build faster.

## **34. Is There A Bird On Your Wire?**

*Do you think that mobile devices will help or hurt the music industry, and will the movie business be similarly affected? - R.R.*

I believe the applications will continue to evolve in more and more creative ways. The toys will change and get more fantastic as time goes by. Eventually everything will be done on your cell phone or tablet. Music will become cheaper and easier to buy than steal. The billing will come through the phone provider and nobody is going to let that bill default. This does not mean that everybody who makes a record and builds a band will have a career.

It is only a matter of time and circumstance before movies will

be digitally downloaded quickly, at low fees, just as music is. More sophisticated forms of theatrical entertainment will be introduced to bring audiences out to cyber-theaters where a sensual involvement in the drama will be enhanced by multi-dimensional audio-visual stimulation.

The University of California at Santa Barbara is engaged in the long term development of a full spectrum entertainment medium that will change the way movies are produced and viewed. The Allosphere is a three stories high, hollow globe that projects sound and visual content in an omni-directional manner. This totally engulfs the customer in the entertainment medium.

The individual audience member will be immersed in the heart of the action with a full sensory participation. Patrons will actually purchase specific tickets that will install them in the cast. One will be able to assume the role of a specific character and deliver the lines as they appear on your specially designed eye glasses. You will become your favorite screen hero.

The rest of the entertainment game will be played at home where movies and music will be streamed on-demand from cloud based servers on a pay per play basis. From cell phones to wall sized flat screens, movies and music will be accessed on demand through subscription and advertising based models. The various screens around the house will be wirelessly connected to insure liquid continuity and universal access.

## **35. Who's Driving This Train?**

*Do you think that recording engineers are going to be replaced by the artist themselves? - B.L.*

The cutting edge of quantum physics today is exploring the Measurement Theory which says that nothing exists until it is being measured by one of our senses. Up until the moment music is being listened to, it is just energy. Energy is never gained or lost, it is just changed in the process of usage. Until someone listens to music, it's

not there.

Engineers will always provide the “ears” that will measure, change, and determine the quality and content of any sound recording. For this reason there will always be a place for them. Some will be more talented than others at creating the changes. In the future, it will be necessary for musicians and singers to develop as many skills in the recording arts as possible.

In the music renaissance, survival will be dictated by controlling and retaining the various income streams. A performer-songwriter-producer-engineer will keep the money that might have been paid for each of those activities. Engineering will always be a vital part of the process.

With Pro Tools, anybody can record the song. However, that is only a demonstration record. To turn it into a professional quality recording will require that somebody exercise a array of additional manipulations, both technical and artistic.

Artists today are acquiring these skills but it will take a great deal of practice to produce commercially viable product, since, engineering is an art and a craft. The guy with the most native talent and practical experience will make the best records. Although they may be able to do it themselves, an artist is best served with the objective opinion of an experienced recording engineer. However, there is no substitute for creative genius and some people have native talent and good taste.

## **36. How Sound is Your Sound?**

*With the recording process getting easier and cheaper, has the quality of sound been impacted? - H.G.*

Music in its purist form exists in the hearts and minds of the composers. What Mozart heard in his head could be transcribed onto paper in the written language of music but, of course, the "sound" he heard was missing. Each time the songwriter's vision was translated from one medium to another there was a loss of purity.

What could be imagined perfectly could not be interpreted without flaws imposed by the translation and interpretive process. No musical reproduction is ever accomplished perfectly. Even the greatest musician is less than perfect. And no machine produces a perfect product.

Through all the technical changes that have evolved within the recording arts, sound quality has always been the driving force. The transition from mono to stereophonic sound was a huge leap that precipitated more sophisticated recording techniques.

Most audiophiles still consider a needle on vinyl to be the source of the highest fidelity. The postmodern record business was obliged to record on very expensive recording monitors because the fans had hi quality playback systems.

Long play albums often cost hundreds of thousands of dollars and took months and sometimes years to create. The high cost of recording kept the process under the control of record companies who risked large capital investment to bring competitive "product" to the market place. Advanced phonograph equipment provided the ability to play music with recording studio quality at home or in the car.

With the advent of the compact disc, the entire process was drastically changed. Digital recording brought two significant innovations to the game. First, reproduction was uniform and the zeroes and ones duplicated the music with precisely the same sound every time. There was no generational loss of quality imposed by the duplication process.

Secondly, the amount of space available on CDs virtually doubled. A Sony executive decided that the new format should be able to contain Beethoven's Ninth Symphony in its entirety. This made seventy four minutes of music possible and enabled the addition of many more songs on an album than the previously allowed ten or so.

Digital technology does not directly affect the quality of music itself. That is still controlled by the songwriters, composers, singers and producers. There is an obvious loss of fidelity in digital recording



compared with analog. However, since most music is being accessed through smart phones and digital playback systems, fidelity is obviously not a major concern to the cyber generation.

Only the public decides what is going to be popular and the control of that process is more in the hands of the fans than ever before. The recording process is no longer "dollar" dependant; anybody can play and this has infused the game with a tremendous degree of mediocrity.

For the first time in the history of record production, fidelity is no longer the primary goal. An entire generation has decided that content is more important than sound quality. MP3 technology and the popularity of the smart phone have reversed the trend.

Instant access to a particular song on demand and free of cost has changed the way music is used today. Music heard through tiny little ear "buds" doesn't require the same degree of sophistication previously available with needle on vinyl recordings.

All of these revolutionary changes are contributing to the demise of the major record companies. Expensive recording and high cost access to radio airplay for promotion kept the big three labels in power for decades. Today the fan base only uses radio by default and they don't want to be "told" what is good. They'll make that decision themselves and distribute what they like to their Internet communities directly.

Survival in this environment will be precarious but one thing is certain: online file sharing is the mode of the day, and downloads and streaming will continue to dominate in the future. Eventually, "owning" songs and storing them on our computers and hand-held devices will surrender to cloud based storage of video and musical content.

Ownership will become less important than instant access to the song of choice, and Internet streaming systems will eventually make access to all music relatively inexpensive. Even the least tech savvy person will be able to instantly access any song whenever he chooses.

The record labels will continuously struggle to survive, but it appears they missed their chance to control the digital market place that is now dominated by Apple through iTunes.

## 37. How Long Can You Run?

*Why is it that bands, and artists, are having so much trouble establishing themselves as respected musicians? - B.C.*

Career longevity is the result of a combination of circumstances. Talent is the primary ingredient. The mysterious combination of great songs, excellent singing, virtuoso musicianship, charisma, and sex appeal all combine with media image and cultural influences to create an enduring attraction.

In the early days of the modern record business, natural ability found expression through the raw energy and power of rock & roll. Elvis created a thirst that drove the baby boomers to embrace the entire community of artists that best demonstrated this new musical genre.

The originators were rhythm & blues journeymen like Little Richard, Chuck Berry, and Antoine “Fats” Domino. White artists emulating their style and often duplicating their performances with cover records established the new musical form. Ultimately white rock & roll broke down the segregationist taboos, and the race ceiling at radio was obliterated.

In the postmodern era The Beatles brought a new standard of quality to the game. As a generation of artists inspired by The Fab Four entered the competition, writing, playing, and performance skills reached unprecedented heights. The public, exposed to The Beatles’ genius, demanded more and more from the artists that evolved in the wake of their enormous success.

Since then, the standards for quality have remained very high making it more difficult for new artists to compete at the professional level. Even though more artists participate, the number of bands achieving commercial success remains customarily low.

New artists have difficulty establishing themselves, even in a system that makes all music free for the taking. This is directly related to the lack of basic songwriting, singing, and playing skills. All talent is not equal and a discerning public, familiar with the best of the best, only chooses music of the highest quality.

One-hit wonders regularly achieve temporary success online and on the charts, but a good recording of one quality song does not a career make. Only truly talented songwriters, packaged in a commercially viable act, can create long running careers. This requires a series of great records presented over years of live performing.

## **38. Does the Mainstream Run Underground?**

*Do the more "underground" acts purposefully choose the off-beat or less mainstream career paths in order to make an artistic statement? - H.K.*

Mainstream broadcast radio focuses on a very narrow spectrum of the musical rainbow. Artists in pursuit of record deals and radio airplay must bend, shape, and mutilate the creative possibilities to conform to the prevailing formulae dictated by the record companies. This system stifles creativity and forces artists to shape their music to fit Cinderella's slipper.

Most creative musicians seek to develop innovations in the musical styles of established genres. Lyricists give voice to the truth as they see it. This medium is constantly changing to keep up with the social, sexual, and economic concerns of each succeeding generation. Artists speak to the issues of their time. They incite a need for listeners to search for and discover songwriters and performers with whom they can personally identify.

Although the promotional mechanism has changed from broadcast radio to Internet exploitation, the digital process has liberated music and handed the youth the most powerful distribution mechanism ever created. The best part of it all is that the talented are no longer suppressed by the archaic systems of the postmodern record business.

The pool of potential supporters for any band has developed a new mind set. They are not interested in the mainstream acts offered by the record labels. In fact, their aversion to “commercial” artists has established an attraction to the underground act that lives in a state of rebellion and does not conform to the system. If the next big thing isn’t running underground, it’s at east incubating at street level.

## 39. Did Your Mom Like Her Video?

*Since MTV has shifted their business model toward reality programming, are music videos still an important part of the promotion process? - S.B.*

Video is more important than ever. From the earliest days of motion pictures, music has provided a key creative element to the motion picture art form. In return, movies have been a significant promotional vehicle for songs and recordings of every genre and style. The filming of individual songs is not a new idea.

MTV didn't invent the video, although it did become the home for it for awhile. From the moment of its August 1, 1981 launch, Music Television instantly became the promotional tool that could drive a hit record to the top of the charts.

Record company promotion men seeded their "priority" records at rural and suburban terrestrial radio. Only a tiny fraction of the videos produced ever flowed down the MTV cables. The vast majority were vanity pieces most treasured by the artist's Mom, and contributing little promotional value.

The records that gained traction at radio would add stations, get more spins, and then gravitate toward the major market super stations. A video component was added to the hit songs, and the labels lobbied MTV to put the video into rotation. The exposure was enormous and virtually insured Top Ten status.

The immediate success of MTV inspired a number of additional cable TV channels that were nourished by an endless stream of free

content pouring out of the record companies. In the eighties, as the postmodern era was peaking, MTV was burdened with its own success and forced to compete with traditional programming.

As the music renaissance dawned, the record companies tried to destroy digital distribution, and in so doing, precipitated their own demise. Music Television was driven into the ratings game and an endless struggle to attract more and more advertising dollars. They virtually invented reality television, and the video ceased to be an important component in their business model.

The format they originated eventually created a major paradigm shift in television. The term "reality programming" entered the video lexicon and the medium became a window into the lives of extraordinary and sometimes ordinary people and events. The advent of YouTube has introduced a new and powerful weapon into the promotional arsenal of music artists. Video is bigger than ever and YouTube is the foremost host of its archives.

The record business is in a state of implosion. Each genre of music is engaged in a competition for the attention of a core audience. The ubiquitous presence of Hip Hop has declined as rap music evolved into its classic form. The vacuum created, as the most popular music genre shrinks will be filled by a new contender. Every existing genre holds the possibility of being the one to produce the next superstar. Electronic dance music is at the cutting edge.

A primary ingredient for any successful artist competing in the music renaissance is video. Every new artist should create a video record of their daily activity, and every song must have a video attached to it. The artist's website should contain the archive and it should be free to all visitors, along with the streaming of the music itself.

Great thought and care should go into the video concept and execution. Production value will not be as important as cleverness and creativity. Artists and their management teams must embrace the dual nature of storytelling when designing their audio-visual components. With low cost video and recording readily available, there is no reason not to add a visual element to all recorded music.

The presentation of image is vital in attracting and retaining a fan base. We receive eighty percent of our data through our eyes, and what is attractive to any given community can be analyzed, designed, and marketed by those who care enough to do the research. Video is here to stay, and it is more important than ever in its ability to demonstrate a band's music, persona, and style.

## 40. What About Talent TV?

*Are talent contests on television and Disney produced shows creating viable careers, or would the winners have made it anyway? - P.R.*

Truly talented musicians must think twice about presenting themselves in amateur contests. Talent TV is one of the most precarious pathways to success. It's a very risky pursuit. The contestants are exploited for ratings and advertising dollars. The fame that results from a few quick exposures, without building a live act through the traditional concert system, is as quickly erased as it is difficult to attain.

These shows have killed far more careers than they have launched. A miniscule number of contestants have succeeded, but most are brought along too soon. They are not prepared for the microscopic examination of their under developed skills. After being exploited for ratings, they are discarded at the end of the TV season.

Every contestant who reaches the broadcast level of American Idol, X Factor, and The Voice has signed a stack of contracts several inches high. They have agreed to give the producers of the show complete control over every aspect of their careers. Through strategic relationships between the show and various record companies, the winners are often awarded major label record deals. However, they still have to sell albums to stay in the game.

Some shows profess to offer large cash prizes, which are actually doled out through recording contracts that require the exercising of options to get the next piece of the prize. If the album fails, the label can elect to not exercise the option and the rest of the prize evaporates.

The producers have options on all the competing contestants.

Despite a handful of successes these shows have produced very few star attractions. Most will not build long lasting careers. Far more dreams have ended on talent TV than have been fulfilled.

Hundreds of contestants have had their fifteen minutes of fame and since disappeared into obscurity. Although talent TV definitely accelerated the process in a few cases, one must assume that those who reach the top of the charts had the right stuff. It is fair to presume that with the right effort and a little luck they would have made it without the benefit of this particular kind of exposure.

All television shows do is speed up the process. If you have marginal talent, you will find that out right away and your career will be over before the show airs. The most talented contestants could be smothered by the drama between the judges, vague voting systems, and the need for television producers to create tension for the home audience. Ratings rule in television.

Artists who gain fame from TV exposure must still build the core team that will sustain their long term careers. The personal management imposed on the act by the producers of the show may not be appropriate for every artist.

In most cases the artist will fail, the act will be dropped by management and drop into obscurity. The end result will not be evident until years down the line. Any one of these artists, who still has a career then, probably would have been successful with or without talent TV.

There is no denying that some of the top grossing artists of today started on television. However, two of the biggest successes, Adele and Taylor Swift had relatively little television exposure. Every genre and style has an appropriate avenue to travel in pursuit of popularity and success. Talent television does afford an opportunity for certain artists to get exposure and initiate their careers.

The Disney system does not cast one artist against another in a contest format. Their movie studio, television channel, radio network, and record labels compose the mightiest media mechanism

in entertainment. The Mouse House is able to bring more focused attention on an individual artist than any other content provider. The challenge for managers is to get all the various divisions to cooperate in the development of any given artist's career.

Disney provides many young artists with a testing ground for their talents. The broad spectrum of exposure they are capable of generating has made many people famous beyond their skill level. Exposure over several years in a television series will create a much larger following than a few weeks in a talent contest. Miley Cyrus, Britney Spears and Justin Timberlake had years of preparation under the Disney umbrella. By the time they had to take the big stage, they were seasoned veterans with polished skills and prepared for the challenge.

Those who rise to the top through television become ensnared in a web of contractual obligations that place their careers in the hands of third parties. They end up being owned and operated by the producers of the shows that made them attractive to the public. Working through the issues imposed by these one-sided contractual agreements can take years to resolve.

Artists engaged in the talent shows usually work for free during the audition phase, and then receive union scale if they survive to the later rounds. They are told what material they will perform on the show and what personal appearances they will make.

The truly talented will have enduring careers and eventually outlive the original contracts. I doubt that any of them complain until they become media stars. Then the realities of their contractual obligations reveal that they may be famous but they're not yet rich.

I expect that Carrie Underwood, Kelly Clarkson and Jennifer Hudson are not complaining about the role talent television played in their success. Undoubtedly there were circumstances they had to overcome and undesirable options they were forced to endure. But their success is undeniable and they will survive the process.

Fortunately personal services contracts cannot exceed seven



years in California, so there is a light at the end of the tunnel. There is also the ability to "renegotiate" when leverage is gained. If you are making Disney a lot of money and they need your cooperation, you do have the ability to renegotiate and ask for a larger piece of the pie.

The Disney machine is content specific. Their wholesome, family-oriented image is popular with parents and the younger demographic. The studio fiercely protects its brand and reputation, and they keep their core products focused on the youth and family culture. The integration of their contract artists into the various media outlets they control has enabled the rise of performers with a certain look and appeal.

These acts are funneled into formats that impose the Disney style on the artist, rather than allowing them to demonstrate originality. Such artists will find it difficult to shake off that image in later years. More often than not the celebrity eclipses the talent and the success is temporary. When was the last time you heard the words, Jonas Brothers?

As the digital paradigm emerges, it comes with a new sensibility about who artists are and what they represent in today's society. If an act is attractive to Disney, they must be presenting certain characteristics that fit the Disney formula. This most likely focuses them on the preteen and teen demographics, and these same qualities will limit their appeal to other age groups.

The power of Disney's radio network is an enormously significant tool that allows them to address the potential fan base in an extremely efficient manner. Access to their massive radio audience can be invaluable in the early stages of a career.

The multi-media exposure they can offer guarantees a certain amount of notoriety. Good looks and a modest sexuality can carry an artist a long way quickly, but only quality music and practiced performance skills will build an enduring career.

Audiences grow up fast, and as they become more musically sophisticated, their tastes change. Inevitably fans demand "more"

from their musical heroes and the corporate based artists lose their allure. It is doubtful that performers manufactured for television will be working in showbiz a decade from now. Their musical skills are usually weak, and “cute” only goes so far.

The use of celebrity television to gain popularity is a judgment call that artists and managers must make when and if the opportunities present themselves. The Disney pathway comes with the obligation to understand the depth of the commitment, and requires an evaluation of the artist's long term goals and native talent. If one chooses to join such a system, he or she should read carefully and understand the array of contracts that will govern their professional activities.

Personal managers must be conscious of the need to build a team of players that will carry on the artist's career, when the obligation to their corporate masters expires. The requisite pile of contracts the TV producers submit should be negotiated by professional agents and experienced entertainment lawyers. However, finalists are usually forced to select their legal representative from a short list of attorneys provided and paid for by the production companies.

The lawyers chosen by the producers represent the best interests of the show, not the artists. Most of the talent shows do not allow the amateur contestants the benefit of their own counsel. In the case of Disney, the artist's managers, agents and lawyers negotiate the deals on behalf of their clients who also, unlike amateurs, have the protection of union regulations.

The terms are always rigid and studio lawyers are not known for their flexibility. When fame accrues, everything changes. The power of the artist, which is minimal at the beginning, is greatly enhanced when the public embraces the rising star.

## **41. Where's the Dough?**

*Are the musicians who are not at the top making more money these days because of Internet systems like iTunes, Facebook and YouTube? - R.P.*

Bands marketing themselves on Facebook, YouTube, and their own websites will grow slowly, one song and video at a time. The ones that are truly talented will expand their fan base and reach the survival level. Without a viable live act, there is little possibility of creating a meaningful career. The tough part about this is that so few artists make so much of the money and very little of it comes from Internet airplay.

This is a core principle that does not change. It is a very tiny, elite group who battle their way to the pinnacles of success, and to whom most of the fame and fortune accrues. These are primarily artists signed to record companies and most have previously established their fan bases. The labels have lost their ability to discover and develop new talent. The cost of effective A&R is just too high to be sustained, because the talent pool is so obscured by mediocrity.

We are experiencing the emergence of an entire generation of musicians who have received an extraordinary amount of musical training. They start younger with "toys" like Guitar Hero and Rock Band. Many, experiencing the thrill of performing, are inspired to take up "real" instruments. These fledgling artists enter the competition early and grow faster.

Thousands of colleges and universities around the country are presenting academic majors in songwriting, recording, and performing curricula. These musicians are learning more than the few chords utilized by the originators of rock & roll. Today's college students are also being taught the more esoteric aspects of the ever-evolving music industry.

After graduation, college educated musicians combine musical talents with their accumulated knowledge of how to execute business strategies. They will create a new, sophisticated quality of music that will inspire their peer groups to support their favorite bands.

It is even possible that the bonding experience created at live performances might inspire the public to actually pay for the music. If the fan loves the act enough they will buy the CD at the live event. At this stage, the music becomes a souvenir more than a delivery system and the artist collects the high profit.

## 42. Is That Your Apple?

*Do you think that iTunes will push the music industry to move towards a low-cost, high-volume price point? - J.R.*  
<http://forum.holodigmmusic.com/editpost.php?do=editpost&p=567>  
<http://forum.holodigmmusic.com/newreply.php?do=newreply&p=567>  
<http://forum.holodigmmusic.com/newreply.php?do=newreply&p=567>  
<http://forum.holodigmmusic.com/newreply.php?do=newreply&p=567>

The important consideration is that Apple is working with the labels and has demonstrated some flexibility. They are experimenting with new pricing points, in an effort to appease the recording industry that is suffering from the loss of CD revenue. The big three record companies are still trying to maintain an excessive profit margin on the product they do sell.

This is because music sales can no longer hold up the infrastructure created when the profit in albums was extraordinarily high. Charging more for "hot" product will not necessarily increase sales. Also, what the record company deems hot may be wishful thinking. If the record companies anger the fan base, the kids will just steal the music. The sound strategy would be to lower the cost and up the sales volume.

The good news is that they will probably have a booming business on their catalog product at a lower price per track. This could result in higher profit margins that might drive the per-song price down even further. Eventually it will settle where it belongs: around twenty-five cents per tune. Charging a dollar when a download costs nothing is not a balanced approach.

Remember that paying for music is optional; and only if there is a prevailing sense of fair play will people spend their disposable income on music at any price. The record companies must embrace pricing policies that are good for the artist and fair to the fan.

Income to the content owners from iTunes is seventy percent, which is far better than any record company royalty. Of course, this requires that the artist own the records; otherwise the royalties go to the label and the artist's share will be diluted by the terms of the recording contract.

A record company's strength has always been its ability to distribute widely and solicit or buy air time on radio. In the age of the ubiquitous iPhone, radio is becoming irrelevant, reducing the need for record companies that are not artist owned and operated.

The major labels will probably experiment with advertising based and subscription models. Such systems are more likely to be created by Internet entrepreneurs than record companies that will continue to gouge the fan and abuse the artist, for the benefit of their stock options and shareholders.

It is a long established tradition in the postmodern record business that the price of music is grossly inflated. In the era of high cost analog recording, a tradition of paying about a dollar a track became firmly entrenched in the corporate business model. Fifteen dollar albums and CDs have always provided an extraordinary profit margin to the record companies.

The process allowed the funding of a very complex A&R mechanism that insured a flow of product into the system. The digital convergence has imposed a new formula on the recording industry. In a reversal of the long established tradition, bands are no longer built by the labels.

In the recent past, record companies chose artists and music based on fads and trends, through selection committees. This method of deciding what music would reach radio and the brick and mortar record stores stifled competition. The end user was the last link in the

chain and had little influence on the selection process.

The Internet has enabled the music fan to search, select, and distribute the songs he and his peer group decide are important. The fans are now in charge of the A&R mechanics and have turned their focus on the vast library of songs available on YouTube, one tune at a time.

Since most music is shared for free on the Internet, the discovery of a great song is up to the people who most vigorously conduct the search. The game is continuous and universal and every genre provides a fertile hunting ground. When a song is valued and appreciated it is quickly flashed across the online communities. Some music fans carry a moral aversion to stealing MP3 files and stand willing to pay the fare at iTunes. The price points conform to the old establishment system.

The lower costs associated with digital recording and distribution, have not translated to the cost of the end product. Most new artists employ digital recording software to produce their records cheaply, but this savings was not passed on to the consumers. Apple held a firm line with the record companies and stubbornly controls the price of a song. The record companies lobbied long and hard to get Apple to allow variable price points.

The new change in pricing structure allows labels to charge more for special product. It also opens the door for bargain pricing for records that are new or less popular. The change in the ceiling also makes possible the lowering of prices on records that are in less demand. This new system gives more latitude to labels and artists to manipulate their profit margins.

There is a strong argument that reducing the price of per song music acquisition could bring many more buyers into the marketplace. This could lead to less piracy, higher gross receipts, and more income for songwriters, publishers, producers, and recording artists. That would be good for the business.

As the need to hold the product in your hand erodes, albums will once again become collections of singles, which is back to where it

all started. In the antiquarian era, the labels packaged the hit songs in a book with sleeves that held each record. Albums were then, and are becoming once again, collections of individually popular songs.

Every semester I ask my students, "Who downloads for free?" and every hand goes up. I follow with, "Who knows that it is stealing?" and every hand goes up. Then I ask, "Who is quitting?" and no hands go up. The fact is that the giant record companies have a very poor image among the youth and command absolutely no loyalty.

Artists in the music renaissance must regard the Internet as 'free radio' and consider it a promotional vehicle. Music should be given away by emerging artists in order to create a fan base to nourish their business. If they have talent and build a following, the fans will support them at the box office and the merch table. If an act can reach the survival plateau, they have already won the first battle. Staying there is the second challenge.

## **43. Where Are My Fans?**

*What are the most effective forms of Internet marketing? - M.A.*

Welcome to the digital convergence. This is where the winners and losers meet. Which category you end up in will depend on the choices you make. The arcane practices of the record business have contributed to the public perception of an industry devoid of the principles of integrity and fair play. That perception is correct and has created a negative mind set among the music fan base.

For decades personal managers have unsuccessfully battled record companies in an effort to create reasonable terms for recording agreements. The stubborn resistance of the big three to level the profit table has led to their demise. Now the world-wide-web is the regenerative mechanism that will invent the new music industry paradigm.

The business of music will never disappear, but it will always change with the technology. There are hundreds, soon to be thousands,

of efforts to capitalize on the changing market place. The best systems will survive and the truly great ones could develop business models that are enormously profitable. No one knows which applications will endure, but one thing is certain: it won't be a hundred yard dash; it will be a marathon.

Only the most passionate artist, driven by obsessive ambition and an insatiable need to make music will prevail in the professional ranks. This will require a sense of direction and a compass. Navigation of the Internet can be like a rodent running in an endless maze. Without a clear pathway, artists are lost in an expanding universe with no center and no visible destination.

The music industry has been nestled in the prickly, controlled environment of the record business for more than a hundred years. Now it must reinvent itself through Internet Marketing, which begins with having a product to sell. The challenge is to drive traffic to your online mechanism.

The most ardent fans haunt the night clubs where they are most likely to find a band they believe has potential and can endorse. Once they discover something formidable, their endorsement incites others to join the tribe. When, where, and how that connection is made is up to the artist and his or her management team.

The concert arena is where the energy exchange is most intense. Get them while they're hot; market your products at that juncture. Stay close to home and conduct your business where the expenses are low and the profit high. From there you can expand within the cyber universe and build a career in the global music industry.

## **44. Can You Handle The Truth?**

*How can an up and coming artist use social media to gain a following? - J.B.*

We live in an ever-expanding universe. Love it or not, humanity is streaming into cyber-space at the speed of thought. The Internet



is wonderful, powerful, and dangerous. Eventually, it will change the way everything is done. Where there is a vacuum, digital will fill it. Where there is resistance, digital will erode it. The postmodern record industry is suffering because its core product, the compact disc, has lost its market share.

Free file sharing has expanded the use of music, but the old business model needs a major overhaul. In the past, hundreds of A&R minions scoured the bars, night clubs, and college campuses, selecting the acts that the labels would present to radio.

The A&R process has reversed itself. Today the A&R search is conducted from the fan base up. The old system of find an act, develop the repertoire, polish the live performance, record an album, send a single to radio, go on tour, drive traffic to record stores, and climb the charts is no longer viable.

Radio has a finite reach and a fixed time frame. As a music source, it has lost its preeminence to digital efficacy, convenience, and cool. Record labels will not pay for radio promotion, if no one is listening. Touring is cost prohibitive and the brick and mortar retail outlets have virtually disappeared.

In the music renaissance, the new artist faces multiple forces vying to influence the new music industry paradigm. Instant, on demand access is more important than owning content. There are many delivery systems competing for the Internet music dollar; iTunes is preeminent.

CD Baby and Amazon offer alternative music acquisition sources. The fundamental difference is that today the artist is directly connected to the fan base and easily linked to the distribution. Companies like TuneCore can quickly and easily facilitate the various connections.

Ninety percent of the artists will fail to survive. Success will accrue to those who bring the most unique ingredients, in the greatest quantities, to their enterprise. Considering there is talent and a good live act, in support of strong material, the next most important

element is a strong business mechanism. The first step is to create a web presence that links the artist to the customer.

An entire generation is growing up under the microscope of reality television. They are focused on an Internet search for artists and music that is new, extraordinary, revolutionary, hip, or cool. When they find, "it" their iPhones light up as they text, tweet, blog, face off, and share the news. Organic, viral, social media networking is the primary force in music promotion today.

The fan has very high standards and usually focuses on a specific genre or style. His exposure to reality TV makes him curious about the mindset, lifestyle, and personal habits of his heroes. The band's website must sell that message in a creative and entertaining manner.

The goal is to hold the attention of the visitors and get them to join the tribe. Enrolling fans in the promotion of your act is vital to your survival. Make them part of the viral squad and put them to work. The personal relationship reinforces their commitment and makes them feel like they are in the band.

There is a definite distinction between social media and traditional industrial media. The social media is online, highly accessible, and user friendly. It is a ubiquitous and multi-faceted fusion of societal and technical forces that democratize the sharing of information. Industrial media includes the traditional main stream print, film, broadcast, advertising, and cable outlets.

All band brand exploitation must utilize both channels to form and maintain an interactive personal relationship with the artist's entire fan base. Social is immediate; industrial demands significant resources to get a band's image into the main stream promotion mechanism.

Both can reach small niche groups and large global audiences. The web is real time, easy access, and low cost. Professional PR services are expensive and their efficacy difficult to assess, since there is never any real proof that the story you got resulted from the fee you paid your publicist.

The audience can participate in social media by adding

comments, instant messaging, or even editing the stories themselves. All forms of participation matter: blogs, forums, wikis, podcasts, webcasts, email, instant messages, texts, and tweets should be hyper-linked to build a critical mass. At a certain level of accumulated unique visitors, an artist's website can become an income stream by posting advertising..

## 45. Who's On Second?

*Are the major record companies going to create the new music industry paradigm, or will this be done by Internet entrepreneurs?*

- J.F.

The new music medium is audio/visual content. The aural experience is not enough for the digital generation. They've been on screens since the womb and they want pictures. Sound alone will not create a fan in the music renaissance. The music maven, in any given community, influences his peers to check out his latest discovery. The sounds that hook their interest inspire curiosity about the source of the music.

The next stop is YouTube to see who had the audacity to produce this exquisite record. That is the hardest won click. The first 10 seconds of the video they land on must tell your story, or the third click is on to something else. Genre, image, and style are instantly established through context, color and image. Virtuosity will be measured in the next three seconds, melody in five, and message in ten. If you haven't hooked them by then, you won't be adding them to your fan base. A clear, visual story element is a must.

The recording industry is not necessarily dead; it is more like in a coma. It could wake up at any time. Some innovative technology could rescue it and provide a new business model. In the interim, declining sales have imposed downsizing on the postmodern record business.

No matter how great your friends say you are, remember that music is personal, and there is no way to know what any one individual will like. The great stuff doesn't require study; it's not an acquired taste.

The best of it leaps out at you; it tickles your brain, gives you goosebumps, and makes your body twitch and dance. Your next thought is, "I want to hear it again."

Those closest to the act have the most data with which to interpret the value of the performance. They are going to fall in love first. The challenge is to get the rest of the world to follow suit. Regardless of the role record labels might play in the future, the music industry will continue on as it has since long before there was a record business

The future stars will be the ones who play the most gigs, and can turn those events into high profit merchandising sales. To succeed, an artist must treat the band as a do-it-yourself business. All enterprises have competition, and it is always a race for market share, when multiple brands seek the same dollars

A band's survival depends on reaching the profit margin before the thrill is gone. Most acts will give up and walk away, feeling that their failure was totally the manager's fault. In most cases, they are probably right

The degree of difficulty is very high, and new artists compete with each other, as well as the prevailing stars. Enduring the nomadic lifestyle of a traveling performer isn't always as glamorous as one might think. Many will quit out of sheer exhaustion. The survivors will create a personal relationship with their audience and build those fans into the business structure.

The online music marketing and promotion sites will provide cost free infrastructure for every band with a brand. Careful use of the social networking systems will continue to play a major role in the artist's ability to control his own destiny and direct his career into the market place.

New artists should reach as deep into the fan base as possible. The pre-teen audience has access to the same technology as the teenager. They have been constantly exposed to music since birth and they will grow with you. They are on the web somewhere and can be reached

The postmodern record business was built on the back of great

artists evolving the recording arts through technology. When radio ruled, knowledge of sound may have been enough to compete. In the music renaissance, film and video are equally important ingredients.

Every band starts out trying to get to first base. The transition to second base is even more difficult. The next music cycle could rise from anywhere; all it takes is a superstar to kick it off. The battlefield is the world-wide-web. When every terminal in the distribution system comes with a screen, “iBalls” rule. The King is dead: long live the King.

## **46. What’s In Your Tube?**

*Do you think that YouTube will continue to play an important role in the future of the music industry? - K.R.*

The new music industry paradigm is shrouded in the fog of showbiz. High speed Internet access and online experiments are in a state of explosion, creating an ever expanding cyber-universe. Artists and entrepreneurs seeking to build careers must address a wide range of possibilities. Most Internet ideas fail to monetize. Some will prevail long into the future. One that has proven itself to be a cornerstone in the new A&R process is the amazing YouTube.

A young performer dreams of bringing mass audiences to tears with the beauty of his songs. He imagines his destiny, and immediately sets his mind on a quest to fulfill that dream. This creative process is driven by desire and fueled by discipline. The battle for supremacy in showbiz will be fought on stage and on the web.

YouTube uses Adobe Flash video technology to display a wide variety of user generated content. Some major label product is available, but most music videos are uploaded by the artists themselves. Anybody can watch, but only registered members are permitted to post an unlimited number of videos. Adult programming, material encouraging violence or criminal conduct is prohibited.

Every serious artist already has a presence on YouTube. It has become a quick and easy method of presenting your act to prospective

supporters. With a couple of clicks a talent buyer can quickly assess the artist he is being pitched on the phone. A quick link can instantly connect him to the artist's site where the data posted has been custom designed to close the deal

YouTube was officially launched in November 2005. By July 2006 the company was receiving over 100 million video views per day. It has become the dominant provider of online video in the world, making it one of the most visited Internet destinations. The cost of YouTube's bandwidth usage is millions of dollars daily

YouTube has often been criticized for failing to ensure that its online content honors existing copyright laws. Users are cautioned not to post material they do not own or control. Pirated material can be issued "takedown" orders under the terms of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act. Videos are screened against data banks to determine if the intellectual property is protected.

Regardless of the source or the competition, singers, musicians, and bands can establish their acts online at any time. There is no charge, and navigation is liquid and precise. Production values don't seem to matter. The simplest phone generated video of the right artist singing the right song could bring an act to instant global recognition. The hard part is turning notoriety into a profitable business.

Social networking sites allow bands to build and service a list of followers who support their music. These websites are not of themselves anything more than pipelines to reach and nourish a fan base. Like any other tool, they are only as good as the user.

The overwhelming number of artists and managers posting on, and surfing the Internet makes the process of finding the truly gifted artist extremely difficult. However, music fans searching for new discoveries need social media, in order to conduct their quest.

This is your promotional system and it is man-hour intensive. The more time you invest the better the results. It is imperative that bands treat their business in a professional manner and use all methods available to get their music out to the widest possible audience. If the

music is good the public will spread the word and the fan base will grow accordingly.

## 47. Is More Better?

*Does the state of the economy have a direct effect on the bands who are building their careers on the Internet? - C.B.*

Falling tides lower all boats. A weak economy affects every business enterprise. If there is less money in play, the amount of disposable income available for music is proportionately and exponentially decreased. A number one album still reaches the top of the charts, whether it sells a hundred thousand CDs or a million. What is drastically impacted is the profit margin. If the same effort produces infinitely less profit the enterprise will fail. This loss of revenue is forcing a new business model on the world of recorded music.

The music is the cause, not the effect. Facebook and YouTube have become vital links in the chain that will secure the future of popular music. However, they are delivery systems, not sources of artistic content or performing talent. The greatest talents may choose to never join the competition.

However, those that do are dedicated to spreading their music far and wide. They intend to impress their songs into every corner of the Internet, in hopes of reaching a critical mass and causing a viral explosion around the world. The pace at which progress is made is directly affected by the disposable income of the universal fan base.

## 48. Which Way Does The Wind Blow?

*Do you feel that music today is headed in the right direction? - A.G*

There is no right or wrong direction for music to travel. There is only a variety of styles vying for supremacy. Since ubiquity has not yet occurred in the digital age, it remains to be seen if any one musical genre can attract a universal audience. When music is free for the taking, the public is able to experiment in many directions at once.

They are simultaneously exploring the great music genres of the past, as they search for the next big thing.

It stands to reason that each generation will follow the historical trajectory and choose a hero to lead them into the music of their lives. The sound track of each person's life is filled with the tunes that delighted their youth, sparkled in their coming of age period, and fueled the romance of their maturing process. The songs that nurture us through life remain a part of our personal repertoire for as long as we can remember them.

This is why "classic" artists continue to draw crowds as they age. There was such a demand for Frank Sinatra to perform that he was forced out of retirement several times. Elvis was on stage right up until his untimely death from a drug overdose. There was enormous pressure on The Beatles to reunite, until the assassination of John Lennon destroyed that possibility forever.

Once an artist has built a huge fan base, their devoted audience generally follows them for the remainder of their lives. Many of the biggest grossing personal appearance attractions today are the "classic" artists who have endured with careers lasting up to forty years and longer.

One might surf the web in search of "talent" forever and never find anything truly great. Or it could pop up on your Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr, or Facebook pages at any time. The fans are the only ones who determine the direction and pace of an artist's career. The degree of difficulty in getting "discovered" may be greater today, but so is the potential reward.

Get set for a rocky ride. All those millions of artists on the Internet are about to realize that the stars in their eyes are burning out. The easy money and loose women they dreamed of won't be landing on them just because they put a video up on YouTube. Anybody can call himself an artist, but it does take something special and unique to actually become a great one.



The next big thing is usually something one would not have expected. In the world of crooners emulating Frank Sinatra, who would have thought that a hip shaking, animalistic, sexual beast like Elvis Presley would get the whole world all shook up? The Beatles were equally surprising when they came on the scene in the early sixties. Vocal groups were dominating, and along came a self-contained quartet that had the audacity to sing their own tunes.

The individual or band that breaks through inevitably represents their own age group. They look and sound like their audience, and sometimes it is hard to tell if the artists are following the fans or vice-versa. And it doesn't really matter. The important thing is that somehow they both end up on the same square at the same time.

Often there is more than one genre or style of music competing for dominance. The winner is the form that produces the biggest star first. Electronic dance music has been flirting with a growing cult audience for over a decade and is only now on the threshold of breaking wide open. Some artists are fusing different genres with elements of EDM, hip hop, dance, and pop. These hybrid bands might just come up with something new.

I think the future belongs to some artist who demonstrates a new set of personal values that transcend greed and "making it." This act will need to have a lot of bases covered, starting with great songs that speak to the concerns and anxieties of the youth culture. They must also show integrity of purpose and demonstrate a spiritual relationship with their audience.

The public is most likely to embrace an artist who shows himself to be like them, or at least how they would like to see themselves. The younger generation is always engaged in a transcendent personal change of their cultural programming. The young seem determined to provoke the evolution revolution. The next superstar will have to stand for something nobler than money, sex, machismo, and personal glory.

Look for an act with leadership qualities, projecting an enlightened life style, to be the next Pied Piper on planet earth. I don't think it will be a diamond in the rough suddenly staking a huge claim

in cyber-space. It will most likely be an artist who has struggled and sharpened his skills over an extended period of time.

Suddenly a new artist with a great song will inspire everybody to take a listen. When the new star comes under the microscope of digital investigation, they could reveal an evolved set of talents and personal principles that will make them "what's happening."

## **49. Are Movies And Music Merging?**

*How do you think the Entertainment Industry will be shaped by the current trend toward audio/visual music? - J.M.*

The music renaissance is not just the Phoenix rising from the ashes of the postmodern record business; it is a complete reinvention of the industry. The process begins in the video gaming world with a wide range of virtual, interactive, "play along" musical programs.

All Internet activity is conducted in an audio-visual universe. The artist who hopes to rise above the chaos needs to be proficient at many things. Multimedia coordination and synchronization is imperative. Presentation and promotion of music is irrevocably married to film and video. The YouTube phenomenon has imposed a radical keyhole through which endless streams of new content can be viewed.

Artists must develop appropriate visual components in order to present their music on the Internet. Personal websites, social networks, and music marketing systems all employ visual content to facilitate the promotion and sale of recorded music.

Every genre has an established visual image that is deemed the traditional fashion of that style. Black leather, skulls and chains definitely says "metal." Cowboy hats and pointy toed boots say country; oversized shorts and straight billed baseball caps scream Hip Hop.

Since the music business is reinventing itself, the inclusion of video in all aspects of promotion and marketing is imperative. Singers and Bands will be required to create low cost video to emphasize and

punctuate their music.

Bands must create and produce their own video content in tandem with their music production. Successful entertainers, out of necessity, need to learn the basic principles of film production. Every band should carry a video camera to document their activities. Fans want to develop a personal relationship with their heroes and interact with them every day. A visual archive of a band's daily struggle to survive can provide a compelling vision to their fans.

## 50. What Does Success Cost?

*How does a new band get enough money and industry support to be competitive? - K.M.*

Traditionally the record company is the banker. However, with record sales plummeting, there is little justification for labels to pour money into baby bands. There just doesn't seem to be any way to recoup their investment.

Finances are always a challenge for the new artist who is starting at rock bottom. Musicians have traditionally convinced themselves that they don't "do" business, they make music. This misperception often excuses them from assuming responsibilities normally covered by personal managers.

It is imperative that singers, songwriters, musicians, and bands understand their business goals, structures, and mechanics. More importantly, each partner must be integrated into the daily activity of running their business. This helps keep costs down and enables artists to reach profit sooner.

Most baby bands create records and a line of merch to sell at their gigs. If an act can develop an efficient booking mechanism and play often enough, they can generate a significant cash flow. There is an emerging trend toward group funding where production and survival capital is raised directly from the fan base by enrolling their financial support in specific projects.

The volume of artists dilutes the process and forces the contenders for stardom to work more aggressively than their competition to gain notice and grow. The record companies no longer fund this stage of development.

It's a do-it-yourself game. Artists must invest in their own careers and embrace the humiliation of holding a day job. If you wait for an investor to fund your band, you will probably die on the vine before that mythical patron appears.

## 51. How Deep Is Down?

*Will the record business ever recover from its current decline? - M.H.*

Approximately 25 percent of all disposable income is spent on entertainment. Those dollars are spread over a wide range of choices, and the portion devoted to the purchase of music is shrinking. At the same time, there is an explosion of music appreciation and exploration.

It is important to draw a distinction between the record business and the concert business. These entities form the show business part of the music industry. The personal appearance tradition was in motion long before there was a phonograph. And it will continue long after all the records are reduced to zeroes and ones.

The big three record labels are shrinking their overheads and scrambling for digital solutions. Enormous publishing and recording catalogs, exploited by leaner machinery, will delay their demise. However, over time, the artists will perform these functions themselves and avoid being owned and operated by corporate minions concerned more about their paychecks and stock options than music.

The artists who build their own record labels and publishing houses may be lured by lucrative deals to the major music companies. However, if they succumb, the deals should be licensing and rental arrangements, whereby copyrights and masters are returned to the artist when the term of the contract expires. The postmodern record business is underwater and it won't be rising again.

## 52. Where Do We Go From Here?

*Is one city better than another when it comes to launching a career in the music industry? - D.W.*

Every city has the potential to be the source of the next music wave. The least likely are cities that have had major music waves in recent times. Seattle, for example, is still vibrating in the aura of the "Grunge" movement that produced Nirvana and Pearl Jam.

San Francisco is fondly remembered as the center of the psychedelic sixties, spawned by Jefferson Airplane, the Grateful Dead, and Janis Joplin. At the same time, Los Angeles offered The Byrds, Buffalo Springfield, and The Doors, adding to the California music boom.

The best markets for the next "big thing" would be New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit, Cleveland, Denver or virtually any other major market. A large population helps. The most important ingredient is, of course, talented artists. A band can emerge from any place at any time. However, to create a major music wave, it usually requires two or more great acts surfacing simultaneously from a common source.

The primary ingredients are an active night club scene and a large fan base from which to draw an audience. College towns are particularly good spots as there are students of drinking age and lots of fake IDs that facilitate the process. Austin, Texas, home of the University of Texas, has a vibrant music scene and a populace in tune with the cultural pride of being an internationally known music center. This image is reinforced by being the host city for the annual South by Southwest extravaganza, which attracts amateurs and professionals from all over the world.

Most music movements are organic, grass roots based, and talent driven. Generally, they cannot be artificially manufactured, but a creative entrepreneur could stimulate the process by creating a venue

and developing a house band into a global sensation. That could kick the next music cycle into high gear. A great act well presented is a requisite ingredient.

## 53. Is It Your Country?

*Is Country Music the best genre in which to launch a career today?*  
- S.B.

All music genres exist simultaneously. Country Music remains one of the stalwart forms and is always a contender for mass popularity. Supremacy in the market place is always star driven. The focus of public attention is drawn toward artists who demonstrate extraordinary talent within their chosen musical style.

Country music has very specific ingredients that connote the signature sound that makes it appeal to the core fan base. These include instrumental arrangements and vocal styling that bring "twang" to the country sound. The basic characteristics are long established and best demonstrated by virtuoso players and seasoned vocalists.

Clearly defined, requisite components enable fans to analyze performances and adjudicate quality based on long established criteria. This familiarity gives consumers the ability to choose which artists maintain the standard and which do not. Artists who adhere to the traditional elements inspire the loyalty of fans and peers alike.

A country music fan is generally less fickle than the followers of other genres. It is far more difficult to gain their respect, but once earned, the affection is more likely to endure. The security blanket provided by a stable fan base affords these artists a more solid platform upon which to build a career. The bonds with favored artists are powerful and country fans are less likely to steal the music. This personal relationship will always keep country music in contention for most popular genre.

Success and popularity rise and fall on the fortunes of these artists and their songs. When a great star rises, their talents and

charisma accelerate commercial viability. Sound business practices provide insurance that careers can be sustained. Country will always be a viable form that could break an artist into stardom at any time.

The game becomes one of turning a great song into a quality recording and provoking sales through strong live performances. This is the way it has always been done, and the decline of record companies will not alter that dynamic. The show must go on, and artists must be paid for their work. Success in country music pays big time.

## **54. Will There Be An Asian Invasion?**

*What are your thoughts on Asian artists, like Se7en, Rain, and the Wonder Girls, trying to break through in the U.S. market? - A.D.*

The general rule is that if you can make it at home, you can make it everywhere. Asian artists like Se7en, Rain, and the Wonder Girls have proven their talents in their native countries. These artists are superstars in the Far East and have relatively huge followings. Japan and South Korea have especially vibrant music scenes, and China is joining the parade.

The fans seem like Americans twenty-five years ago. They are reverent, sweet, and adore their musical heroes. The indigenous artists themselves are demonstrating powerful musical and performing skills. Their style is particularly American.

There is a proliferation of handsome and sexy young men emulating the image and style made popular by Michael Jackson, Usher, and Justin Timberlake. They have the looks, the moves, and the bad boy attitude down cold. The music itself is a hybrid fusion of Hip Hop, EDM and urban pop.

Most of the material is love oriented, although some artists express more rebellious and provocative themes in their lyrics. Symmetry, charisma, and beauty are strong elements with all of these performers, and each aspect is demonstrated in the sophisticated videos they post on the Internet.

The business of marketing music is a global enterprise that has been violently knocked from the course it has followed for the past sixty years. Because American and British artists have dominated the postmodern record business, we have been the dictators of excellence standards for the rest of the world.

Asian countries have embraced our pop music culture for decades. Since they have been following our lead, the Asians run somewhat behind the curve. Although the global reach of the Internet has quickened the process, there is a derivative quality in music from the Far East.

The lag time can create the impression that these artists are lacking in originality, which is one of the key elements in attracting hard core fans. The music aficionados in any given community usually discover the "next big thing" first, and they inspire their friends to get on the band wagon. Singing in a foreign language can make it difficult for new artists to create an impact on the U.S. fan base. However, most of the Asian stars offer English versions of their hits.

As world-wide CD sales continue to wane, it becomes increasingly difficult for record companies to bring international artists to western countries. The primary breaking point for artists today is the live performance arena. However, Asian stars are used to presenting spectacular shows with choreographed dancers and elaborate production values.

Bringing foreign stars to America is very expensive, and unless they are playing to sellout crowds in large venues, the costs of fancy production are prohibitive. Without hit records on the radio, success is not likely to accrue. Few labels are ready to pour millions into promoting Asian artists in the U.S.A.

To be successful in America, an Asian act would have to build a large Internet following numbering in the millions. If this army of supporters could be organized through viral marketing to inspire a national buzz on an act, anything is possible. So far, except for Internet sensation Psy, the American fans have not embraced these artists or their music.



It is brave of the Asian stars to come here and try, but it is likely to be a long hard road before any one of them achieves extraordinary success in the U.S. market. It would take a sustained and costly effort to build an Asian act from the grassroots level, and no record company seems interested in spending the money or taking the risk.

## 55. Where In the World Did You Hear That?

*Do you think that third wave Reggae music is going to go through a "revival" period? - C.M.*

The traditional Caribbean rhythms are rooted in Calypso music. After World War II, the island of Jamaica was exposed to Jazz and R&B through armed forces radio. In the late 50s the fusion of these genres blossomed into Ska, which is characterized by a walking bass line accented with rhythms on the offbeat.

This music was the precursor to Rocksteady and Reggae. These styles were universally popular in Jamaica and gained world-wide attention in the 1960s, with the rise of Bob Marley & the Wailers. Marley's rebellious lyrics were embraced by British and American music fans who were themselves embroiled in a state of rebellion. Many of the greatest artists adopted Reggae rhythms into their repertoires.

The second wave of Ska is known as the English 2 Tone movement. It began in the late 1970s in and around the city of Coventry, England. The fusion of Jamaican Ska beats and melodies with punk rock's more aggressive guitar chords and faster tempos brought a harder edge to the sound. The genre was named after 2 Tone Records, a label founded by Jerry Dammers of The Specials.

In many cases, the reworking of classic Ska songs turned the originals into hits again in Great Britain. The 2 Tone wave promoted unity at a time when racial tensions were high in the UK. Most of their bands had multiracial lineups, such as The Beat, The Specials, and The Selecter. Although only on the 2 Tone label for one single, Madness was one of the most effective bands at bringing the genre into the mainstream.

In the early 1980s, bands influenced by the Ska revival started forming in the U.S. and other countries. This movement included post-punk Ska bands such as The Uptones in Northern California; Fishbone, The Untouchables in Southern California; and The Mighty Mighty Bosstones on the East Coast.

The first well-known Ska revival band was The Toasters, who helped pave the way for the third wave movement. In 1981, The Uptones jump-started the Northern California Ska scene when the band, consisting of Berkeley High School students, formed and went on to play sold-out shows throughout the San Francisco area. Their punk-influenced Ska has been cited as inspiration by many California bands.

Orange County, California had one of the biggest and most influential third wave Ska scenes, which originated in the early 1990s. For about a decade, Orange County was the starting point for many successful Reggae influenced bands. Some of these had a great deal of commercial success, albeit short-lived. The Hippos, Save Ferris, and other local favorites, including Common Sense and The Rebel Rockers, failed to sell records despite strong local followings.

In the early 1990s, the Ska Parade radio show helped popularize the term third wave Ska and promoted many of Southern California Ska-influenced bands, such as Sublime, No Doubt, and Lets Go Bowling. In 1993, the Ska-core band The Mighty Mighty Bosstones appeared in the film, *Clueless*, with their first mainstream hit "Where'd You Go?"

Around this time, many Ska-influenced songs became hits on mainstream radio. In 1996, the band Less Than Jake started the record label Fueled by Ramen, which featured many lesser known third wave Ska bands. By the late 1990s, mainstream interest in Reggae waned as other music genres gained momentum.

Although the Reggae movement produced hit records from Jimmy Cliff, Johnny Nash, Eric Clapton, The Police, Sugar Ray, and others, the genre never attained ubiquity as a force in pop music culture. The style had all the ingredients for long term commercial viability,

but the untimely death of Bob Marley silenced its most powerful voice.

Los Angeles favorite, Fishbone, had the music and an exciting live act, but failed to achieve hit status. No Reggae artist was able to sustain a string of hit records in the genre, except The Police. They achieved superstar notoriety, but lost their inertia in the wake of band leader Sting's pursuit of a solo career.

A fourth wave of Reggae could emerge behind the rise of a great star. This would require an artist dedicated to the core Reggae rhythms, with the ability to create original songs in the emotional style of the genre. The inclusion of charisma and sex appeal would help such an act rally a universal audience.

It is difficult to say why Ska music, despite its credible history and danceable beat, has failed to produce an enduring superstar. If such a phenomenon were to arrive, the Reggae beat could gain a universal following and might just be the source of the next big thing. A major motion picture, *The Harder They Come* starring Jimmy Cliff, was a commercial success and provided a raw insight into the evolution of the seminal Jamaican music scene of the 60s.

## **56. What Would Mr. Tesla Say?**

*Is there a future for electronic dance music and the DJs who manipulate records to create the EDM environment? - K.R.*

There's a good chance that EDM will be the next big thing. Electronic music has been around for decades. The great artist, musician, and record producer, Leon Russell created an all-electronic album back in the mid-sixties called "The Underground 12." Since then, there have been many thousands of recordings produced that utilize electronic sounds to compose orchestral arrangements.

In the past decade, the audience for electronic dance music has grown considerably. This music appeals to our primordial need to get up on our feet and move to the beat. Lady Ga Ga demonstrates the style through original songs, an outrageous image, and elaborate

performances.

The formula that is presently employed by the DJs who promote this genre does not rely on original material. The DJ is acting as a delivery system to present a collection of songs he feels is an entertaining package to an audience interested more in dancing than listening to lyrics. In this format the DJ is the star and the performer is a pawn in his game.

Lady Ga Ga with her hybrid style of electronic-pop has created the most success so far. She has produced a small but powerful body of material. Well written and handsomely produced, her songs make her one of the only new artists to achieve multi-platinum success in the twenty-first century. It remains to be seen if her Ladyship has the skill and the will to be around in ten or twenty years. But for the moment, she writes the songs and is riding high.

To accomplish long term survival, an artist must come with consistently evolving, high quality material, over an extended series of recordings. If the act can develop a loyal fan base and continue to please their live audiences, they can survive.

The artist who can continuously add new fans to their core following can grow beyond the survival level and enjoy wider popularity. This can develop into a solid business enterprise that has the potential to endure. From where I sit, it looks like EDM is the next big thing.

## **57. Is That My Last Superstar Hanging On The Wall?**

*Is it just a matter of time before the Internet produces a superstar?*  
- S.C.

The Internet has made every genre of music totally accessible to the fan base. With the ability to acquire millions of songs for free, musical taste is expanding as never before. This exploration is broadening the public perception of each musical genre. The Internet

is the launching pad for every new star, but we won't know which ones are actually super for another 20 years.

As the fans are exposed to more sophisticated music, their tastes change and the mind tickle that music provides seeks more and more satisfaction. At first they are satiated by vanilla, but once they have tasted chocolate, their demands shift. Just as with candy and ice-cream, we are gloriously addicted to music.

Over the past decade, DJs manipulating other artists' music has been acceptable in electronic music and will continue to be a cornerstone of the process. This is a throwback to the modern record business when radio disc jockeys could choose what they played on the air.

In an attempt to curb "payola," the right to choose the play lists was assigned to one individual at each station. This person is called the program director and he decides which records get the airplay. Through the consolidation of radio station ownership, play lists are more and more nationally implemented without regard to local and regional tastes.

However, the public has proven they want chocolate with the extraordinary success of Adele. The international superstar has proven that great songs and talented performing are still the basic ingredients for major success.

DJs have large audiences but they don't own the records their work makes famous, so their income is from the live events and merch sales, not mechanical royalties. The top tier DJs earn annual incomes in excess of ten million dollars.

It remains to be seen who will win the competition for supremacy as the avatar of the next music cycle. The digital generation is exploring the entire musical universe and will eventually discover its own superstar.

## 58. Can We Fix It In The Mix?

*What do you think of the trend toward remixes where producers 'borrow' parts of records or completely restructure the entire song?*  
- D.A.

Beauty is in the ear of the listener. There is a long tradition of amateur and professional record producers manipulating the works of others for their own amusement. This is not unlike a mechanic adding accessories to an automobile, or a hipster cutting the sleeves off his shirt. If you own the music, and the technology gives you the ability to make adjustments to the original work, it is your right to do so. The selling of re-mixed material is quite another matter.

It's fair to say that some of the changes may have been for the better and there is a growing interest in the variations produced. In most cases the originators probably got it right and the remixes don't add much by way of improvement. Some of these alterations are designed to enhance the dance factor.

The original artists might see the practice as desecration of their work. Certainly the owners of the copyright and the master recordings do not surrender any of their entitlements. If unauthorized remixes are offered for sale through any venue, online or through brick and mortar sales, all royalties and mechanical fees are still due to the songwriters who created the copyrights.

First and foremost, music is about fun and entertainment; and if somebody wants to strip his car down and remove all the extra hardware, or add four barrel carburetors to turn an old Ford into a hot rod, why not. There is no harm done when a recording engineer does the same thing to a record. When he tries to put some fast miles on that speedster by turning it into an income stream for himself, he's asking for a ticket.

Stealing is made easy in the digital age, but there are honesty and integrity issues that every individual has to face. Traditional values are not always honored in a culture where animosity toward corporate excess runs very high.

There is an entrenched perception that stealing music doesn't harm the little guy, but that is not true. Music piracy affects everybody in the food chain and in the end the artist has the most to lose. Most artists today consider a DJ remixing their song as a testimonial to the song's greatness, and it is perceived as part of the promotion process. Many such remixes are actually solicited by the original performer.

## **59. Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow?**

*Where will the fans go for their music in the future? - J.N.*

The future of music will be forged in the fires of the Internet and pounded out upon the anvil of digital technology. The fact that hit songs are manipulated into dozens of remixed versions shows that personal tastes run on widely divergent paths. Anyone with a modest amount of the right equipment can adjust his favorite track to fit his own specifications.

Although some artists might see this as desecrating their work, most probably find it flattering. This practice is often generated by DJs who create tracks as "special" presentations at their live events. Many DJs have become famous in their own right, and a significant number of popular records have initiated their success in this arena.

As strong as EDM is, it may, or may not become the focal point of main stream popularity. There is also large scale experimentation in traditional genres like Rock, Jazz, The Blues, Reggae, Hip Hop, Pop, and the always present County Music scene.

It's easy to tell what is good when you hear it, and no one genre will dominate forever. The great music will always be out there, and the best will continuously rise to the top. The big winner in the music renaissance is music itself. It will be bigger than ever.

## 60. What Do You Believe?

*What does it all mean? - .J.J.*

It means nothing. In the simplest sense, it's just a game we play because there is music. Taken to extremes, in the commercial aspect, it's a WAR. In the political realm, it's a weapon. Find a band you believe in, apply the rules and principles you have learned here, keep moving so nobody gets a clean shot, be creative, have fun, and ROCK 'til you drop. ability to manage careers.



# EPILOGUE

The opinions expressed in the foregoing have been accumulated over more than fifty years of practical application during my life in entertainment. Throughout my career I have practiced the systems and mechanics of every aspect of the entertainment industry. This book is designed to help those seeking careers in the eight core professions of entertainment to focus on the specific elements of their chosen path.

Although centered on the music industry, Hartmann's Laws are applicable to the career pursuits of actors, writers, directors, and producers of motion pictures and television as well. They are designed to teach the practical side of show business. These rules provide a set of guidelines on how to conduct the affairs of the creative artists and entrepreneurs who execute the protocols of the entertainment industry.

If you would like to learn more about the profession of personal management, please visit my website: [www.TheHolodigm.com](http://www.TheHolodigm.com) where you can access a comprehensive education on how to build careers in the music renaissance. There are more than twenty hours of instruction on how to conduct professional careers in music, including fifty more rules that clarify the customs of the industry, and identify the fiduciary obligations of the primary and ancillary players.

Access to The Holodigm Seminars is available to all visitors at no charge. The content is substantially the same material that I have been teaching in the classrooms of Musicians Institute, Loyola Marymount University and UCLA over the past decade.

If you are serious about making entertainment the arena of your career pursuits, the lectures presented at The Holodigm Seminars provide support for, and elaboration on, the core principles and basic philosophy expressed herein. You will not only gain an insight into how the game is played and who the players are, you will sharpen your ability to manage careers.

Thank you for reading this book and please feel free to contact me directly with your thoughts or inquiries at [johnhartmann@holodigmmusic.com](mailto:johnhartmann@holodigmmusic.com). I am interested in your successes and your failures. The former will be occasions for celebration and victory; the latter will provide opportunities to learn and grow toward the fulfillment of your dreams.

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# GLOSSARY

## A

A. F. of M. - The American Federation of Musicians is the trade union for musicians. They are the governing body for the recording, booking, and production of live and recorded music.

All Rights Deal – This is also known as a 360-degree deal, whereby record companies participate in all income streams that accrue to recording and performing artists.

AEG Live – Anschutz Entertainment Group is the second largest concert promotion company producing approximately one-third of global live events annually.

A&R – Artist & Repertoire departments seek and discover new talent and material for record companies.

Antiquarian Record Business – The period from the invention of the phonograph to WW II.

ASCAP – The American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers is one of three performing rights societies in America.

AutoTune – An electronic system that corrects tuning on vocals and instruments.

Axe – Music industry slang for a musician's instrument.

## B

Breaking an Act – The action of bringing a musical attraction to popularity and financial success.

GBOR – The Gross Box-Office Receipts collected from customers for attendance at a musical event.

Baby Band – This term applies to a new musical group that has yet to gain popularity.

BMI - Broadcast Music, Inc. is one of three performance rights

societies operating in America.

Broadcast radio – This includes terrestrial radio operating on AM and FM channels.

Branding – The act of creating and establishing the name and likeness of a musical attraction, as a branded product.

## C

Chops – Music industry slang for measuring the degree of virtuosity of a given musician.

Cross-collateralization – The record industry practice of usurping music publishing royalties to reduce an artist's debt under a recording contract.

Copyright – The deed to a song that designates the author and owner of the publishing.

Career Direction – This is the act of devising the pathway for an artist's career pursuits.

Cover Record – Music industry term to describe the recording of a song that has been previously released by a different artist.

Compulsory License – This legal term describes the right of an artist to record any song that has been previously released on a record, without specific permission from the author or publisher.

CD – Compact Disk

CEO – Chief Executive Officer

COO – Chief Operating Officer

## D

Download - This term describes the act and product of transferring a song from the Internet to a digital device.

Dough – This is the slang term for money or legal tender.

Draw Power – This describes the ability of an act to attract an audience to a designated place on a specific date and time.

Digimodernization – This slang term describes the effect of digital systems and protocols on our contemporary environment.

Digital Convergence – This term describes the nexus of all digital mechanics and formats as a unified activity.

DIY – Do-it-yourself

Demo – This refers to the preliminary recording of a song to demonstrate its content and potential.

## E

EDM – This is the abbreviated term for electronic dance music.

Electronica - This refers to the systems, mechanics, protocols, and politics of electronic music.

Ears – This is a slang term to indicate that a person has a discerning ear for recognizing the commercial viability of a record.

Elvisland – This term describes the mythical destination for an

artist who would like to be the most successful performer of all time. The standard was set by Elvis Presley.

Evil Men – This describes unscrupulous inhabitants of the music industry who deceptively and often illegally exploit artists for personal gain.

## F

Free Music – This refers to music accessed on the Internet without compensation to record companies, songwriters, publishers, and performers.

The Fab Four – This is one of the nick names imposed on The Beatles by the global press.

## G

Grunge – This is music industry slang, also known as the Seattle Sound, for a sub-genre of alternative rock that flourished in the mid-1980s.

Gig – Music industry slang that refers to a personal appearance engagement.

## H

Hippie - This term describes the peace and love flower children of the 1960s.

Hybrid Artist – This term describes an artist who combines two or more musical genres to create an alternative musical style.

## I

IT - Internet technology

Indie – This is music industry slang for an independent record label that is not affiliated with the three major record companies.

Impresario - The producer or manager of a concert event.

## J

Jones – This is slang for addiction.

## K

Key Man – This is an employee of a label, agency, or management company who is considered central to the artist's relationship with the company.

Key Man Clause - This is a contractual stipulation that allows an artist to terminate a contract if the Key Man leaves the company.

## L

LLC – This is the abbreviation of Limited Liability Company.

LP – This is the abbreviation of Long Playing as applied to record albums.

Live Nation – This is the largest promoter of concert events presenting almost two-thirds of all live musical events on the planet.

## M

Mainstream Radio – This term describes the top forty AM and FM broadcast radio format as the primary promotional mechanism of popular music for the postmodern record business.

Music Supervisor – This term describes the person responsible for selecting and licensing the music for motion picture and television productions.

Music Publisher – The person or entity that secures, owns, and licenses music copyrights to third parties.

Master – This term refers to a finished recording that is mixed and mastered and is ready for duplication and distribution.

Merch – This is music industry slang for merchandise referring to CDs, T-shirts, and other products bearing the artist's logo and offered for sale.

Master Use License – This term refers to the permission document authorizing the synchronization of an existing master recording on the sound track of a motion picture or television production.

MP3 - A standard of digital audio compression for the transfer and playback of music on digital audio devices.

Modern Record Business – The period following WWII dominated by 45 RPM technology, low cost record players, AM radio, Elvis and Rock & Roll.

Musical Matrix – This refers to the combined history of one's personal musical experience, also known as the sound track of your life.

Making it – This term is vernacular of the music industry for achieving critical and commercial success.

Music Industry – This is the commercial activity composed of the four businesses of equipment and instrument manufacturing, concert production, music publishing and recording.

Micro Movie – Also known as mini-docs, this term refers to a short film of a few minutes in duration.

## N

Napster – Napster was originally founded as a pioneering peer-to-peer file sharing service that emphasized sharing audio files, typically music encoded in MP3 format.

## O

Opening act – This term refers to the artist who opens the show



for the headlining attraction.

## P

Peer to peer file sharing – This refers to the digital transmission of MP3 files from one fan to another, without compensation to the creators of the music or the owner of the master.

Piracy – This term refers to the illegal duplication of recorded music for resale.

Post Modern Record Business – This is the period dominated by 33 + 1/3 technology, stereophonic sound, FM radio and The Beatle.

PRO – Performing rights organization.

Psychedelic – A psychedelic substance is a psychoactive drug whose primary action is to alter cognition and perception.

Packaging Costs – This term is incorporated into recording contracts to charge the cost of CD packaging back to the artist.

PR – This is the abbreviation of Public Relations.

Payola – This term refers to the practice of providing remuneration in return for radio airplay.

Paparazzi – This is an Italian term that describes photojournalists who specialize in candid photography by stalking prominent people.

Paleolithic – This term refers to Prehistoric things and places.

## Q

Quorum- This is the number of officers and directors required to be present, before a meeting can institute change in policy, covenants, or procedures.

## R

Remix – This term refers to the practice of digitally remixing a previously recorded master.

RIAA – The Recording Industry Association of America is the chief lobbying arm of the record business.

Royalties – This refers to monies paid to artists based on their percentage share of revenues from the sale of phonograph records, publishing income, etc.

## S

Spotting – This refers to the practice of music supervisors inserting unlicensed music on the sound track of a movie or television show for the purpose of demonstrating the potential use of music in a given spot.

Shortfall – This term refers to the amount of money that will exceed the income produced on a personal appearance engagement.

Side – A single song on a phonograph record.

Single – This is a recording consisting of two songs, one designated as the “A” side and the other a “B” side. In the digital age, one song is a single.

Symmetry – The balance and harmony in the appearance of an object.

Statutory Rate – This term refers to the legally mandated amount of money a record company must pay a songwriter and music publisher for the use of a copyright on a given recording, currently 9.1 cents per song by statute.

SESAC – This was originally known as the Society of European Stage Authors & Composers and is the smallest of the three performance rights organizations operating in the U.S.

Synchronization License – This agreement permits the use of a song on the sound track of a motion picture or television production.

Showbiz – An affectionate term for describing show business.

## T

The Music Renaissance – This is the current period of free music, digital distribution and the emancipation of artists from the corporate control of the recording arts.

Twang - This term is slang for the indigenous sound of country music, as in the twang of a guitar.

Talent – This describes the combination of skill and charisma that is characteristic of gifted artists.

Taoism – This is the ancient Chinese philosophy that describes the non-duality of the universe.

The Heat – Guns.

The Man – The police.

The Tab – The check presented for payment in restaurants at the conclusion of a meal.

The Cycle – This term describes the generational change in musical taste.

Three Sixty Deal – This is a new formula for record deals that requires artists to share all income streams with record labels.

The New Paradigm – The form and structure of a system for creating careers in the new music industry.

The Historical Trajectory – This refers to the arc that defines the historical evolution of the music industry.

The Music Renaissance – The era of music exploitation created by the digital convergence and the advent of free music.

The Charts – This refers to the weekly calculation of the bestselling records in Billboard Magazine and other periodicals and online music sites.

## U

Un-recouped – Refers to the balance owed on an artist's royalty account.

## V

Venue – The building or location where theatrical events are presented.

Vimeo – This refers to a short form movie or video of a song or other content.

Virtuosity – This describes the skill of musicians with extraordinary talent.

Vocal Chops – This refers to the quality of a singing voice.

## W

Webio – This refers to short form movies and videos.

What's Happening – This describes situations and artists who are currently popular.

Win-Win – This refers to negotiations that are beneficial to both sides of the debate.

## X

Xerox – Refers to the photo copying process that duplicates printed matter. Slang for any copy.

## Y

Yoga – This is the ancient practice of physical, mental, and breathing exercises designed to unite the body and mind, thereby elevating the spirit.

## Z

Zone – An area designated as united for the purpose of concentrating promotion and distribution of recorded product.











"Hartmann envisions the demise of corporate record companies, and the rise of artist owned and operated labels. 'Rock' is a comprehensive, do-it-yourself, guidebook on how to get out of the garage and into the business. A must read for every baby band."

David Geffen – Dreamworks SKG

"My goodness, what a great read! I certainly wish I'd had access to this book when I was growing up. Things would have been much easier."

Graham Nash – Musician – Activist

"John Hartmann is passionate, knowledgeable and experienced. I'm interested in EVERYTHING he has to say."

Bob Lefsetz – The Lefsetz Letter

"This book should be required reading for anyone desiring the unique adventure, and ultimate reward, of exploring the business of music."

Jim Morey – Morey Management Group

"A Brilliant book, by a brilliant man."

Michael Levine – Levine Communications



John Hartmann began his career in the mailroom of the William Morris Agency and later served as the Morris office liaison to Colonel Tom Parker the legendary manager of Elvis Presley. A veteran agent, manager and record executive, Hartmann has provided career direction for such luminaries as Chad & Jeremy, Sonny & Cher, Eagles, Buffalo Springfield, Neil Young, Joni Mitchell, Canned Heat, Peter, Paul & Mary, Crosby, Stills & Nash, Poco, and many others. He is a results – oriented operational leader with more than fifty years experience designing and

executing career strategies in the entertainment industry. Hartmann started his teaching career at Musicians Institute in Hollywood. For the past decade he has taught Entertainment Business in the School of Film and Television, at Loyola Marymount University, where the students voted him Professor of the Year three times. He also teaches Music Management at UCLA. Hartmann is the founder and CEO of The Holodigm Corporation, an internet company engaged in educating and coaching songwriters, musicians and bands seeking to build careers in the music renaissance.

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