

**WHAT YOU'RE
NOT DOING IS
COSTING YOU!**



ARTISTS' TIPS FOR GROWING YOUR MUSIC INCOME

CD Baby has learned from our most successful artists that the way to the top is to take control of your career one step at a time. So to help you attack things with verve and vigor, we've compiled some great advice from our top-selling artists. We hope it will help you gain a wider aerial view of your career while also offering specific tips to make your journey into the indie wilderness more manageable.

SELL MORE THAN JUST YOUR MUSIC

Your merch display doesn't have to be attractive, but it has to be ATTRACTING! Whether you've pimped out a thrift-store suitcase, constructed a sleek and chic portable display, or simply spread CDs, T-shirts, and candles across one of the venue's tables, you've got to make sure that something besides your undeniable musical genius catches the attention of the people in the audience.

- 1. Make it intriguing**, capturing the attention of concert attendees before they hear a single note.
- 2. Avoid clutter**, clearly displaying the products for sale and their prices.
- 3. Quickly convey your artist aesthetic.** It is an extension of you and should "jive with your vibe."
- 4. Make it accessible.** The merch booth has got to be easy to get to, unobstructed, and clearly visible to many people at once so long lines don't hinder sales opportunities. Also, don't let it become a hangout for friends. A congregation of people chatting away (but not buying anything) will dissuade folks with actual interest and actual dollars.
- 5. Diversify.** Offer a few different items (CDs, t-shirts, stickers, mugs, etc.) and bundle them together for a reduced price to entice fans who might be on the fence.
- 6. Get your email list up there front and center.** The merch booth is your opportunity to attract new fans even if they don't buy anything. Have your email list and website info as the centerpiece. This may be the only chance you have to turn a stranger into a lifelong fan. Don't miss it!
- 7. Be visible at the booth following your performance.** If you've created a moment on stage that made a fan say to themselves "I need to take some memory of this home with me" then what better way to ensure a lasting connection than to have a conversation with your audience after the show.

ARTIST ADVICE: "LED's. Seriously, LED's. If you're not keen on assembling something yourself from the raw parts, go to Autozone and pick up the stuff people use to pimp put their cars. I found windshield washer replacements that acted like colored spotlights/uplights and could just be bolted down to the backboard of my display, strips of white LED's to provide some soft fill lighting (doesn't do much in a lit room, but how many clubs are well-lit?), and even some strobes that ended up just being annoying. All of this stuff is designed to run on 12 volt car batteries, so you could either get a plug-in adapter for the lights (also found at Autozone) or rig up a couple of 6v batteries to power the display from any table in the bar. Worst case scenario? Just buy a couple of good LED flashlights and find a way to diffuse the light so people can see your table in the dark."

Matthew Ebel: <http://www.cdbaby.com/Artist/MatthewEbel>

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ARTIST ADVICE: "Make sure your display is eye catching, yet simple. I like to make sure my name is big and bold, and that I have enough stuff displayed to look interesting but not overwhelming. And if you get to choose where you put your stuff, pick a location with a lot of traffic, near the entrance, and make sure you've got someone manning the table at all times. In my opinion, when it comes to the merch table the smallest decisions can make the biggest difference. The most important thing is to be organized and visible."

Allison Weiss: <http://www.cdbaby.com/Artist/AllisonWeiss>

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For more details members.cdbaby.com/SellMusicAndMore/CreditCardSales.aspx



BUILD YOUR AUDIENCE AND GET PAID MORE EVERY TIME YOU PLAY

If you're like most artists, the live gig is your bread and butter. Unfortunately, many musicians get stuck in a rut playing the same humdrum clubs over and over again to dwindling audiences. The club circuit may be a crucial part of your concert calendar, but it's time to start thinking outside the box when it comes to your booking strategy, too. Want to earn more money each and every time you unload the van? Here are some suggestions:

- 1. Play corporate events.** Not all corporate gigs have to resemble the air-base scene from Spinal Tap. Plenty of companies are looking to boost their "cred" within the community. They allow their younger employees to choose music for their events, functions, and parties that is "hip with the kids." Musicians are usually treated well, fed well, and paid well at corporate gigs.

Who should I contact? Most larger corporations will have designated event planners. You might have to do a bit of cold calling and internet research to find out who these people are and how they like to receive promotional material/press kits.

- 2. Weddings anyone?** If you're the type of band that has a large and diverse repertoire of songs, you might be overlooking a real cash cow, weddings. But even if you're not into playing Sinatra tunes and the Electric Slide, there are thousands of folks every summer who are looking to throw the most unique wedding ever. Metal bands? Barbershop quartets? Avant-Garde feedback manipulators? I've seen them all at weddings. Your act could be next.

Where can I find out about wedding gigs? Firstly, there is a great book by Anne Roos entitled "The Musician's Guide to Brides" that is a great resource to get you started. Once you've played a few weddings, you can attend local Bridal conventions, place ads (with links

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to your website!) in bridal magazines, and get the word out to anyone else in the industry (DJs, wedding planners, caterers, other bands, clergy, florists, banquet halls, etc.)

- 3. Book some college shows while on tour.** Similar to corporate events, these gigs generally don't offer you the full glory of smoke machines and light shows, but they can pay well and treat you like professionals. Intersperse these kinds of shows throughout a tour of club gigs that are often higher profile, but pay little. Whether you're playing a lunch time gig at the student union, a frat party, or an evening in the campus bar, the \$500-\$2000 you can earn here will go a long way for your band morale on those long stretches from town to town.

Who should I contact? It depends. If you're routing a tour and you know a specific region in which a college gig would be ideal, you might want to get in touch with each school's campus activities director (info should be on the school's website). Speak with them about what kinds of opportunities are available and how they like to receive music and press kits. If you're intending to do a more widespread campaign, you may benefit from attending conferences held by campus activities associations like NACA. (www.naca.org)

- 4. Meeting people is easy.** Like most things, the music business thrives on interpersonal connections. It all comes down to who you know. Build strong relationships with the popular artists in your town. Without overselling or coming across as a social climber, demonstrate to the more popular artists how YOU can benefit THEM as an opening act. Once given the opportunity, prove it! Bring all your fans out to the show and perform like your life depends on. Soon, all the popular local bands will want you opening for them.

Where should I start? Simple is best. Go to a show! If you like the music, introduce yourself. Also, be on the lookout for industry mixers held by local record labels, music stores, distributors, publicists, recording studios, licensing agencies, etc. These are great opportunities to meet people without all the post-performance sweat and nerves.

- 5. Ask plenty of questions.** Talk to the club bookers in town and ask them what they see other successful bands doing. What is working? What is NOT working? How are they consistently drawing a crowd? What kinds of bills seem to make the most money? Don't pretend you have all the answers. There is a certain mature assuredness in asking questions. The booker might just take this as a sign that you're serious about your music and give you a show.

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ARTIST ADVICE: "Start by announcing that you'll play house shows on your website and explain what is expected of the host. Take the guesswork out of the booking process and be approachable. Then, once you have a few shows under your belt, fans will see house show dates on your calendar, see pictures of the events on other fans social networking sites, and they will be more comfortable approaching you to book a show. Once we changed people's perception of the kinds of shows we'd play, we started getting approached for more types of gigs."

Cameron Mizell: <http://www.cdbaby.com/Artist/CameronMizell>

ARTIST ADVICE: "Don't believe all the crazy bridezilla hype that TV shows would like you to believe. Weddings are very lucrative, viable gigs, and you don't have to spend your hard-earned money touring and trying to make a name for yourself. There are many musicians out there quietly making a living playing weddings."

Anne Roos: <http://www.cdbaby.com/Artist/AnneRoos>



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WEB PRESENCE IS MORE THAN JUST HAVING A WEBSITE

Nowadays, anyone can have a website and a MySpace or Facebook profile. Everyone can post music online for the world to hear. Everyone has been given a voice. So how do you rise above the crowded sea of artists on the internet to have YOUR voice ring clearest? It is what you DO with these technological tools that will make all the difference.

- 1. Document Everything.** Cameras, camcorders, and hand-held audio recorders are more affordable than they've ever been. Tape your practices, film your shows and studio sessions, and photograph your band members. Upload and share your experiences on your favorite social networks. Always post everything on your website. It doesn't have to be polished or perfect. The point of sharing content is to engage and make real connections. If somebody comments that they think your video is corny, that's perfect! Nothing stirs interest online like a strong opinion. Chances are, somebody else will jump in and say the exact opposite. The point is; they're paying attention and you're making yourself real to them, which means they'll remember you.
- 2. Give them something they can't get elsewhere.** People like to feel that they're in on a secret. Make sure your website has a welcoming feel and clearly displays compelling content. Then offer your fans and the people on your email list exclusive MP3s, videos, essays, etc.

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Update often! Keep them coming back for more and make sure you've made it easy for fans to share your content with others.

- 3. Don't spam, communicate.** It is vital that every interaction you have with your online fans offers a genuine sense of connection. Be authentic. Don't just seem like you want them to buy something. There is no quicker way to make people hit the un-friend or unsubscribe button.
- 4. Analyze your web hits.** CD Baby's member account displays detailed info about HOW your fans are linking through to view your CD Baby album page. Look at the traffic sources. What do the numbers tell you? Is your current online marketing campaign working? Should you be shifting your tactics? Perhaps you'll find that people are stumbling upon your music from a blog or chat room that you didn't even know about. Go to those places and interact with these new fans directly.
- 5. Bring your fans in.** Use your live performances and day-to-day interactions to bring people into your online community. Print your website address on everything and let your fans know at concerts what social networks they can find you on. Tell your audience that if they tweet 'yourband' or friend you on Facebook you'll send them a personal link to an exclusive free track. Conversely, encourage your online connections to come out to your events and engage with you in the real world. An online buddy is no substitute for one in the flesh.

ARTIST ADVICE: "The key to using social media and the web effectively is to treat it like it's as important as your real life interactions, because it is! Your Internet presence might be the only side of you that some of your fans ever see. Be honest, real, and entertaining, and you'll be able to build long-lasting relationships with people all over the world."

Allison Weiss: <http://www.cdbaby.com/Artist/AllisonWeiss>

ARTIST ADVICE: "Respond to anyone who reaches out to you. They perceive you as something special. In turn, it makes them feel special when you reach back. That connection creates a fan and advocate for life. The web and social networks are perfect for this type of connection!"

Josh Rosenthal: <http://www.cdbaby.com/Artist/JoshRosenthal>



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