

CMU:DIY

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**GETTING YOUR ARTIST
BUSINESS STARTED**

YOUR BUSINESS PLAN

BUILD FANBASE

gigging, social, media & marketing, content

UNDERSTAND FANBASE

social, analytics, interact, pre-orders

SELL

downloads, tickets, merch, subscription services, VIP

STARTING POINT

You have...

- Songs
- Live set
- Recordings
- Initial fanbase (beyond friends and family)

Let's sort out the business!

STARTING POINT

Who is the business?

- You
- Bandmates?
- Collaborators?
- Anyone else?

Let's get things agreed.

STEP ONE: AGREE THE BASICS, WRITE IT DOWN

Things to discuss and agree...

- Who actually has a stake in the artist business?
- What happens to any money that comes in?
- Is anyone putting in money - do they get it back?
- Is anyone charging for their time?
- Who owns the copyright?
- How are you sharing co-owned works?

STEP TWO: SORT OUT THE BUSINESS FORMALITIES

Are you operating as a sole trader or partnership?

- You need to declare this to the Inland Revenue and file an annual tax return.
- Do you have a separate bank account for music income (sole trader account)?

Do you set yourself up as a limited company?

- This has advantages.
- But comes with extra obligations and paperwork.
- You probably need an accountant to help with this.

YOUR REVENUE STREAMS

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

LIVE PERFORMANCE

FAN RELATIONSHIP

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Remember you have different kinds of IP...

- Copyright in your songs.
- Copyright in your recordings.
- Copyright in your photos and artwork.
- Copyright in your videos.
- You could trademark your name.

But first, let's sort out the copyright basics...

STEP THREE: AGREE AND LOG COPYRIGHT OWNERSHIP

- Default owner of song, photo and artwork copyright is: the writer, photographer, artist or designer.
- Default owner of recording copyright is: whoever paid for the recording to take place.
- The default owner can 'assign' the rights to a third party, usually for money - you need to get the assignment agreement written down.
- When you co-create you co-own the resulting works - you need to agree the splits.
- There is no copyright registration, so have written agreements about ownership and log your songs with PRS and your recordings with PPL.

STEP FOUR: JOIN THE COLLECTIVES

- Join PRS and log all your songs (membership is £100 per person).
- Join PPL and log all your recordings (membership is free).
- You need to decide when to join MCPS (songwriter membership is £100 per person).
- Once you have joined you will earn whenever:
 - Your song is performed live (PRS).
 - Your record is played in public (PRS/PPL).
 - Your record is played on the radio (PRS/PPL).
 - Your record is played on TV (PRS/MCPS/PPL).

STEP FIVE: GET YOUR MUSIC ONLINE

- Pick a digital distributor and get your music onto all the download and streaming platforms.
- Your distributor represents your recording rights and will pay you your recording royalties minus any commission or fees.
- Your collecting society represents your song rights and will pay you your song royalties minus its commission.
- In the UK, that income will be paid via both PRS and MCPS.
- Recording royalties on digital income will usually be 4-6 times more than accompanying song royalties.

STEP SIX: GIVE PEOPLE A REASON TO LISTEN

- Regularly promote that your music is on Spotify and Apple Music.
- Maybe set up and regularly update a playlist on Spotify, including both your music and other tracks from similar artists, and talk about it at gigs and on the social networks.
- Find ways to subtly suggest to fans that they might want to add your music to their personal libraries.

STEP SEVEN: THINK ABOUT OTHER WAYS TO MONETISE IP AND FANBASE

- Sell downloads of your music direct - via Bandcamp, ReverbNation or Music Glue.
- Limited edition runs of CD and vinyl are not essential and require upfront investment, though if you have a fanbase interested in physical product, you might make extra money at gigs.
- Think about merch that doesn't involve much upfront expense. Investigate platforms like Music Glue - it is easy to set up print-on-demand t-shirts which you can promote through social channels.
- Investigate platforms like PledgeMusic - do you have an engaged fanbase who might spend money on something limited edition?

STEP EIGHT: GET OUT AND GIG

- Look for opportunities to play live, especially beyond your home town.
- Make sure information for bookers is clearly posted on your website and Facebook page - email address and links to your music.
- Maybe have (good) photos and video from past gigs on a 'live page' on your website showing an engaged audience.

STEP EIGHT: GET OUT AND GIG

- Identify bookers at local venues and festivals, and possible local support slots.
- Send polite emails explaining who you are, why you would be right for certain nights/stages/support slots and links to your music on SoundCloud.
- When you get gigs, make sure you market them to your fanbase - this will make a booker or promoter more like to re-book you.
- Remember, gigs are a marketing opportunity - look for subtle opportunities to plug your stuff - eg on-stage visuals, between song chat, postcards, merch stall etc.

STEP NINE (aka STEP ONE): SET UP YOUR DIGITAL CHANNELS

- Decide which social networks you will use... and what you will use them for.
- Set up profiles on: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, SoundCloud. And Snapchat?
- And make sure your music is on all the digital platforms.

STEP NINE (aka STEP ONE): SET UP YOUR DIGITAL CHANNELS

- Drip feed new content (music, photos, video) over your various networks.
- Interact on the social networks, plug other people, make sure you post when other people champion your stuff.
- Start getting email addresses at gigs and online - use a service like MailChimp to manage and communicate with your mailing list.
- Remember: the aim is to ultimately sell your fans stuff.

STEP TEN: REACH OUT TO MEDIA AND INDUSTRY IN A TARGETED WAY

- Identify journalists, DJs, A&Rs, agents, bookers and managers who are working with artists like you.
- Send them polite short emails making them aware of what you are up to.
- Make sure you communicate that you know what they do and that you like their work - make your music seem relevant to them.
- Always include a SoundCloud link (or YouTube link).
- Make your emails newsworthy - eg new track, upcoming gig, etc.

STEP TEN: REACH OUT TO MEDIA AND INDUSTRY IN A TARGETED WAY

- Be persistent without being a pest.
- With media say you would love their support.
- With industry say you would appreciate their advice or feedback.

MEET THE MUSIC BUSINESS

THE MUSIC INDUSTRY

MANAGEMENT (+ lawyer and accountant)

MUSIC RIGHTS

Record Label

Music Publisher

Merchandiser

LIVE INDUSTRY

Booking Agent

Promoter

Ticket Agent

FAN BUSINESS

Direct To Fan

Brand Agency

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