



## INDUSTRY ADVICE ADVICE CENTRAL

Advice - home | Professionalism in the Industry | Gigs & Promotion | Management | Marketing  
Distribution | Press & Radio | Recording Contracts | Beware - compilation catches | Copyright

## gigs & promotion

When starting your promotions, as we've outlined previously, it is in your best interest to promote yourself with as much *professionalism* as possible. You must also consider having Artist/Performer promo package ready to provide to Promoters & other industry personnel when it is requested.

Firstly, you'll need a Bio (biography). A bio is similar to Resume (in that it describes contact details, history and skills information) although your Bio wouldn't contain all the typical info that you'd find in a 'Resume' (no, don't mention your math's results!)

With a Bio, you can creatively detail information on the band including individual profiles, band conception and progress, influences.. also put forward as much as you can on your *image & following* - eg. gigs history, logo, photos, even promote your website address - as well as even adding colours to your Bio (a Bio doesn't have to be just a plain page!)



A Bio can be anywhere between 1 page & a full colour booklet! To keep expenses down (vital in initial stages), you might want to keep your BIO no more than 3 A4 pages. Each page should definitely be typed (oh.. and spell checked!).

Alternatively, you can split your bio up into 1/2 pages... and print on both sides of an A4 sheet. When folded in half, your BIO is turned into a small booklet..! If you're not really sure of what you're doing in Microsoft Word in trying to type up a booklet, give Publisher a go (normally has templates that will help you with your layout).

Give a brief description of yourself or band, ie. music style, influences, press clippings, recent events, future plans & full contact details. Even outline the members/instruments, musical history (if captivating!), gigs/events and up & coming events. Ensure your Bio is updated regularly to include new gigs or line-up changes. Even include "catch words or phrases" to attract the promoters attention (that can be used in their own promotional material).



It is important to also include a photo of yourself/your band that captures the band's image (not a boring photo or one showing you rehearsing in a messy garage)! Consider even getting out in the garden with the full band and pose for a photo! Climb a tree! All jump a fence! Well.. you know what I mean... just use a little of your creative imagination!

You may want to display an ace logo that represents your band. Even try and draw or computer generate a Logo that distinguishes your band and shows your style. Even design your band's name in a distinctive font for use in promotional material (letterheads, cassette covers, etc..).

Once you have organised your Bio, you'll need a DEMO. A band demo is a copy of a recording that gives a demonstration of your music - that can be presented on either a CD (preferred) or cassette.

In starting out your promotions, you'll be better off financially by dubbing your own cassettes. You may even want to keep it simple - hire a rehearsal room & record on a multi-track/cassette deck/DAT.

Consider checking out the prices of *Recording Studios* where you'll be at least assured that your demo will be of professional quality. There are so many demos out there these days - you must ensure that your Demo is professional - as quality plays an important part of your Demo.



Prior to recording, ensure you've decided on the songs to record and that they're well rehearsed before stepping into a studio (even before recording at a rehearsal room).

This will save you time and money if you happen to be running into differences or undecided errors at a time of recording (when you are paying by the hour!). So remember to watch your time when recording - plan ahead with a schedule!

With your finished master, if you are going to send out cassettes (rather than CD), you'll need to dub your cassettes ready for submitting to promoters.

Consider the quality of cassette you buy (you don't want the unbearable hum that can be heard in cheap cassettes). Listen to all the recorded songs and select no more than 3 of the best songs (have family or friends give their opinions then compare notes!).

Definitely, place your BEST song (not necessarily the song that YOU may think is the best) at the start of the cassette. If you have many songs but only want to provide a company with just a taste, you may want to consider placing simple "sprats" on the cassette only (shorter snippets of your songs) by fading out each song [professionally] after 30 seconds or so.



It is VITAL to rewind each tape ready for the listener. Don't rewind to the very start of the tape - just enough so when the "play" button is pressed, the song will be played

within 2-3 seconds.

Design and print out Cassette inserts (J-Cards) to be placed within the cover. Include your Band/Artists name, logo, song titles, copyright information, credits (producers, guest musicians, etc..) and contact information (address, telephone, email, etc..). - even your website address.

On the Label of the cassette, you must also have the Artist/Band name, copyright information, contact name and reliable PHONE NUMBER.

This is important, as if your cassette never gets back into it's cover (which happens!) the Promoter will have no idea who's material is on the cassette.

So - you are now ready to start promoting yourself!



When promoting to venues, it is advised to have someone "outside" of the band making the calls (ie. a Manager or Agent).

If you to take on the Management yourself on behalf of the band, ensure you are capable of handling calls, bookings, paperwork, packaging, invoicing, banking and, most importantly, the rejections.

You will be making a lot of calls, so - for those starting out - even try out your phone skills by having asking a friend or another band member to Pretend they are the Promoter!

Run through the conversation as though you're talking to a venue - see what questions your friend can come up with - and take notes!

Even ask a friend or contact who's also in a band & see what they have encountered - even ask if they have any "contact names" that will give you a head start when you make your calls.



When contacting venues, speak clearly & always introduce yourself - state who you are representing (yourself or band name). Ask to speak with the person who looks after Promotions (get their name!)

If they are not available, or you you're faced with a machine, professionally leave your name, reason for calling, number and, if on a machine, leave the time that you called. If leaving a message with someone, ask when would be the best time to reach them.

Before making your calls to Venues, you should compile a list/database of Venue names and numbers (even Promoters' names!). Once your list is compiled, check for duplicate phone numbers. If two venues have the one contact number, obviously the one Promoter is booking bands for 2 -or more- venues. See this as a bonus - this one person may consider you for both venues. Plus, this will save embarrassment of ringing the same person twice!

On your database of venues, make enough room for detailed notes. Every time you attempt to or make contact with the venue or promoter, make a note of the contact, date, time and clear comments.



So, are you ready to speak to the Promoter?

Be as natural as possible - and talk with a smile! Don't ring venues during the night (unless you are asked to do so), otherwise your important promotional conversation will be competing with a bar crowd!

Try and make your calls during the day. If the promoter sounds busy at the time - ask if you should call back & what time would be convenient.

Always be prepared to write things down - you may need to write down addresses, times, etc.. ask relevant questions if you need to!

Have fun! Promoters do actually have personalities (!) but understand that it may not be the right time to talk!

Even suggest dropping off your Demo to them personally at the venue! Ensure you have the address of the venue in front of you - if they ask you to drop it off, they assume you want to perform there because you know and love the venue - therefore know exactly where they are located!



When you make contact with a Promoter, announce that you are interested in performing at their venue & would like to send them a Demo. If they agree, confirm the address to send it to (that you have in front of you!) & Attention it to the Promoter. Don't try and schedule a gig in your initial call.

Ask them when would be a suitable time for you to call them back (suggest a day that's one week ahead) - they may say that they'll call you back - then THANK them for their time.

Write down the full details of the conversation & the date to call back. THEN - send off your demo to them ASAP. You may even want to include a short letter stating:

Dear <insert name>,

As per our conversation today, please find enclosed our Demo and Bio for <your band's name>.

I look forward to hearing your response and hopefully having the chance to perform at <the venue's name>.

Please contact me on <phone number> if you have any questions!  
I'm sure you'll enjoy it!

Regards,  
<your name>

If you have a logo designed, even put your letter on a designed letterhead!  
[with return address and most importantly, your contact phone numbers]



If the Promoter has heard your Demo, ask what they thought of the music. If they are impressed, ask if they'd like to schedule a date to perform at the venue. If they are too busy, understand and offer to call back another time & see how things are going - or if they can call you as soon as they find the right time.

When making your calls, have a list of more than one venue to call - it's best to call as many as you can in the one day as this will increase your confidence for each call. Call the venues that you feel you have the best chance with firstly, then build up to the larger venues! Have your diary open as well. You may need to confirm dates.

Always check with other band members for any dates that are filled (ie. they have to attend a family wedding, etc..) prior to making any phone calls.

When you get a gig, you hopefully have a fan club mailing-list that you can send information to! If not, start compiling a list of all the band members' friends that would like to know about the gig.

Print out a small promotional flyer (even 1/2 page) that you can photocopy and mail out about 10-14 days before the gig. If launching a CD, contact your local paper & music press & see if you can submit information relating to the launch and the venue. If you have a website, promote it as much as possible!

To save money on postage, any fans that are on the net, let them know you have a gig by emailing them!



So.. are you getting paid? If your band doesn't have a (reasonable) set fee, check with the Promoter upon confirming a gig what their fee will be. Sometimes, for your initial gig, you may not get paid at all (your first gig there may be to determine your turnout before booking you for paid gigs). If it's one of your band's first gigs, accept any price! The promoter may even offer you a great fee before you suggest one (you may want to ask what their standard fee is firstly!)

Remember to confirm whether they have a PA available, otherwise you will have to hire a PA yourself (which is rather common). This does not get added to your fee, you have to cover this cost yourself. Also check if you'll need your own Engineer (mixer) as some venues ask that you to set up everything from mics to your foldback mix!



If a Promoter cannot book you for a gig, appreciate their honesty & thank them for their time. Even ask if they know of someone who'd be interested in hearing your demo - they may be able to pass the Demo on for you - or you can send it to the person that they suggest.

Keep it on friendly terms, as you never know - this Promoter may consider your Band for a gig in the future!

Overall, be patient with every contact and look out at promoting yourself where ever possible!

If you're at your local venue and see it as a perfect place to play at (ie. if the music style is suitable), ask if the promoter is around on the night and get to know them (make sure you're okay - ie. not drunk!). Ask if you can send them a demo! Whoever you meet, remember their name & never forget their face!

>>> NEXT >>>

[ [return to top](#) ]

[Advice - home](#) | [Professionalism in the Industry](#) | [Gigs & Promotion](#) | [Management](#) | [Marketing](#)  
[Distribution](#) | [Press & Radio](#) | [Recording Contracts](#) | [Beware - compilation catches](#) | [Copyright](#)

All information supplied is the advice and suggestion of Ego Music  
Ego Music will not be held responsible for any actions or events occurring  
being a direct or indirect result from information supplied within our pages.  
All Content is © Ego Music and cannot be replicated without the writers permission.

[home](#) | [web design](#) | [industry links](#) | [industry advice](#) | [noticeboard](#) | [guestbook](#) | [site of the month](#) | [contact us](#)

<||**Ego Music**||>

format, design & flash menu

© 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001 Ego Music

<||in conjunction with vsites.net||>