



## Starting And Running A Marketing / Street Team

*Vivek J. Tiwary*

A marketing or “street” team, simply put, is a group of people (the team members or “marketing representatives”) located in different areas who assist you in executing your [marketing plan](#) and expanding its reach to other territories. If your team is large enough, its reach will allow you to take on more sophisticated, expansive, and national promotions than you could handle without a team. Putting a street team together is a very cost-effective way of getting help with your marketing efforts, especially if you are a solo act or a band without a large business team in place to assist you.

Many artists that developed from the grassroots level reaped significant benefits from the efforts of widespread, dedicated marketing team. Guster, Kittie, and The Clarks are all mid-sized bands who put together marketing teams of sometimes hundreds of dedicated reps whose efforts had a direct impact on the groups’ developing careers, attracting record-label deals and impressive national tours.

In [urban music](#), street teams are a primary part of artists’ marketing plans, and a significant portion of every urban artist’s marketing budget is dedicated to manufacturing [promotional tools](#) for street team use. This shouldn’t be surprising, when you take into consideration that “urban” music almost by definition comes from “the streets.” It makes sense that initial marketing efforts would be concentrated at these grassroots levels.

In fact, street marketing teams are so important for *all* developing artists, that almost every major label (and many independent ones) develop street teams in-house, responsible for assisting with the marketing of all their new releases. I created the Alternative Marketing Department at Mercury Records and developed and oversaw its Marketing Team for three years. Our reps’ efforts were integral in assisting several great bands break through or cross over to platinum-level success, including 311, The Mighty Mighty BossTones, Cake, and The Cardigans, to name a few.

Many developing artists assume that they will be unsuccessful at putting a dedicated street team together until they have already achieved some degree of success. Not so. You can-- and should-- start a street team at the very beginning of your career. In fact, that’s when you’ll need their help the most. Even if your team consists of five reps in your hometown, that’s five more people than you had dedicated to your cause before you started the team. If you and your team work hard, you will grow together.

### **The Role of The Street Team**

Think of your street team as an extra set of several “arms and legs” scattered across the country helping you with your marketing efforts. How you use your street team and the specific tasks that you assign them are very much a factor of how much time you have to direct them, and how confident you are that they can carry out certain tasks that may require representing you professionally and in accordance with your [image](#). Major record labels recruit and hire their marketing reps very carefully, and expect them to be responsible for working with every aspect of the [marketing mix](#) to some extent:

[Retail Marketing](#)

[Radio Promotion](#)

[Press and Publicity](#)

[Video Promotion](#)

[Performance Marketing / Tour Support](#)

[High School / College Marketing](#)

[Lifestyle / Nontraditional Marketing](#)

[Using the Internet as a Marketing Tool](#)

Additionally, you may ask your street reps to identify the most appropriate places for you to play in their local markets, and help you make the right contacts and secure gigs there.

If you are like most artists, you will not have a tremendous amount of time to direct your street team, and you won't spend a lot of time screening candidates before welcoming them aboard. Therefore, you shouldn't expect your team to be professional enough to handle serious marketing business. You should assign them simple tasks-- passing out flyers, posters and other promotional items that you supply them; providing tour support when you come to town and helping you build a fanbase; getting your music into cool lifestyle stores like skateshops or coffeeshops (whatever's appropriate for your act); etc. All that being said, you should still study each element of the mix above and determine whether there are any specific tasks within each element you can delegate to members of your street team.

On record-label marketing teams, the marketing reps are often asked to actually design as well as execute marketing plans incorporating every element of the mix specific to their territory. Of course, these teams are overseen by at least one individual at the company whose entire job it is to run that team.

### **Recruiting A Team**

The most likely team candidates are friends and fans, although you may also be able to recruit a few people who simply want experience working with artists and learning about music marketing. Utilize your [mailing lists](#) and send email as well as postcards (if you can afford it) to all your contacts and fans announcing that you are putting a team together to help you develop your act or the band. Also post this notice in key chat rooms and bulletin boards on the Web that are relevant to your act's sound and vibe. If possible, come up with a creative name for your team to entice people to join (like the "KISS Army" or Jewel's "Everyday Angels"). Most fans and friends will be willing to help because they already believe in you and your music. But also ask them to refer other good candidates who may be excited about being on such a team. Word of mouth and references are not to be underestimated. Remember that while your marketing might seem like work to you, for someone who is not a musician, being part of an artist's street team might be a very exciting opportunity.

In your recruitment materials, include a few basic lines about your intended [marketing strategies](#), promotions, or events (to let folks know what you're talking about when you say you're asking for help), and, of course, your contact information. I'm assuming you will not be paying your reps, but expecting them to work for the love of your music and/or for the experience. This is perfectly acceptable, and you may be surprised at how many folks will want to come onboard even without financial compensation. But at this stage, you don't need to highlight the fact that there's no compensation involved. However, be straight up with those folks who respond to your recruitment efforts and let them know that being on the team is a labor of love and not a money-making opportunity.

Other grassroots recruitment efforts could include passing out postcards or flyers with the relevant information at cool record stores, at funky clothing stores, at skateshops, at the shows of bands with similar fanbases as yours, etc.-- anywhere where you think your act's potential fans or good street team members would hang out.

If you have a little more money to spend on recruitment (other than the cost of designing, manufacturing and distributing postcards/flyers), then you could also take out a few key ads in local music papers within the target markets where you'd like to have marketing reps. But be careful here. Print ads can be very expensive, so don't forget that the whole point of having a marketing team is to obtain cost-effective help.

*As a general rule of thumb: If you're spending too much money on the team, you doing something wrong.*

*If your recruitment efforts end up being focused in the area where your act is based and/or the hometowns of the band members if you are a group, don't be dismayed. Most artists' marketing teams start in their hometown and grow as the band grows (or a few paces quicker). But always keep other appropriate expansion markets in mind. Always [network](#) and keep your ears open for good references for candidates located in areas where you'd like a marketing rep. And remember to ask your current team members to do the same and themselves assist in the recruitment and expansion of their team.*

### **Maintaining A Team**

*You should set up a unique communication system that is in line with your marketing goals and the sophistication of the marketing efforts you expect of your reps.*

*Assuming you're keeping things basic, email is the best method because it is both extremely cost-effective (usually free) and easy to use. Set up an address-book feature that will allow you to email all your team members simultaneously. You will find this function critical for conveying information. Almost all the information you will need to send the team can be sent via e-mail, using document attachments where necessary. This can include your new bios and photos, tour updates and itineraries, progress reports, information on new releases, any chart results and special requests, and of course, your specific directions and instructions on what you want the team to be doing.*

*Email is also important as a question-and-answer mechanism, so that when one rep emails you a good question, you can send the answer to the entire team; more often than not the reps will have the same questions about what they should be doing. Encourage each rep to send the entire team messages, questions, and feedback to foster discussion a true sense of teamwork and community.*

*Although you may not have a great deal of time to dedicate to overseeing your reps and answering all their questions, it's important that you be in touch with them regularly, so that they know they are part of a real team and are important to you and your efforts. Monthly emails are not out of the question. Similarly, you should ask reps to be in touch with you with some kind of progress report or "report from the field" about once a month or so, in order for you to gauge their effectiveness and get a sense of what kinds of promotions are working for your act.*

*Whenever possible, try to place a telephone call to as many reps as possible, or to the few key reps who have done particularly good work. Especially for those reps in faraway markets, being able to hear a voice on the other line makes a rep feel part of a real living, breathing team.*

*It is critical that you periodically thank your reps for their efforts. Seems like common sense, but many artists forget to express simple gratitude. Make sure the team knows that their efforts are not just noticed, but appreciated. Especially when you're not paying someone for their help, a thank you and a little kindness go a long way.*

*Of course, you will need to send the reps packages of [promotional tools](#) for them to use in their marketing efforts, so some written communication will also be necessary. You can't expect reps to pass out flyers and hang up posters, or get their local coffeeshop to play your CD in-store, if you haven't sent them sufficient quantities of those items.*

*Your primary expense in maintaining a marketing team should be the cost of manufacturing and shipping additional promotional items to the reps.*

### ***For the Independent Label or Management Company: Running A Sophisticated Marketing Team***

*If you are a record label or management company, you will want to put together a more sophisticated marketing team of reps who can handle multiple projects simultaneously and take on greater responsibilities. These kinds of sophisticated teams take quite a bit of work to setup and run. Below are all key details that will help you to both get it done and keep it going.*

*If you are an artist, I still encourage you to read the sections below. They will give you a sense of how more sophisticated teams are run, and may give you ideas on ways to expand your basic street team.*

### ***Choosing / Hiring A Team Member***

*First, follow the recruitment advice [above](#). Once you have an applicant, obtain a resume from them (or a resume-like outline) and hold an interview before offering them a spot on the team. If your team will only be expected to handle simple marketing efforts-- such as distributing flyers and hanging up posters-- then perhaps an interview isn't necessary, but I would recommend having one in as many cases as time will permit. If you are putting together a team that will be expected to execute, and in some cases, even design sophisticated marketing plans, then an interview is mandatory. As much as possible, these should be in-person interviews, although for*

*an applicant in a faraway market, a telephone interview may need to be (and can be) sufficient.*

*Perhaps the most important thing you should discover in an interview is why the applicant wants to be on the team. I'm assuming that for most of you reading this, the primary compensation you'll be offering for services is experience and the excitement/fun of being in the music industry. So if you expect an applicant to perform good work for little or no money, you should ensure that they really want and are excited about the job. Similarly, make sure they understand what compensation you're offering and that little (or no) pay will be OK given their current financial situation-- don't risk winding up with a great member who has to leave because he or she simply can't afford to remain on the team(i.e. they need a better paying job).*

*If you are multi-genre label or management company, make sure the applicant is comfortable with the possibility that from time-to-time they will be asked to market an artist whose music they may not like. Remind them that part of being good at comprehensive music marketing is being open-minded, and being able to think, "Well, if I don't like this music, who will? And how do I reach those people?" If an applicant seems uneasy with this mode of thinking, that's respectable, but they don't belong on your team. I would strongly warn against accepting applicants who are applying because they love one particular band involved with your company. They may perform excellent work for that artist, but may be annoyed or simply ineffective when asked to market another, different artist.*

*Motivation and creativity are the key factors to being a good street-marketing rep. Don't get ridiculous with your interview questions, but try to conduct an interview that will hint toward the applicant's creative abilities and motivation.*

*Next, find out how much familiarity the applicant has with the circles in which you'll be asking them to operate. Are they familiar with the record stores, radio stations, music press, etc. in their area? It's generally OK to pick an applicant who has little industry experience (most of them want to join your team precisely to obtain experience)-- as long as they are familiar with the types of places and people they will be asked to work with.*

*I used to think it was important that team members have some industry experience prior to joining a sophisticated team-- working at a college radio station or local record store, having written for a local paper or zine, etc. But I then invited a woman to join the Mercury Records Marketing Team who had no music-industry experience at all. She did, however, prove to me in her interview that she was creative and really wanted the job, promising me that she wouldn't let me down. She also spoke eloquently about all the various record stores, radio stations, video shows, press outlets, coffeeshops, skateshops, etc. in her market-- first proving familiarity with the market, and then going on to explain what each place's specific vibe was, and what sort of people hang out there. Sara Gibson wound up winning Mercury's College Rep of the Year Award in 1997; she went on to a full-time job at the label, and is now Director of Publishing at [sonicnet.com](http://sonicnet.com). Read her [StarPolish](#) section on [Music And The Internet](#).*

*Small but Critical:*

*In some markets it's crucial that the team member have (or have regular access to) a car. In Atlanta or Los Angeles, for example, it is impossible to get anything done efficiently without a car. Ask now to avoid rude surprises later, when the member is unable to get the job done due to problems with logistics, not a lack of talent.*

*Finally, find out how long the applicant will be able to remain on the team. If you'll be asking them to design and execute sophisticated plans, it may be important that the member be on the team for more than a year. Remember that it may take a few months for marketing reps to learn the ropes and the ins-and-out of their market. You don't want to wind up in a position where just when the rep gets to the point that they are excelling, they have to leave the team (because they are graduating school and leaving the market, because they'll need a better-paying job, etc.).*

### **Compensation**

*It's important that you be honest with your team about what compensation they will receive for their services. If you are asking them to work for experience (i.e. for free), make sure they understand this, and similarly make sure you pick applicants who are comfortable with this arrangement.*

*As much as possible, I recommend that you financially compensate your team members, if only with a small salary more resembling a stipend. It is a reality that whenever money is involved, people work harder. Similarly, you can demand more from your reps if you're paying them. If you aren't paying the team, it's hard to get mad at a team member who's slacking off. If you are paying them (even a little) it's remarkably easier to give firm directions and occasional admonition.*

*Finally, and perhaps most importantly, you will be able to attract better candidates if you can pay a little. Many entertainment companies (from music to film) have marketing teams these days-- so there will definitely be some competition to acquire good reps for your team. Obviously, if you can offer some money, your team will be more attractive than a team that doesn't.*

*Major record label marketing teams vary in the financial compensation they pay their reps from \$0 to \$150/week. From my experience, however, I would say that between \$200-\$250 per rep per month is average/competitive. I would also recommend an annual raise (even a tiny bit), so that reps who've been with the team for a longer period of time are recognized for their ongoing and cumulative efforts.*

*What's the best way to pay your team? This is a tricky business question, and if you are a large company, you must check with your legal and business affairs departments for the best method, given your company's specific corporate structure. The obvious-- and to some extent easiest-- method would be to put the reps on payroll and have your payroll department cut and mail regular checks, withholding taxes as appropriate. A potential downside of this method is that once on payroll, team members must legally be considered part of your company's overall "headcount" (i.e. the total number of people working at the company). Each member will legally count as an additional "head," and if your team is large enough you will face a significant increase to overall headcount-- which could in turn have significantly adverse tax ramifications. On the other hand, you want a large enough marketing team for sophisticated marketing purposes. To resolve this headcount problem, you may want to legally treat team members as "outside consultants," who are not included in a company's headcount and are paid as described below. However, just because you label someone a "consultant" does not mean that the law will recognize them as such-- so let me again recommend that you check with your company's counsel before making a decision on your reps' legal classification.*

*Because outside consultants are not a part of a company's headcount, they can be hired and fired easily and flexibly. They are not put on regular payroll with regular payroll checks; instead you pay them by cutting individual checks as needed. Each member is responsible for deducting his or her own taxes (i.e. you don't remove income taxes from the payment yourself). Technically, you should have each team member send you some kind of standard "invoice" requesting payment prior to each check, so that you keep your own proper accounting and paper trail. The "outside consultant" classification is basically the simplest method, and it still allows team members to truthfully say they work for your company even though they are not on payroll. Putting this last point another way, young team members can and should include their experience working for your company on their resume, without mention of the technical/legal "outside consultant" classification.*

*All that being said, I'd like to once again reiterate that you should check either with your business and legal affairs departments or with your lawyer and accountant prior to deciding upon a legal classification and payment method for marketing team members.*

### **Benefits**

*Even if you are paying your reps a stipend or salary, it's a safe bet that they will be putting in much more work than they will be fairly financially compensated for. So you must offer them as many benefits as possible. This should at the very least include free CDs and concert tickets, access to discounts on other products (if any) your company (or its parent, if any) produces, and whatever else you can muster or afford. Many entertainment-related dot-coms have recently started street teams to market their website offline, and they offer their marketing reps stock or stock options. Stock is a fabulous incentive, and has the added benefit of giving the rep a vested interest (quite literally, however small) in your company's success.*

*As marketing pioneer and legend David Ogilvy said, "Pay peanuts and you get monkeys." So even if you have to pay your team peanuts, give them as many benefits as possible so they won't feel they can get away with monkeying around with your marketing. And of course, the more benefits you can offer, the more attractive your team will be to a prospective team member.*

**Expenses**

*You should not expect your reps to be willing to lose money by being a member of your team. They will need to incur expenses in the course of executing your marketing plans and following your direction, and they should be reimbursed for these expenses. Especially if you are not paying your reps a salary or stipend, it is critical that you cover their expenses, so that being on the team does not become a financial burden to any member. And if you are paying your reps, you should still cover their expenses so their salary/stipend goes directly into their pockets, rather than ending up being spent back on you. You should expect that if at the end of the day, a team member is losing money by being on your team (or was promised he or she would make a little bit of money and that doesn't prove true because of high uncovered expenses), then his or her days on the team will be numbered.*

*For a major record-label marketing team, reasonable expenses would necessitate granting team members a flexible expense budget of about \$100-\$150 per month. Expensable costs should include: transportation/gas, parking, tolls, mailings and postage, film and film developing if you require photographs, stationary/supplies for special promotions, etc. At the end of every month, each team member should fill out and submit to you an expense report for that month, similar to your company's standard expense forms. Team members should attach all receipts to the report in order to be reimbursed. Provided that they submit these reports to you in a timely manner, you should in turn reimburse them in a timely manner.*

*When I say that the budget should be "flexible," I'm referring to the fact that some markets will be more difficult to service than others (i.e. New York City and Boston are busier markets than Lawrence, Kansas), and some months will be busier than others (when artists are in the reps' market, when the rep is running a special promotion, etc.). If a rep needs to spend in excess of \$100 during a particular month, you should evaluate what the expense is for and whether it makes sense for you. Is the added promotional gain worth the added expense? Often it will be, and you shouldn't miss a great opportunity because budgets are set in stone. Just make it clear that reps must check with you first to ensure reimbursement before going over their monthly budget. In reverse-- and this may not be obvious to some reps-- also explain that reps should not feel obligated to spend up to \$100 in a given month. Some reps may feel that you will perceive them as slacking in their responsibilities if their expenses fall below budget. Explain to them that the reverse may be true-- you may be impressed, since the best promotions are not just unique and creative, but also cost-effective.*

**Copy Service Account**

*If you plan on having team members design their own comprehensive marketing plans specifically suited to their territories (and assuming they don't work out of one of your company's branch offices and so don't have access to office machines and supplies), you may want to give them a copy service account.*

*A copy service account allows team members to have access to any branch outlet of the service provider, where they should be able to cover all copy center and basic office needs, including: Photocopying, faxing, office supplies/stationery, even in some cases photo developing, mailing, and computer services. Your home office will be billed directly for each rep's local charges. The provider I recommend is Kinko's, mostly because they offer comprehensive services, and there's a Kinko's branch located in or near every market where you'd want a marketing rep. You can set up a Kinko's national or "corporate" account, as they call them, by calling toll-free 800.488.3705.*

*A copy service account ensures that team members don't have to spend their own money and wait to be reimbursed. In many cases, team members simply won't have enough of their own money to spend on your marketing up front. If they don't have access to a copy service account, they may not be able to afford to get the best job done, regardless of the fact that you would reimburse them at some later point (which you should, if you're not offering a copy account). In other words, a copy service account will facilitate more efficient work from your marketing team.*

*You should receive monthly bills representing the aggregate of all local costs, as well as individual breakdowns so you can keep track of how much each team member is spending. In many cases, if you can convince the copy service provider that the combined work of all your team members will amount to a significant deal of business they wouldn't otherwise have, that provider may cut you a deal and offer access to their services/products at a special discount. Ask for it.*

*Of course, if you give reps access to a copy service account, you must also give them strict guidelines on how much money they are to rack up in expenses on that account. Advise them when they are allowed to use special, more expensive services (like color copying and special publishing), and instruct them that when in doubt, they should check with you before incurring the expense. Tell them that if they exceed budget without your consent, the excess will be deducted from their pay.*

*Most accounts are accessed by credit-card-sized account cards, which the service provider will provide for you, and you distribute one per rep. These cards should provide access to any branch anywhere in the nation. You should ask the reps to collect their individual receipts and send them into the home office, even though the national provider should provide you with a packet of copies monthly-- it's always better to have the original receipts than to rely on copies provided by the national provider in case there is a dispute at some point regarding billing.*

*Finally, pay your bills on time. If you don't, the national provider could put a halt on your entire account, and none of your reps would have access, which could seriously screw up a national marketing promotion mid-swing.*

### **Telephone Calling Cards / 800 Number**

*In order to facilitate reps calling into the home office often/regularly with questions and for direction, I recommend setting up an 800 number, or, if your company is large enough and can afford it, provide each rep with a calling card number (both can be set up by the phone company and/or your long distance provider). While email will definitely prove an extremely useful and cost-effective tool, actual phone conversations will be critical, especially because many promotions are time-sensitive and reps will occasionally need more immediate answers from you than email and waiting for a reply would allow.*

*Another, perhaps more important benefit of calling cards is that a good deal of music marketing and setting up promotions takes place on the telephone, so if you are reimbursing expenses as you should be, a calling card will ease the process of reimbursing your reps for phone time. If they have a calling card, it will save them and you the tedious paperwork of sifting through individual phone bills to separate business calls from non-business calls. On the other hand, if you do implement a calling card system, you will need to spend some time maintaining a somewhat close watch on the calling card statements to ensure that reps aren't abusing the privilege of having a card by using it to call friends in Hawaii. Make it clear to the reps that you receive records of their telephone calls, and if it is discovered that they are abusing the card for non-business purposes, they will lose their job.*

### **Advanced Communication Systems**

*If you are a record label or management company running a sophisticated marketing team, you will need to communicate with your reps via more than just monthly emails (which would be appropriate if you were an artist with a basic street team). Keep in mind that it will be important to know the details of promotions that team members are working before the promotions begin (so you can suggest expansion plans or point out pitfalls), while they are happening (so you can monitor progress), and after they're all over (so you can evaluate effectiveness and determine whether certain efforts are worth repeating).*

*Make sure your reps know that they can contact you as often as necessary with any and all questions. Advise them not to be shy and that no question is a stupid question, especially at the beginning of their term as a team member.*

### **Telephone Communication**

*I would recommend that in order to maintain a healthy relationship with each individual rep-- and to keep proper tabs on what's actually going on in the various markets-- you should speak to each rep on the phone at least once a week, if only for a few minutes. I would also recommend holding regular conference calls with the entire team to go over national priorities, share progress reports, foster teamwork, get feedback, and motivate the reps. Conference calls can be expensive, especially if you have a large number of reps in faraway markets, so you should be well prepared to moderate the call with a specific agenda and an exact amount of time allotted for each topic of discussion.*

*Finally, as I suggested before, your reps with telephone calling cards if possible to facilitate both easy telephone*

*communication and easy expensing of phone bills.*

### **Voicemail**

*If you can afford it, it may be a good idea to additionally provide each rep with a voicemail account/mailbox. Voicemail is like a cross between email and the telephone-- it can be accessed at any time, allows reply and forwarding features, but is more "human" than using email. However, you can't transmit a written document via voicemail, of course, so I'd recommend voicemail be used in addition to and not in place of email. Voicemail can be set up by most telephone companies and long-distance providers.*

### **Additional Uses of Email**

*Earlier in this document, I mentioned the many uses of [email](#) as a communication tool for the basic street team. If your company is large enough, you should provide each rep with a company email address, so they feel like they are really on board, and so their address will carry credibility when they are setting up promotions with outside sponsors. To further cut down on expenses, encourage reps to use email in the place of faxing whenever possible. Encourage reps to attach documents to email, so they can use email to send reports, proposals, outlines, photographs, etc.*

### **Reports**

*As with communication, I believe that each marketing team should have its own unique reporting system specific to its goals and submitted as frequently as needed (but on a strict, regular basis). Here are some methods that I found effective when I ran the Mercury Records Alternative Marketing Team:*

#### **1. Wrap-ups**

*To provide you with quick, current information, reps should be expected to send email or voicemail "wrap-ups" after all special events, promotions, and shows. Wrap-ups should be due no later than the day after the event. Instruct the reps to keep wrap-ups as brief but as detailed as possible; short and sweet is the key here. They should overview the event, highlight their marketing efforts, and note as many specifics as possible (number of people attending, number of promotional items given away, etc.). Inform them to leave out all extraneous details and to avoid repetition.*

#### **2. Photographs**

*Reps should photodocument all their efforts and promotional events. Whenever you're overseeing a field staff, there exists a certain degree of faith that the reps are actually doing what they claim to be doing. But being able to see it in photographs certainly helps to reduce the amount of faith required. Photographs are also great because they allow you to show off your reps' work in a poignant, immediate way to any interested party (artists, managers, label personnel, etc.). Photos can also be easily scanned, put online, and distributed via email throughout your company or shared with other reps. Photos should be regularly due at specified intervals, perhaps simultaneous with written progress reports (see below).*

*To make sure that reps take a sufficient amount of photos, you can explain it like this: The bottom line is, if they don't take photos, then as far as you know, they didn't do anything.*

#### **3. Written Progress Reports**

*Comprehensive written progress reports should be due regularly. I'd recommend biweekly or monthly, depending on the extent of the reps' efforts, and you should be particularly strict about reps submitting their reports on time. These written reports will give you the best sense of the full extent of your team's efforts and-- when read together as a packet-- they will suggest the national effect the team is having on a project's development. Written reports should be viewed as the reps' lifeline to your company.*

*I recommend that reports be accompanied with photographs, and any samples of marketing tools the reps made to supplement their efforts (flyers, stickers, specialty goods, etc.). If the reps are working with the press, tearsheets (i.e. copies) of relevant articles should also be attached.*

*Reports should cover all marketing activities performed during that reporting period, as well as setting up activities planned for the next period. Instruct the reps to include all the important details-- providing more specifics than they would in a wrap-up-- while still being brief. I'd recommend that progress reports be no more than a few pages long (4-5 max), and be written in a bullet-point, outline form. I'd also recommend that the reports be broken into sections, one for each project, and then include a "feedback" section at the end, where reps can candidly share their opinions on the effectiveness of their efforts, suggest ways for improving the overall marketing plans for a given project, and instruct you on how to better serve their needs and assist their efforts in the field.*

#### **4. Regular Information Mailings**

*In the same way that you expect reps to send you written progress reports on a regular basis, you should send them package mailings on a regular basis via regular mail that include any useful tools or information that you can't distribute via email.*

#### **Academic Credit**

*Being a member of a Marketing Team is a unique educational experience. Team members will spend a great deal of time learning comprehensive marketing skills and refining their public relations abilities. You should encourage them to obtain college or other academic credit for their efforts. All it will take on your behalf is some paperwork-- and especially if you're not heavily financially compensating your reps, credit will be a very welcome benefit for those team members who are in school.*

#### **Awards And Recognition**

*I would suggest that at regular intervals, you give an "award" to the team member who has shown the greatest progress and effort, such as a "Teammate of the Month" award. This award can simply be company recognition if necessary. Awards can serve a great motivational purpose to the entire team. However, I would also constantly remind the team that they are exactly that: a team. They should be expected to work together, to feed off each other's ideas, to support each other's efforts, to replicate each other's successful promotions, etc. A marketing team is most effective when its members are cooperating-- not competing-- in joint, national efforts. If you feel that team members are engaging in unhealthy competition, address it immediately and kill it before it leads to ineffective operations.*

*Another possible award could be a special "Teammate of the Year" award to the rep who has shown the most outstanding overall effort and progress for the year. Criteria for winning could include developing and executing the best creative ideas on a regular basis; submitting reports and wrap-ups in a professional, well-organized, and timely manner; and sharing ideas, works-in-progress, and completed efforts with other teammates for replication in other markets. I would recommend that this award be more than simple company recognition, and include some kind of gift, such as a plaque or trophy. In order to minimize potential unhealthy competition that such an award may cause, I would suggest allowing each rep to cast a vote in determining the winner (even if your vote counts more, giving the reps a say will make this less of a contest and more of a team process).*

*And those are all the key elements to developing a successful field marketing team. Good luck, and I'll keep my eyes out for your reps!*