



Hiring Your Team: Part III – Hiring a Publicist

Hiring a publicist is one of those steps that many artists just don't think about very much. But it can make a really big difference in the quantity and quality of press a new release receives, it can help a band to build buzz and momentum, and it can have a huge impact on sales, attendance, and more.

If you are signed to a major label, a publicist will be provide to you. But if you are like most artists who are just getting started, you've spent your own money for studio time, a producer, mastering, pressing, artwork, etc. Spending a little more to make sure that you get the most press possible for your release is just as important and may make the difference between being known locally, nationally or internationally.

Many artists put together their own press kits to send everywhere and anywhere that they can think of in the hopes that someone will write a review or play a song. This is not the most effective approach and usually results in a output of time and money with very little in return.

How could a publicist make a difference? To start, the publicist will work with you to create a consistent image. They will make sure your press kit fits and will distribute it in advance of an album release date to carefully chosen recipients. They will follow-up with those recipients in the hopes of getting reviews, articles, interviews, etc. to go public around the time the album is released. They will write and issue press releases when your album is released, when you play a new city, when you do something interesting, etc. They will do everything that they can to make sure that the media and the public knows you exist.

Once some momentum gets going, the publicist will be the guardian of your (carefully created) image. They will be the go to person for media inquiries, they will be part of our team at promo photo shoots and merchandising idea sessions to help keep your image intact. Whether you have thought about it or not, you have an image as an artist and certain people will be attracted to that image. If you make a choice that doesn't fit – you could alienate your audience or be perceived as a sell out.

What qualities should you look for in a music publicist?

- A professional appearance and manner – this person will be representing you to the media.
- Articulate likable and very organized – you want the media to want to talk with your publicist and get the right information in a timely manner.
- Innovative, creative thinker – they should be able to come up with new ways to present you to the public and not just do what all the other bands are doing.
- They are familiar with your style of music – they will need to be able to talk about it!
- Know which writers or publications will love your music – nothing wastes time like spamming publications and radio stations with a press kit. A publicist should already have or know of contacts who will be interested in receiving your press kit.

This article is provided for general informational purposes and is not intended to take the place of legal counsel or to create an attorney client relationship between the author and the reader.

Posted June 5, 2006 – MusicLawInfo.com