

**HOW TO MAKE A
LIVING
AS
A MU\$ICIAN**



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

Getting Started

Freelancing

Making Money

Instruments Required

Other Ways to Make Money

Your Promotional Kit

Pictures

Your List of Songs

Business Cards, Videos and Stationery

The Actual Gig

Be Prepared

Conclusion

INTRODUCTION

First of all you must possess some sort of musical skills.

It helps to be able to play one or more instruments.

You might at some time yearn to become a professional musician or become involved in a related field. Involving yourself in a related field at least gets you to a point where you are surrounded with musicians. Maybe you will be discovered. We present this manual which includes achievable goals which will lead you on the road to a musical career wherein you could earn a comfortable living. First and foremost, before deciding on any career, is to determine the necessity for your service.

To make a profit, your service has to be a marketable one. You alone, are the only person to determine your abilities to make good sounding music. Your service will be in providing entertainment as a musician, and if you are good, you will be reimbursed in monetary value. On a regular basis, if you are able to provide this entertainment, you will achieve a musical career. A musical career is a lot like becoming an actor. You need as much exposure as possible and you must continually get your name out to the places that use bands or musicians.

Your market will be represented by persons who require you to provide a service to them - music. Rock bands are required at rock and roll night clubs. Country and western music is required for a country and western night club, etc. Weddings, special occasions and any large celebration requires live music. One man bands are something that is always needed at smaller gatherings. Generally the price for a one man band is more reasonable because there is only one person to pay. But there still is a very good living to be made as a one man band.

Different groups demand different requests. A concert fan wants to attend a concert and enjoy the music. If you are performing in a night club, you must bring in the crowd in order to pay your fee. A wedding requires a totally different style of music, such as a DJ. You must remember who you are attempting to sell yourself to and what music they want. If you are willing to work hard in determining what your client's needs are, you will be successful. Regardless of your style of music, you are the one who will control your future success. The word fail should not be in your vocabulary. If you continually think about failing, you will. The best way to be is positive. Believe in yourself and your customers will believe in you.

Becoming a musician is not the easiest profession to choose. If you feel this is your goal, Go for It. Remember this is a tough road to follow and you will still need a regular

job to continue your endeavors. When you start out you still need to pay the bills.

Out of pocket costs are to be realized also. You need instruments, amplifiers, demo tapes and pamphlets to do your job and promote yourself. You do not necessarily have to buy your equipment, you can rent your stuff. You might even consider refresher music courses to learn new methods or new technology. Remember the musician with the latest technology rules.

GETTING STARTED

OK, Now What.

So you want to play music. You want to have fun, and above all make some money. A wide range of bookings are available and we will explore all the options. The next section will determine your eligibility to become a musician. This section is also important because it will help you realize your needs, wants and goals. The following should be answered as truthfully as possible. It's your life:

Ask yourself these questions. They will affect your decision:

Can I really make money being a musician?

How good am I?

Do I know how to read music?

Who would employ me?

What kind of music do I play?

Where do I look for gigs.

How much money can I make?

What am I really worth?

Where do I go to join an existing band? Should I?

Do I need to have more members in a band I start myself?

Where and how do I contact other musicians to perform with?

Do I sing, do I just play, do I do both?

Will I need a full or part time job to maintain during the transgression?

How do I tune up my musical act to help me financially?

After answering the above questions, you will obtain a concise understanding of where you want to go and how to go about doing it. It is not going to be easy but with hard work and true desire it can be accomplished.

You are in the business of having fun. Not only for your audience but for yourself too. The majority of people continue to listen to music they are familiar with, the old tunes they grew up with, and the new ones they enjoy. By learning a variety of these types of songs, your audience will enjoy your music. Become familiar with your audience and what they want. As you become familiar with your audience, you will then be able to throw in some of your own songs and test them out. During breaks, get their feedback.

Ask for feedback from night club owners or staff during practice sessions. Other musicians in your area have a wealth of knowledge you need to tap into. Their knowledge is irreplaceable in your quest to be a musician. They know what kind of music your area likes or is used to, a big benefit.

FREELANCING

Generally, a freelance musician is one who is not under contract to one establishment night after night or two or three different places weekly. Either way you can work when you want, where you want, and often as you want. As with any self employed person, you are responsible for your own taxes. Chances are you will receive a 1099 tax form at the end of the year. You are required by law to claim all income. Some musicians do play on a cash basis, but this not recommended. During this time frame, you should open yourself up to play with groups, school bands, etc. You will always learn something new when playing with others. When working with other individuals in groups, the knowledge you obtain from others will be invaluable.

Where the jobs are and who is your audience?

Wherever people are, depending on the situation, you will be able to set up and play. A dance floor invites musicians to set up and the crowd to dance. The places to choose to perform are limitless, such as a cruise ship, a shopping mall, a night club, church groups, at the beach, and sports stadiums. The possibilities are limitless.

Your audience is just about everyone. I personally do not anyone who does not some kind of music. Music is definitely a universal language, loved by everyone.

In order to make money making music, you must set the dates to perform yourself or have someone in your group assigned to this task. If your good enough you might want to contact an agent. Yes you will have to pay the agent a fee but chances are the agent will get you better paying gigs and nicer places to play.

Selecting the right venue and the correct music to play at each Clubs, Bars, Lounges, Hotel Lounges and Restaurants - You need to determine what type of crowd these establishments bring in. If you are a rock and roll band, you definitely would want to go where the crowds listen to rock and roll. Hotel Lounges normally play all cover songs and dance music.

County Fairs, Fund-raisers and Amusement Oriented Gatherings - Just think of all the county fairs that are all over the country. If you are willing to travel, you could book a great amount of county fairs. Find out who is in charge of bookings for these types of events and call them for an audition. The Internet is a good source of reference.

Local Happenings - Check your local schools for dates of dance recitals, holiday performances, plays, etc.

Weddings - Every wedding has music. If you think about it, there are many different types of music even at a wedding - the background music before the actual wedding, processional and recessional music, dinner music, dance music, and the traditional wedding songs. To play this kind of gathering you must know the wedding routine.

Private Parties - Everyone has friends, and those friends have friends. Word of mouth advertisement is one of the best. Private parties could include your friend's birthday party, their child's birthday party, etc.

Ethnic Oriented - If you expand your types of music, you will be able to broaden the variety of your performances. Greek songs would be required at a Greek wedding etc. If you have this type of music, you will be able to perform in these types of functions. Versatility is the key to booking more jobs in the future. There are so many different types of music you should be able to right your own ticket. Being proficient in all types of music is preferable.

Houses of Worship - Most churches and temples have a director of music, organist, soloist, etc. If you are able to acquire a job such as this, and are good, you will probably be hired for a long term.

Freelancing - Again, versatility is the key. The wider variety of music you are able to perform, the greater the opportunity for making money. Not every person plays the same instrument as well as someone else or sings like another. Some other opportunities to check out include sporting events, rodeos, ballet, beauty pageants, theater, political rallies, comedies, and TV and radio. Today, the Internet is available to showcase your talents and test market your new songs.

In order to continue working and make a decent living, you will need to continue expanding your music and the different types of music you learn to play.

If you are serious about making money then click below for great resource for learning marketing skill for musicians:

<http://www.guitar5day.com/how2getgigs.html>

MAKING MONEY

In order to make money as a musician, here are a few tips:

Play well. Learn to play well and continue to practice to make your music better. Read well. Reading music will enhance your ability to obtain more gigs. Variety of Songs. A great assortment of songs is a requirement.

INSTRUMENTS REQUIRED

Synthesizers. If your band includes two keyboard players, use one on the piano and the other keyboard player on a synthesizer. Woodwinds, brass, flute, stringed instruments and special sound effects can all be accomplished with the use of a synthesizer.

Guitar. A guitar player is in high demand. Guitar players are able to work alone and obviously in a group.

Bass. Bass players work well in performing with piano, guitar and brass musicians. The fields open to a bass player include classical music, concerts and jazz.

Drums. In a band, a drummer is a necessity. Successful drummers are also able to sing back up to the main singer, or in some cases become one of the lead singers.

Hand-held percussion. This type of instrument includes tambourine, cowbell, shakers, and the like. Latin music depends on these types of rhythm even more than a traditional drummer.

Strings. The violin family has been integrated into many bands. The violin is popular in jazz, rock and pop music.

Woodwinds. These would include clarinet and sax, flute, piccolo, oboe, English horn, bassoon, etc. These instruments are used in symphony orchestras, studio work, jazz ensembles and large shows.

Brass. This category includes the trumpet, cornet, tuba, horn, trombone and the like.

Performances with these instruments include Dixieland, jazz symphony, big band, theater acts and orchestra.

Vocalists. This person is also a must in a band. Your songs should include a wide range of music, both popular songs and your own compilation of songs.

OTHER WAYS TO MAKE MONEY WITH MUSIC

Other than performing in a band, there are many opportunities to work in the musical field. Below are some of the other areas which deal with the music industry.

Teaching. To be able to teach music, you should also be a good musician. When you want to learn anything, you go to the best. Music education should include rhythm training, ear training, application and theory.

Takedowns. A takedown is when you listen to music and write it down. If you are able to do this, you will be in demand. Charts of music are necessary for singers to show the musicians who they are working with. Writers also use charts in order to publish and copyright their material.

Arranging. This consists of taking a composition and writing it for a particular mood of music, group of instruments, or add and delete one or more instruments to change the context of the piece. As an example, a Broadway show may need a melody to become upbeat and timely to create a desired effect.

Jingles. Jingles are the songs you hear on commercials and television programs. These are aids used to help people remember a product by association of the jingle. If the jingle is memorable, people will often sing or hum the jingle. Contact an advertising agency if you are interested in writing jingles. To become a studio musician to play jingles, contact advertising agencies, composers, and other musicians for referrals.

Composing. This is the ability to take an idea, create a song, album or background music for television, movie or play. Record producers are the ones to contact for these opportunities.

Songwriter. Writing songs is rewarding in itself monetarily because of the amount of money which can be earned. A songwriter can have a very rewarding career, as he writes the songs that are played over and over.

Sidelining. This is "lip synching". You see a band or group of musicians playing in a television program or a movie basically going through the motions. They are not really playing the music, only going through the motions.

Voice-overs. At times a celebrity who does not sing will be required to sing a song and they cannot actually sing. As a singer, you can step in and sing for the actor.

YOUR PROMOTIONAL KIT

By developing a promo kit, you will have all of your information at hand. Included will be the type of music you perform, your songs, etc. In most cases, a full demo kit will not be required for each audition. A demo tape will do in most cases.

A video of your group may be more useful in larger metropolitan areas. This way, your group can come to the agent or promoter, rather than them traveling to you and many other groups to see them perform. The promoter or agent will also have the opportunity to keep the video and look at it for the future.

Even if you don't have a complete promo kit, don't stop promoting yourself. Make it a priority to put together a promo kit. When asked for your song list, provide your song list. If you cannot provide such information, you will probably not get the job. You need to assure the prospective employer that you can provide the product you are selling.

Your promo kit should include a cover letter, a demo tape, a picture of your group, a song list, and phone numbers or addresses to contact you. As you advance, your promo kit should include a band biography, previous work experience, and a video tape of your performances. A cover letter is always a nice professional touch which is your first introduction to the client. A cover letter may also be used in cases where a full promo kit is not required.

PICTURES

The types of photographs you use will depend on your market area and the image you want to sell. Always use professional photographs. Spending that extra money on a professional photographer will be worth it in the end. If your market is rock and roll, you want to dress the part, such as nice blue jeans, collar shirt, etc. If your market is for weddings and such, maybe a nice suit or tuxedo would fit the part. 8x10 black and white photographs work best for all photographs, as they are easiest to print.

YOUR LIST OF SONGS

You will need your song list to be professionally put together also. There are many ways you can arrange these, such as by song title with artist listed also, all types of songs categorized by style of music, all songs listed together by artist, etc. Choose the one that suits your market.

BUSINESS CARDS, VIDEOS & STATIONERY

Always carry your business cards with you. That one time you don't have a business

card will be the one time you will meet a prospective client at a social function, and no business cards to give the prospect. There are many local print shops or larger shops which can produce business cards and stationery at very reasonable prices. Take some time and decide how you want your business cards and stationery to look. If you purchase these items in larger bulk, say 1,000 quantity, you will receive a much better price. Therefore you will have a larger quantity, but if you decide in midstream you don't like your design, etc., it's not feasible to purchase another set of business cards and stationery. Take some time to make sure you are happy with your design, logo, etc.

Videos will be a useful tool to promote yourself or band. Go professional all the way here also. Don't throw together some "home made" movie. Use a professional. Again, the image you are creating will influence your future. In some cases, you might want to have several different videos available to show the different types of performances, such as at a rock and roll club, wedding, etc.

THE ACTUAL GIG

The most important step is to find out what your client wants from you and your performance. Ahead of time determine how long you are to play, the number of breaks and break time limits, etc. That is where a contract comes into play. Obtain a contract and study the contract. Before signing any contract, make sure you are agreeable to the terms. Sit down with the promoter and discuss any changes beforehand. This will eliminate any "confusion" the night of the actual gig.

Dress the part. If you are performing at a rock and roll club, fit into the crowd. If you are performing at a wedding, a suit would be applicable.

Know your crowd and determine the type of music they want to hear. If dancing is involved, and no one is dancing, try a different song. Take requests from your audience - play the music they want to hear.

Most of all have fun also. Get into your music. Give a performance. Show the crowd you enjoy what you are doing. Leave your problems at home. Don't disappoint your client or the audience.

BE PREPARED

Be prepared for the gig. Bring extra supplies. Put together extra strings, fuses, batteries, cables, etc. Keep these items updated at all times. You are being hired as a professional and you are responsible for your equipment.

CONCLUSION

You create your own destiny. Your success will be determined by yourself alone. If you put your heart and soul into your performances, you will succeed. If you are enjoying what you are doing, you will be happy. You control your own success or failure. Don't become complacent about your performances. Continue to practice and improve on your abilities. Continue to grow with your performances. Expand your horizons. Always look for opportunities to improve upon your performances. Always believe in yourself and your talents.

Here is a list of resources that will really help your music career:

Help with your Music Career:

<http://www.guitar5day.com/how2getgigs.html>

Help with Guitar

Amazing Guitar Video -
These Exercises will make your fingers Fly.

<http://www.guitar5day.com>

Guitar Alliance: Many Helpful hits
and tricks. Lots of Riffs:

<http://www.guitar5day.com/gal.html>

Guitar Tips: Special Site to Teach
you to Become a Pro. This Site was designed
Chris Elmore who in 30 Days became a professional!

<http://www.guitar5day.com/gt.html>

<http://www.midi-tab.com>

<http://www.guitar5day.com/aktop100.html>

Help With Vocals

<http://www.guitar5day.com/vr01.html>

Help with Keyboards

<http://www.pianosupplies.com/affiliates/thankyou.htm>

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