**UNIT 2 MANAGING A MUSIC PRODUCT**

The following article is from the Internet:

<http://cyberprmusic.com/musicians-guide-creating-effective-music-marketing-plan-part-2-3/>

Please read through and highlight the key points then write a paragraph in your own words to summarise how to create an effective music marketing plan.

The Musician’s Guide to Creating an Effective Music Marketing Plan (Part 2 of 3)

Releasing an album or EP into today’s music landscape can feel like a daunting task. Who do you send it to? How will you get people to listen?  How do you cut through the noise? Where are all the places to put it online?

[The first blog post](http://cyberprmusic.com/2014/09/10/musicmarketingplan-1/) in this 3-part series for creating an effective marketing plan dealt with building a strong online presence, so if you follow those instructions you are already in better shape than the majority of artists releasing music today.

In this, part 2, we will discuss steps to take in order to have a successful new release launch.

**DIGITAL DISTRIBUTION**

You must digitally distribute your album or EP. A physical CD only release or selling MP3s strictly on your website is *not* the way to go.

Digital distribution allows your music to be available everywhere fans will want it. Some will prefer streamed (Spotify, Rdio) and some will purchase (iTunes, Amazon, etc.) and the best way to get added to all of these is to go to a digital distributor like CD Baby or Tunecore.

I talk to artists all the time who take this step too far and sign up with multiple distributors because they think they are covering all their bases, which they are not. All this will do is put multiple copies of the same album on all the digital retail stores.

So, choose one and stick with them. We prefer CD Baby over Tunecore’s model because it’s a one time fee plus a small % of sales vs an annual fee that Tunecore will charge. So unless you think you’ll be generating at least $1k in sales year after year, then CD Baby is the economical option.

**THE ALBUM IS JUST THE BEGINNING**

The release of the actual music itself is one big event, and this album/EP as a whole represents your main content that will be used in an effective launch campaign.

Keep in mind that you need to also plan for other types of content to support the release. These are many assets you can use to reach out to press and share with your current following that will work to draw attention to the release.

Here are a few of the most effective categories:

**TOURING**

Ideally you will have a tour booked to kickoff following the official release of your album or EP. I’m not saying this has to be a long tour, it can be just a few regional dates, as this will help with your press efforts. Local blogs 

and newspapers in each market will be much more inclined to cover a new album or EP for an artist if a show is booked in their town.

Having multiple markets to play in will also help you leverage when it’s time for a national press campaign. A list of tour dates will add credibility and demonstrate that you are an active artist working hard to promote your career.

**VIDEOS**

We all know MTV does not play music anymore, that is well-worn territory, but there are thousands of blogs who do love to post videos everyday. A music video that is captivating, colorful, funny, interesting (the list goes on, but you get the idea) greatly helps with a press campaign. The video can be used in the initial pitch to blogs about your album to make for a stronger pitch.

Another thing you can do with a video is secure an exclusive premier of the video on one blog ahead of the album release date to start generating buzz. Or if you don’t have the video ready in time for the release you can also drop it a month or two after the release date as a tool to continue to build awareness and draw attention back to the release.

You should have at least one official music video for an album to use in your press efforts, but you should plan on making videos for every song on the release. The idea is you want to build a fanbase and get as many people listening as possible and YouTube is where millions of people are going to listen to music. Many artists will upload the song’s audio to YouTube with a static image of the artist or album cover, but people are much more inclined to listen to your music if there are moving images. A slideshow video is one method or a better solution is to make lyric videos, here’s a great example from the band [Vampire Weekend](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_mDxcDjg9P4).

**MERCH**

Pretty much everything in regards to your music career takes longer than expected, from making the album to creating the artwork to booking shows, and this definitely applies to any merchandise you want to have available to sell with the new album or EP, so start your planning months in advance.

I will caution you to ask your fans before you make merch to find out what they might like and if you don’t have a good sized fan base merch may not be a great move (yet!), as it can be costly to order merch that doesn’t yet have an audience to buy it.

Remember to match your merch to your crowd and merch isn’t limited to T-Shirts and posters, handmade items can make for great unique offerings or flash drives are great items that are functional and can be pre-filled with your music, videos and even sheet music.

Spark sales at shows, and through your online store, by selling your music through bundling items together. At the merch booth using download stickers from companies like Bandcamp or CD Baby you can create packages by placing a sticker with a download code to your music right on the t-shirt or other physical merch item that you are wishing to bundle your music with. Even though people aren’t buying CDs much anymore, they are still interested in supporting artists they love, so give them lots of different ways to support you and purchase your music.

**PRESS CAMPAIGN**

A big component when promoting a new album is the press campaign, and you can do this by working with a PR company to handle your press outreach or going the DIY route.

I talk to many independent artists who don’t see the point in a press campaign for their new release, usually because they (or artists they know) have spent thousands of dollars on a PR company in the past with little to no results. I definitely feel for artists here, but ignoring press completely is not the solution.

When hiring a publicist make sure your music is a good fit with their existing roster and that the publicist has a well thought out plan for the campaign, and most of all, honestly likes your music. An expensive campaign with a PR company that has some major label big name clients is not by any means a slam dunk that you will get “tons” of “great” press for your independent release, and many times will be the exact opposite. Try contacting boutique PR firms that can offer more personal attention or PR companies that are focused on independent artists.

For many artists doing-it-yourself is a totally feasible option that I consult with artists on with strategy and supplying specific media outlets to target.

For the campaign itself having all this support content that we discussed will help immensely in your outreach to press outlets, keeping a steady stream of talking points throughout the campaign instead of just talking about the album over and over and over. But do not focus on just music blogs, your passions, history, interests and hobbies that you have outside of music can all be utilized in a PR campaign. These are your niches and by making connections with blogs and their communities who share your passions and interests will provide a great opportunity to promote your music at the same time.

[*How To Develop and Dominate in a Targeted Niche – A Cyber PR Niche Marketing Case Study*](http://cyberprmusic.com/2013/08/21/case-study-darius-lux/)

Further reading that I linked to in Part 1 to help you prepare for PR is important info, so if you didn’t read it the first time around, [here it is again](http://cyberprmusic.com/musicians-guide-creating-effective-music-marketing-plan-part-2-3/%C2%A0http:/cyberprmusic.com/2014/07/10/9-critical-things-know-publicity-make-first-move/).

Or Follow Ariel’s step-by-step guidebook (a whole chapter walks you trough how to get PR)

[Music Success in 9 Weeks](http://musicsuccessin9weeks.com/)

**PREPARE YOUR LAUNCH TIMELINE**

Here is a basic model to follow for an upcoming new album or EP release. If you plan on working with a PR company though to promote a new release please don’t set the release date until AFTER you have talked with them as it is important to have their input to make sure everything is aligned with their vision and timetable.

**Two Months Before Release**

* Press campaign begins
* Release a single, a great way excite your fans and also to get some current press quotes to include when contacting press about the full length release
* Reskin social media profiles to advertise the new release
* Get your newsletter firing and tell fans you have a special announcement

**One Month Before Release**

* Announce pre-sale campaign through your newsletter and social media networks- create bundles of merch to sell for extra boost
* Set up a Facebook invite for the new release, send it to all your Facebook friends and post on your Fan Page

**Two Weeks Before Release**

* Keep the excitement going, hold a contest to win a copy of the new album and/or tickets to the release show

**Official Release Day Activities**

* Write a news post about the release on your website or blog
* Update Twitter and Facebook with an “album out now” post and link to where they can purchase it  (I suggest you pay to boost post so people see it!)
* Send out a Newsletter to your mailing list

**One Month After The Release**

* Service press with official music video and announce tour dates

Again, the more activities you can plan surrounding a release will help build and foster excitement amongst your fans and will create more opportunities to keep contacting press with new content, while at the same time reminding them about the new album or EP.

Also don’t forget to ask your family, friends and fans to write reviews of your new release on iTunes and other digital retailers the minute it becomes available. Studies have shown that albums that are reviewed actually sell more than albums with little to no reviews posted.

**WRITE YOUR SUMMARY PARAGRAPH HERE. YOUR TITLE IS GIVEN BELOW:**

**DATE\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**How to create an effective music marketing plan**