

# How to Find a Manager

**As soon as an author or performer, or an artist who is both author and performer, starts to become successful he/she will need to find a manager.**

**A** manager is someone who will look after the business side of the artist's career and will interface with all other parties involved in contributing to the artist's commercial success. Commerce and art do not always sit happily together and it is the manager's job to provide that often difficult interface, and make it work.

Managers are the only group of people in the worldwide music industry who have to know about every aspect of the music industry. They are the ones who have to make the rules of copyright work on a daily basis and it is they who have to grapple with the rapid developments in technology and make sure, as far as possible, that the artist is paid.

In the early stages it is often a good idea for artists to manage themselves until they reach the point where they need outside help. Alternatively it may be that a friend or relative of the artist or band takes on the management role at this early stage. It is very important that the artist, as soon as possible, is conscious of the need to build up a fan base. A fan base is a database of people who are interested in the artist and wish to find out where he/she is performing, and if and when he/she is releasing records etc. If a phonogram producer comes to see an artist play live and the venue is full the artist stands a much better chance of being offered a recording contract, if that is the artist's aim. Phonogram producers want to sell as many records as possible and if they see that an artist already has a substantial and enthusiastic fan base they will be reassured that there will be a market for the artist's recording.

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In the early stages it is a good idea for the artist to try and secure as many live appearances as possible. By doing this he/she can improve his/her skills and build up a fan base. One of the best ways of building a fan base is to get a friend of the band to hand out forms and pens and encourage members of the audience to complete and return them on the night of the performance. Typically the forms should have the name of the artist at the top and request:

Name:

Address:

E-mail address:

Tel no: (optional)

Any comments on tonight's performance.

This information should then be recorded in a book or transferred to a computer database. Every time the artist has a new show or some other event is taking place such as a new recording becoming available, the artist should email or mail the database well in advance with the information. By doing this a fan base will be created which should greatly improve audience numbers at live performances and generally stimulate interest in the artist.

If possible, the artist should create his/her own website and have web pages on community sites such as MySpace. With the establishment of a good and interesting website the artist is immediately making him/herself known to the entire world. Companies such as Intel and Microsoft in conjunction with UNESCO are making available very basic personal computers (PCs) for little as US\$100, specially aimed at developing countries. The access this will provide is very exciting, both for artists and for consumers.

When things start building the artist should consider engaging a manager but where does an artist find the right one? Having no manager is preferable to having a bad one, but a good honest manager can make all the difference between success and failure. A good place to start is for the artist to find out who manages his/her favourite artists by searching the web or by looking at his/her favourite artist's recordings. If an artist already has a music lawyer or accountant these professionals can also sometimes recommend a suitable manager.

Yet another approach is to ask a family member or friend who has good entrepreneurial and administrative skills to be a manager. If this route is taken it is really important that the relative or family friend is prepared to learn and train in the complexities of the music business and never take his/her position for granted.

## **A GOOD MANAGER SHOULD:**

- **Be honest**
- **Be an enabler**  
(he or she should be able to create opportunities that the artist would not otherwise have achieved alone)
- **Be a good administrator**  
(he or she should be good at keeping accurate and up-to-date financial records and be effective in ensuring that income streams are maximized and that the artist is paid)
- **Be a good communicator**  
(relate well to other people and be good at networking)
- **Be a good negotiator**

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