

Find Your Stage

If you are new to performing, it is not realistic to get booked at the biggest festivals and clubs directly. But we should create a path on how to get there. Finding the right stage is a bit like matchmaking. You have specific goals in mind on why you want to stand in a particular location. But the booker might also have certain specific reasons why they are going to buy a specific act. Our goal in this chapter is to find the sweet spot for your show and the buyer.

A couple of reasons why you might want to perform.

- Promote an album or single
- Gain more fans and publicity
- Gain money
- Gain performance skills

A couple of reasons a talent buyer might want to book you.

- Gain publicity for its venue
- Gain more from tickets and drinks
- Wants to bring a specific kind of talent/genre to a local community.

As you can see, the goals of the act and booker might differ a little bit, so it is essential to know what value you can bring to a booker. It doesn't make sense to play in a venue with a capacity of 1000 people if you have only a few friends and fans. At the start, I recommend searching for local venues since they are most often willing to promote local talent. Lots of artists started with a residency in their local hometown and have some income every month. I hadn't gained many skills when I began DJing, but I was eager to perform. So I made a deal with a local club where I could practice DJing in the afternoons in an empty club and perform for free in the evening. This was an excellent opportunity for me since I did have the money to buy all that expensive equipment myself. It was also a great way to gain local support.

Sometimes people just want music, and they don't care about the act per se. These are also opportunities for upcoming artists to gain experience and get bookings. Think about birthday parties, corporate events, retail events, etc.

Another great opportunity is to be a support act for another artist. Maybe you have people in your network who wanna help you out.

Find out where your fans are

To find the right stage, you need to know where your fans are. Check out the analytics of your social media, streaming platforms, and fans in your mailing lists. Create a list of the top 10 cities from most popular to less popular, and write down how many unique fans you have in that city. You can use the worksheet in the attachment at the bottom of this chapter. When you are done, it is time to draft the routing to your stage. Please take a look at their website on which events your music will fit. Remember that for the best success, it's best to look 2-6 months in advance for venues with 50-500 seats and 6-12 months in advance for 500+ seats. When emailing the buyer, be open for surrounding dates.

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A few tips for touring

- Make sure you check Google Maps to find out how long it will take to get from place to place; keep in mind the international time differences.
- Save money, try to create the most efficient routing possible, and avoid repeatedly driving back and forth. It is sometimes hard to avoid, but it will save money.
- Copy another artist routing—no need to reinvent the wheel.
- The more shows you can do in a week, the more likely you will make a profit. But don't forget to rest as well. I believe five gigs a week is a good aiming point.

In this worksheet, we will fill in where your fans are located and which venues are closest to them. Knowing how many unique fans you have in every city is essential to understanding what venue fits.

City	Unique Fans
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

We are now going to use Google to find venues for every city and write them down below.

[illegible]

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Venue	City	Capacity

Now it is time to draft a routing to your stage. The sooner you contact your best fitting locations the bigger the change you can perform there.