

Title:

How To Succeed In The Music Business. Part 1

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Summary:

So you wanna be a star?

Part 1

So, you've made the decision! You've finished recording your album and it's the "best" - it deserves to be heard by the world and you're deserving of the adulation afforded to the creation of such a masterpiece! Of course, you know in your own mind that it won't be easy to become a star. After all, everyone says that the music business is difficult'. But hey, you've got what it takes, you've got talent, and this really is a great album - a...

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Article Body:

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Few people outside of the Music Business have any idea just how difficult it is to survive, let alone succeed, in the ever-changing and unforgiving world of entertainment. Being a musician is much, much more than simply writing, recording and performing.

And few people have any idea of what is involved in the recording of a good sounding CD, of the time and effort involved to get that polished sound that every artist who ever produced a demo aspires to create.

Don't be fooled by inane rubbish like Pop Idol or X-factor. Not only do these

sort of programs give a totally false impression of the reality of the music industry, but they totally undermine the integrity of it! And just for the record, I don't dispute the obvious talent of some of the participants, but the ends do not justify the means! It is indicative of just how low we have sunk as a society that we are happy to watch and laugh at 'hopefuls' who clearly have no talent at all, make embarrassing fools of themselves because they really think they do have the talent.

Then, when the competition proper really gets going, we can watch the music business do what it does best, that is, chew up and spit out varying degrees of talent live on our screens in the name of TV entertainment!

The programs are designed to maximize TV ratings and to manufacture a "Pop Star" who'll be long forgotten in 10 years time. Of course, they'll say that isn't so, but then, they would, wouldn't they!?

We live in an "Instant Fame" society. Celebs and their lifestyles are thrust in our faces 24/7 and far too many people, particularly but not exclusively the young, think fame can be achieved. They are fed the belief that it's possible to give up the day job and become a star. In reality, it's virtually impossible. For a greater insight into the realities of the Pop world, check out the Simon Cowell book "I don't mean to be rude".

Being a musician, an artist, is a vocation. It's a way of life in which everything and everyone else, absolutely everything and everyone else, take second place. Musicians are selfish - they have to be by definition, and I know because I am one.

It's about "The Journey" (much like life) - the journey of self discovery that starts when you realize that being a musician is what you want to do, continues and evolves as you make music and friends along the road, experiencing the highs and the lows and culminates in the realization that the journey doesn't have an end because you're always seeking to do something new, always forging new ideas - seeking to write 'The perfect song' or 'The perfect album'. But a word of warning, if you're fortunate enough to find success, the pressures and the demands will become greater, they'll not get less!

You can't do it on a "part time" basis and expect to succeed beyond a bit of fun at amateur level (not that there's anything at all wrong with that). So, if you really want to 'succeed', the very thing that you have to accept is... that you probably won't! And that isn't as crazy as it sounds!

You see, the most important thing in music is simply that you love doing it.

It's a way of life that's in your blood, in your soul, and it takes precedence over everything else. And as mentioned earlier, it's about the journey.

Now, I can hear you saying things like; "That's all right for you to say, you're in the music business".

Or maybe you're thinking; "Well I have all these attributes, but how do I pay the bills and still make my way as a musician?"

Yes, I am fortunate enough to be involved in music, enjoying moderate success and recognition in a specific music genre. But what I have learned is, that success is relative.

My life and everything in my life revolves around music. But over the years, and particularly in the early days, my private life and finances paid a very heavy price.

Being involved in music is about being in it for the long haul, not the short term - you don't even consider the short term. Ask most musicians and they'll tell you the process is a painful one. When I hear young musicians say they've 'given up everything to be in music', my reply is, that they have no idea what "everything" is!

Being a musician requires many things, many attributes. Selfishness we've already mentioned. Stubbornness is a key factor to - you just have to keep going, then there's dedication, passion and belief. An acceptance that there will be a lot of hard times. You must be prepared to give everything and more, and even then, even with all those things, if you're not 'in the right place at the right time', success can still pass you by.

And thru all this, you keep smiling. You don't question why you're doing what you're doing or the cost of it in broken relationships and heavy debt. You just keep going because music is such a big part of you!

The one remaining prerequisite for a musician is an understanding and supportive partner - without whom you've no chance at all. Reminds me of the old joke: What do you call a musician without a significant and supportive partner? Homeless!

So, finally, what's the difference between a musician and someone who wants to be a musician? It's simple. A musician is someone who gets on with it. They step outside of the box of conventional 9-5 and all that goes with it and live the life and all it entails. They probably won't make it big, but they define their own success and whatever happens, they'll never lose sight of why they're doing what they're doing.

And someone who wants to be a musician, a star? Well, they're unable to do the above!

So, lets go back to the beginning - If you still want to be a musician, a recording artist, then I'll give some hints and advice on demos in part 2.