



CARTEL MANAGEMENT AUSTRALIA

Communicating With Industry & Media.

Learn How To Create & Sustain Dialogue With Music Industry Operators.

Creating and maintaining meaningful relationships in the music industry is a vital part of artist development and can be pivotal from taking a project from a grass roots base with little support to gaining access to resources and attention on a global scale. The purpose of this article is to inform artists of communication best practices with industry professionals as well as maintaining that relationship, once it's established.

Whether you are an introvert or not, there is no denying the importance of developing relationships, and although many artists tell us daily that it's something they 'hate / don't feel comfortable doing', it is a vital tool that you need to master when creating sustainability in your artist brand. It is also very easy for artists and industry (ourselves included) to hide behind an email introduction and hope for the best, but in person communication is equally important. Finding a balance of both that you are comfortable with is the real trick. This communication will directly affect growth and development- it is no secret that people in any industry would rather work with and see a friend of theirs grow.

We need to be incredibly clear that this article is not about how to find contacts. If you're now asking the question, "How do I find these contacts?" The answer is pretty simple. RESEARCH. Take one hour out of your studio time every day and research all of the above. Consider this an admin role that needs to be done every day / every week. If you are looking for email contacts we suggest looking on websites under the contact tab, in the about us section of social media profiles, linkedin and any other online outlet.

Below we have listed some things to consider when introducing yourself and your project to industry professionals. It is important to note that every conversation is different and everybody's preferred form of communication may not be the same as others. For example, an independent playlist curator may use a web submission portal or only use Instagram direct messenger, whereas a label A&R or artist manager almost always prefers email.

Distinction Between Media and Industry:

There are two types of operators we would advise artists to start reaching out to and connecting with.

Media: Are outlets that can share and promote your music via their specific channels or sites. Media is simply a resource. It allows your music to reach an existing (and probably new) audience base that is interested in your niche / genre. Connecting and maintaining a relationship with media is vital for the growth of specific singles and bodies of work that the project puts out.

Some Examples of Media are:

- Youtube channels w/ high subscriber rate and following.
- Independent playlist curators (Spotify / Apple Music / YouTube / Tidal / Amazon)
- Online Magazines
- Online Newsletters

- Online Culture Websites
- Digital Radio
- Community Radio
- Commercial Radio

Industry: Are people that can help facilitate growth in different areas of an artist project. They are essentially people who have skills in a specified area of development needed to develop a sustainable artist project. Connecting and maintaining a relationship with industry operators is a bit of a longer game and is not something that needs to bear fruit overly quickly. An artist mindset around connecting with industry should be to just update them on the moves of the project, with little to no expectation of a reply. These professionals generally already have artists / creatives they are championing and will only begin to reply to you if they can see growth and any potential to further their own interests. Our advice would be to update these specific people (in your niche) every 2-3 months with any major wins of the project.

Some Examples of Industry are:

- Record Labels / A&Rs (Artists and Repertoire)
- Publishing companies
- Booking Agents
- Artist Managers
- Distributors
- Other Artists
- Event Organisers / Promoters / Venue Operators
- Music Publicity advisors
- Music Marketing advisors

Understand The Need + What are you offering:

Before getting in contact with anyone, you need to be very clear on the reasons why. From there, you can deliver a message that is not only succinct for the person receiving the message, but you will also be able to articulate to them what you are offering. For example, if you are trying to create a relationship with a booking agent, the information you would disclose with them would be very different to an independent playlist curator. A booking agents' primary concern is how many tickets you will be able to sell - they may rely on that information to understand if your project is a suitable fit for them and if they'll be able to perform an optimal service for you.

If you can offer leverage off the back of something that has happened to your project that has been beneficial to create a relationship, that is infinitely better than reaching out to someone with a link to your music and no narrative. To use the booking agent example again, if you can open a discussion with:

"I have X amount of streams"

" I have supported X amount of artists such as X, Y & Z"

"I have sold out OR can comfortably sell X amount of tickets"

A booking agent is more likely to be interested and reply if you are reaching out with the above, which directly correlates to them being able to leverage shows for you as an artist.

It's OK To Not Get A Response:

Lets face it, you have most likely done the email blast thing and it hasn't worked. Every artist big and small alike have all at some point not been replied to, there is no way to escape it and is unfortunately part and parcel of the

game. Our advice to artists is to value consistency in releases to build relationships. If they don't reply when you hit them up with the first piece of music, then you will have another opportunity to follow them up in 8 weeks with something new. This allows both industry and media to not forget you, even if they do not reply.

We also urge artists to ensure that they are writing communications that will entice an actual response.

For example:

Instead of: "Hey X , Please listen to my song. It means so much to me. I hope you like it."

Try This: " Hey X, Thank you so much for taking time out of your day to have a listen to my new single Y. I am always trying to improve where I can and I would love to hear any feedback on what I could be doing better."

The above example is very broad and we would suggest that you provide more detail to the person you are getting in contact with, but the second option shows that you value the feedback they can provide you with and shows that you as the artist are hungry to learn more.

You Aren't The Only Artist To Reach Out:

It is no secret that we are in a saturated market. Music is more accessible now than ever before and the ease with which artists can learn, create and distribute their music makes for a high release scenario globally. Understanding that you are not the only artist who is reaching out to industry professionals can be the beginning of a new line of thinking as an artist. You can begin to think about the things that actually separate you as an artist from the others and begin to work out ways to best communicate that to industry and media.

Preferred forms of communication (Best Practices):

Right now in 2021, there are multiple ways of contacting industry and media. Whether it be through phone call, text, Whatsapp, direct message, email, zoom, google hangout and whatever else, in this digital world it is pretty easy to communicate with each other. A lot of artists use Instagram DM as a current form of communication to industry (we get on average about 12-20 a day to give you an example) as it's their preferred method of communication for artists.

We would advise artists that when contacting legitimate businesses whether it be media or industry to go through email, as it is best practice. Email allows a formal setting of communication while also still being able to keep track of conversations, and being able to share files etc. If you cannot find emails or submission portals it then comes down to other forms you can find, but always start with email.

Nurture your relationships:

Be personal, create an actual connection with the people you are sending your music or project to. Once they begin to create dialogue with you, take the opportunity to go beyond the professional and understand what makes that specific manager, curator, editor, publisher tick. What can you potentially apply to them to make their day a better day?

Communication to industry and media is a vital part of your artist development. Learn to create a process around your releases and use that specific leverage to create a connection between yourself and whoever you wish to be in business with over time.