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# Independent Record Label Start Up Guide

By Trevor T

[www.independentmusicstartup.com/specialreport/](http://www.independentmusicstartup.com/specialreport/)

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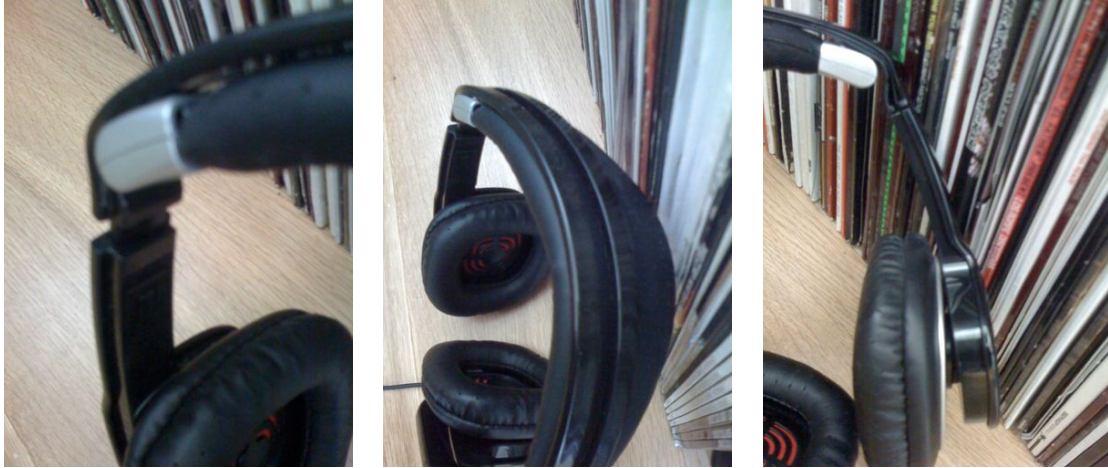
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## Independent Record Label Start Up Guide

If you have decided to start a record label, there are layers of ins and outs that you need to keep in mind in order to succeed. From the beginning of setting up the label to completing your networks and markets, as well as beginning to sell your music, there are a variety of steps that you need to follow that will allow you to become a known entity within music. Following the basics and building your empire within music is one that will lead to your ultimate success.

### Being a Business

Starting an independent record label is one that can lead you to freedom, choices over your music and capabilities to rise among independent artists and the culture. It also allows you to be successful without the bigger record labels taking away your rights as a musician and as an artistic entity.

If you are working towards getting the right things in order, it is important to start on the right foot so that you have the options to lead you into a bigger label that is able to represent your own music and other's music in the correct way.

The first thing that you need to do in order to start your record label is to begin to think of yourself as a business. Your recording company, just like any other company, will need to have the necessary paperwork done and filed in order to be considered legitimate and in order to sell the necessary music. Following are the steps to take to become a business entity.

**Step 1:** Build your own plan. You will want to start with a recording label business plan. This will include the name of your label, the vision and mission, what genres you want to record and the steps you plan to take in order to be a complete company. This will also include the types of recordings you will offer. This can be anything from just recording yourself to recording certain genres and even being involved in other activities such as pre-production, recording or post-production for other Indie artists.

You want to make sure that you have an overview of everything that is a part of being a recording company, as well as details on how you will pursue being a corporation. This will allow you to move forward with the bigger



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picture and with the capability of keeping the details in mind. The idea of a business plan is to allow you to have a space to focus and a way to take the correct steps forward when it is time to make the right decisions.

**Step 2:** Make your plan a reality. The next step to take is to take your business plan to the next level so that it is your complete entity. This will need to be done through incorporating through the government or related organizations as a business. You can also decide to start out as a sole trader if your budget is limited, but I will recommend incorporating sooner rather than later. This means that you will be labeled as a corporation for tax purposes and so others can know about your circumstances. Even if you only plan to record your own music, if you are selling it and are operating under this name, it needs to be registered.

Before you decide to register as a business, make sure that you know what your options are. This will be dependent on whether you are working with another individual and what your circumstances are. This will make a difference in how you are taxed and what your options are for finances and working as a business entity.

**Step 3:** Start thinking financially. This isn't something that you want to pass by if you plan on being successful with your music business. The finances should be a part of the business plan, but also need to be considered outside of it. This includes an estimated budget of how much you want to spend as a start up business and how much you want to receive in return from what you sell.

You will also want to set up a financial system to keep track of your services and products and will want to link this to a bank account so that you can start a tracking record for your business deals. There is software and are options that you can use with this part of the business area in order to ensure that things are set up correctly.

**Step 4:** Extra registration needs. For many who are starting a record label, they will also need a way to make sure that they are connecting to the right entities that are on a national and an international level. This will help to protect their rights as a label and will provide extra opportunities at the right time.

For example, if you want to keep mechanical rights after a recording for





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being a producer, make sure that you register and link into either ASCAP or BMI (or MCPS-PRS Alliance in the UK, SOCAN in Canada and APRA-AMCOS for Australasia). You will also want to consider being a publisher, if you plan to have CDs and musical concepts that come out of your studio that you can earn royalties on. Connecting with places like Harry Fox (US only), for publishing and mechanical licenses, or with IODA in order to get online coverage of your CDs, will give you more options for putting your music on the market.

You will want to define what you need before you start with this step. For the ASCAP, BMI, MCPS-PRS, SOCAN and APRA-AMCOS options, this will include rights if someone else uses your compositions or performs your songs in certain areas. It also includes mechanical rights if someone uses your song for a specific amount of time. With the different options, you will be paid royalties every time your music is used, either through your own record label or through someone else's. With Harry Fox, you will get publishing rights, meaning that if your song is used through someone else's CD, you will get royalty fees for it.

Make sure that you investigate to see which avenue is right for your label so that you can keep the necessary legal rights to earn money off it. You can work with your business plan to see what types of legal rights you are able to get as well as what works best with you. At this point, it may be easier to work with an entertainment lawyer in order to get the best deal in your hands.

**Step 5:** Building your brand. A record label isn't just a registered business. It also has to market and network like a business. Part of the business aspect is building your trademark as a recording company. You should consider building a logo, a set of promotional products and marketing materials to assist you. You should also consider the legalities of this by trademarking your name so that when you hit it big, everything falls into place in the correct way. It's your image and your presence that will help to build you as a legitimate business as well as the capacity to keep this image unique.

**Step 6:** Start thinking about those who will be coming in. Before anyone comes in to record, use your services or before you sell your own CDs, you want to make sure that everything that will be done is fair. Having the necessary contracts in place will allow you to make fair trades, to have the cor-



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rect rights to the publishing so that you can earn money off of the production

and will create a way for you to make sure that everything gets done in a polished manner...from the beginning to the end.

The idea of starting a record label in the beginning is to have everything set up to move towards success. You will want to create a space that has a business attitude attached to it. This includes looking into the legalities of working with others, selling your own music and the rights that are attached to being a publisher. This also includes having a detailed plan about the angles that will take place within your recording company, including a business plan, financial plan, marketing identity and way to deal with those who come into your studio if you have one.

Once you have looked at all angles of how you will operate as a business, you can begin to move forward with the opportunities and ways to advertise your record label, allowing you to grow into an entity that all of the rising stars will want to use to get their music out into the public.

## Offline Networking

When you have the logistics set up for your record label and as an artist, you can begin to branch out and find others who would be interested in your services and products. There are a wide variety of musicians that are looking for independent labels and who are interested in finding an area to build their own CD and music entity. There are also plenty of individuals that are waiting for the next best sound and are ready to listen to something different. Finding those that will work with you best and fit into what you can offer will provide endless options for being a renowned recording label.

Before you go into any physical location or area, you want to make sure that you have everything together that is needed. This will include a demo CD that you have made, your press kit and the information and history of your recording label. This will help you to find the right people and will show that you are a professional entity. If you have a CD that is completed, it may also help you to make some extra sales. For starters, you want to define exactly who you want to target. You can move back to your business plan in order to find exactly how this will work.





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For example, if you want to be a country label, start thinking about where you could find potential country musicians. This will go for any genre or any

set of genres. The more you are able to focus in on the type of clients you want to record and the way that you want to set up your music business, the more likely you will be able to find the correct individuals. If you are performing a certain genre as an independent musician, make sure that you investigate to find the best areas to perform. You don't have to stay in your locality to do this, but can branch out to see what is available in locations around the world that will fit you best.

The most likely place that you are going to find individuals who are interested in recording is by going to various gigs. If you see a musician that is performing and doesn't have a CD, then they are most likely waiting for someone like you to come and help them to reach that next step. Talking to the lead individuals, leaving a card and seeing if they are interested is a simple way to start getting the word out as a recording label without spending much money.

If you are setting the stage for your own music, make sure that you play at any chance you get. This can be a set of gigs that likes to listen to your music or can be at events and conferences that are looking for musicians that are like you. If you want easy access to finding the right gigs, you can try places such as Sonic Bids. This is an online area that will show you what venues are looking for artists and will allow you to send your music into them so that you can find gigs that fit you best. There are several areas like this that will help you to investigate and try out for gigs that will work for you.

You don't just have to go to gigs in order to find the musicians that you want or to set up your own performances. There are always alternatives that are waiting, and that usually have musicians in the crowd. If you don't want to go to a main stage, you can always find performers or crowds of musicians at places such as events. The music scene, especially among Indie artists is now growing so much that events specifically for these types of artists will be held in various areas throughout the year.

Not only are shorter events held, but conferences are also available. If you decide to take this route, you may want to do a little more than try to network with other musicians. Getting a booth or something to represent your recording label will make it easier for you to be found and to get the word out there about who you are. Finding performances at concerts is also a



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great way to get the exposure that you want. You can most likely look into conference options where this is available in order to present your marketing materials and yourself for those who would be interested in recording.

Tapping into these larger resources will help musicians to recognize you and spread the word of mouth by your presence being at their areas. If you can't find a conference or event that is available, you can always tap into community resources that are typically used by musicians. One of these is through radio talk shows. If there is a public station that is in the community, or if there is a promotional excerpt on a radio, you can use this in order to get yourself noticed.

Another multi-media facet that you can use is the television. There are a variety of public television stations that will allow you to advertise or host a show on their program. If you decide to do this, you will either need to find a way to advertise yourself according to the guidelines of that program or find something that is informational and newsworthy so that you can be presented in a way that is best for your business and for the television station. If you are performing, you can easily find a local area that allows musicians to be seen on public television at certain times, allowing you to get more exposure.

If you are more of a quiet networker, there are other options that you can use to effectively start drawing others to your studio. One of the largest tools that you can put to use is the press and press relations. Using newspapers, magazines and local music papers can increase your visibility and draw others to you. There are usually a wide variety of options for this type of press available in communities, all which you can tap into to show where you are and what you are doing.

The idea with all of the offline marketing techniques is to make yourself available to the community and to get yourself noticed by those that are independent musicians and may be looking for a way to record their CDs. The more those know who you are in the community, the more opportunities you may have. This will allow for musicians to begin talking about you and your work and will create a way for you to move your record label forward.



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## Creating Your Online Presence

One of the biggest ways to get yourself noticed as a recording label is to make sure that you are online. While offline tools will create a personalized entity of your record label, the ability to have website capacities will further your options in finding individuals and allowing them to find you. Having an internet presence cannot be underestimated if you are working towards building a record label.

The first step towards building an online presence is to create a website. This is your foundational presence and first impression that will be available. When you start building your website, you will want to make sure that you focus on a representation that is best for your record label. This should be a combination of your logo, news and information that reflects your business plan and the music that you are focusing on.

One of the best ways that you can help your online presence to grow is to begin making a portfolio of the songs that you have recorded and the artists that you have worked with. If you have not yet started getting a customer base, you can start by putting your own recordings out there or short samples that will work in order to get you noticed and will set you apart from other recording labels and artists. You can easily place your music on your website through MP3 files and through various programs that will allow you to put widgets on the Internet.

Your online presence shouldn't stop with a website. While it works well as a foundation, there are other things that you will need to use in order to get your record label out in the public and focused on setting you apart as a recording label.

Branching out into various virtual networks will provide you with more ways to increase your presence not only in your community, but also on the web. You can follow some of these steps in order to make sure that you can be found on the Internet and from artists that are interested in your label.

**Step 1:** Get listed. Before you even get your website into the public eye, you will need to take some time to get it into the search engines. This is the first step that every website needs to make. There are some software tools that you can use in order to automatically submit your website into search engines.



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You can also manually place yourself in the different searches in order to be found. Search engines will always have an option in them for you to get listed. At the very least, you should be listed on Google and Yahoo!, which takes an average of 50% of the traffic that is searched for on the web.

**Step 2:** Let the spiders find you. The Internet is made up of search engines, which are run by spiders whose function is to find websites and put them in rankings on the search engines. Spiders will crawl websites and will see how relevant they are to the web by noticing the topic that you are functioning on and the presentation you have. You will want to keep in mind that spiders are website tools, meaning that there are focused parts of your website they will recognize and others that they won't.

When you are letting spiders find you, they will take the website that you have listed and will compare it to the competition that you have, based on the information you have given the spiders. They will find various components that work with your website and determine which ranks higher according to these components. This will have to do with the relevance of your website, the keywords, information you have on your site, links and how much and how long your website has been looked at.

**Step 3:** Say it right. The first way that spiders will notice you and rank you is through keywords. These are target words that set you apart from the crowd. You will want to have keywords in different places on your website. It is especially important to have a keyword list of your record label in Meta tags. You will also want to place the keywords in headers, titles and in the general content of your website. Your keywords should be unique and should only be listed a certain amount of times in order to be noticed and not recognized as spam, or a false website.

For example, if you have a record label that records rock music, you will want five to ten keywords that have to do with rock music and recording. Things like 'record rock music', 'independent rock music recording' and other specific target words will help you to be noticed and found. This is done because when someone types in a search, the keywords in your website is what allows them to find you. When doing this, you can find tools to help you find the best keywords. You want to combine the most popular keywords with keywords that help you stand out from the crowd, such as regional keywords.



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**Step 4:** Branch out. When the virtual world of websites were built, there was

a recognition that with all of the websites available, there needed to be more than one way in order for spiders to find websites. From this, various components have been built for websites to function correctly. At the basis of this are articles. If you want to get a link that goes to your record label and links you more to the search engines, put out some articles in article directories to get on top of the market.

Just like your website, information that you put out, either on your own website or in other websites, helps you to build a noticeable presence with spiders. It allows you to have more keywords and more than one link that shows you are a relevant and active business.

**Step 5:** Don't stop there. The Internet is not only great for information, but also for linking. You will want to link yourself to other musicians through your website, either by linking back and forth, or just sending a general link to the website. Not only will spiders look at your keywords, they will also look at your links, the number of times you link and the links back that you have.

When you start to link, start by finding the links that are higher in the search engines and that combine your keywords. This will be the beginning of setting you apart. You can combine this with affiliate programs and links as well, which is only a one-way link. There are several ways to build your linking on your website, all which will help you to go to the top of the rankings.

**Step 6:** Be informative. If you want to get even further on the web, make sure that you make informative connections with those you are in touch with. Things such as e-mails that are sent to a list of interested individuals or newsletters that are sent into e-mails will also go into the search engines as extra links that go to your website. The idea is that the more you have, the better it is for everyone. You will get listed higher, will be noticed as an active individual with a website that is attracting others, and your interested individuals will find a way to keep informed of what you have to offer.

This is only the beginning to building your website and your online presence. By beginning to build your presence and allowing yourself to be noticed from various perspectives by the spiders, the more chances you will have at building your label in the correct way. Always remember, when you are building the basics of your website, to get linked, offer information and get noticed by those around you. This presentation of your record label will cre-



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ate a global basis for you to be able to find the customers you want and need.

## Building A List of Loyal Fans

Once you have your foundation set up, you can start moving forward and getting known by those around you in both virtual reality and in person. Since you are a business, and are thinking like a business, your next step is to start getting customers and potential customers who know who you are and ready to see what you can do.

No matter what type of musician you are, this is the point where you need to start building a fan base and getting those who are around you to start following what you are doing. This will allow you to get more exposure with your own music, if this is what you are doing with your record label or will allow you to get more exposure for other musicians, which will not only boost their careers forward, but will also allow you to make more money from the music that they sell.

The starting point of building a list of loyal fans always begins with finding a reason why the fans need to have contact with you. Whether they decide to be a part of your recording studio or not, you will want to create a space where you can exchange information, build networks and create a dialog between both sides. Having the right tools to do this and being able to reach out to these various places will allow you to have the exposure that you want.

For those that you meet and who show a remote interest in your recording label, you need to put them on a potential customer list. This will include getting their e-mail and phone number and mailing address if possible, so that you can build the dialog and keep the contact up with those who are interested in this. Even if they don't want to have a CD out or are not interested in your type of music, they will keep you in mind when they run into a musician that is and that wants to record.

Once you have your customer list started, you will need to have everything moving forward in relation to how you are going to contact them. This can be a simple phone call, text or piece of mail that is sent to them in order to update them or offer them what is needed. If you want to have personable





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talks that are based off of offline marketing, this will continue to remind them that they are there and that you can help them with their music.

An easier way to do this is to set things up online so that you can have the communication necessary in order to keep the masses updated. Things such as e-mail lists, newsletters and frequent updates will keep everyone on the same page and will be an informative reminder of what is happening in the world of music. No matter what stage you are at, keeping in touch will keep you on top of the game.

This will get you a fan list for your record company, but it is not necessarily what will build loyalty. In order to build loyal fans and potential clients, you will need to take your music and your recording company a step further when relating to those who are interested in your record label.

The benefit that any recording label has is that it isn't just one artist that is building the label. While you are building, you will have several sounds and styles to choose from, even if you are only choosing one genre to work with. This will allow those who are interested to have the capacity to keep up with the alternatives and to choose their favorite artists.

When you are building loyal fans, you will want to make sure that you have a set of individuals who are targeted towards the genre and style that you are building. This will keep their interest up and will allow them to be invited back to hear the next latest sound. If you can provide quality, combined with a good variety within the genre, you will be more likely to advertise the artists you are recording and possibly yourself, and will allow the fans to come back for more.

Once you have started to build a portfolio, you can send out the different styles and genres to potential fans, allowing them to listen and understand the styles you are creating and the options that they have to listen to under your record label. This will instantly grab the attention of those who you are working with and allow them to catch up to the music you are working on.

You can also focus on working with more than one artist at a time, which will allow you to build a stronger portfolio and get more individuals devoted to what you are doing. You will want this set of artists to be in a flow that keeps drawing back the fans and keeps everyone updated with what you are doing.



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This circle of individuals will not only build loyal fans from the public eye, but will also build loyal customers in relation to the artists that decide to use you

as a recording label. Keeping variety and diversity among these various groups of individuals, as well as keeping them updated on what is happening will provide you with more options in advertising the different music.

If your record label only takes care of your music, you can present your music in the same way. Keeping the individuals informed of what you are working on and building a network that allows the fans to see what you are doing will allow them to keep in touch with you and to see what you will be doing next. The balance in keeping fans is to work with quality and with quantity to keep everyone coming back for more.

Like any business, the concept to allow individuals to stay loyal and to become your fan is a combination of quality within all of the products you have and the individuals you work with, consistency with what you can offer and the ability to keep everyone informed about the latest developments. The result will be the capacity to build a large database of those who are interested in what you are doing and how you are presenting it to the community at large.

## Marketing Music Online

The virtual revolution of the Internet is not only allowing for more international connections to be made, but is also creating a space in which individuals can work towards presenting their business, music and concepts to the entire world. Understanding how to market yourself online and knowing how to create a space that works in your favor with your music will open an entirely new door on how to market online.

Even though the website is your foundational step and you have the networks and links working in your favor, marketing your music online falls into a different category. This is because there is an entirely different set of places in which individuals can find your music in this way and can link to what you are doing as a recording company.

The first step to take when marketing your music online, whether it is just from your record label or is someone else's music, is to do the background work that you need. This means that you will want to build up a press kit



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filled with promotional tools for your record label and for your promotions. Any time you are online, or even off line, you will want to have the simple basics, such as a head shot or logo, biography or history of your company, information on the CD and recording label and samples of the latest releases.

Not only does this help you to gain more exposure, but can also be distributed throughout the web as links from your website or into other areas online. The more that those who are browsing the web are able to see your press kit, the more likely they will be to listen to samples of your music and eventually buy downloads or CDs. This is the least that you should have as a foundational material for the music that you are distributing.

Once you get this together, you can start distributing your music into various outlets that are available online. One of the easiest ways to get your music seen and heard online is to go through the online stores that are already set up. Places such as CD Baby, CD Bathtub and even Amazon, are simple ways to show your music is there and to get in a list of other musicians who are working at the same thing. These spaces are completely open to independent musicians and recording labels, allowing you to get exposure among others who are interested in what you are doing and are doing the same thing themselves.

Another option that you can work towards with marketing online is with MP3s and download stores. Typically, when you sign up for a store, such as CD Baby, you will instantly be submitted to hundreds of download stores. However, you can also take the matter into your own hands and find spaces that will work best for you. Spaces such as iTunes or Rhapsody work well when getting your music listed and ready to sell. You can easily find these spaces through simple searches that are focused on the genre of music you are recording.

Along these same lines, there are easier ways to get your downloads into the online market. There are specific areas that are designed to automatically submit the music that you are working with. One of the most well known is IODA, which stands for the Independent Online Distribution Alliance. This particular organization will take your music for a small fee and distribute it to all of the online areas, then send you money as the music sells. This is a definite step for those who are getting their music distributed into any online outlet.



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With these download distribution areas and CD distribution areas, you can easily build a foundational area of where your music can be seen and heard

at. This, combined with your website, will allow you to have a large variety of links into the stores that fit you best. The more you put on there and the longer you allow the places to link to, the more options you will have for selling and distributing your music.

For those that are interested in online promotions that will take them a step further, there are several spaces that are waiting for you to send the music to so they can place it for you. Unlike physical areas, there are no limits to online distribution, allowing for you to take advantage of all of the possibilities.

One of the areas that you don't want to miss if you are going to use promotional money for your music is the online radio places. Typically, these areas will give you a certain number of spins on their radio station for a specific fee. This will go directly to the ability for individuals to download and buy your music online. You can find radio stations according to your genre or according to a region that you are interested in targeting.

Another way that you will want to expose yourself with the radio stations is by setting yourself up with interviews and possible television programs. Radio stations will often times interview individuals who have released a CD in order to give them more exposure. You can also use places such as YouTube in order to set up your own interview that allows you to be seen and to expose your music.

If you don't want to take the route of doing an interview for YouTube, you can also expose yourself by video taping your music live. This is something that is often looked into and can help you to be seen as a record label and as an artist, or with other artists.

The concept with marketing your music online is to begin to get exposure into various areas. This should always come from a perspective of focusing on multi-media, allowing you to get into outlets that are already made and have individuals that are searching for independent music and labels to give them more options for the music that they are able to listen to. Finding your right outlets and exposing yourself as a record label is one that will set you



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on the right path and will help to build your fan list for the recording that you are doing.

## Web 2.0 Sales

Music exposure is being seen everywhere on websites that are expected to have the fan bases ready to move forward with the independent music that they listen to. However, there is one aspect that cannot be overlooked when you are advertising your record label online. This is the tools that are a part of Web 2.0.

Web 2.0 was announced almost a decade ago in relation to the Internet. It was said that this generation of Internet would be more advanced than the last because of the tools that would become available. The goal was to make the Internet a platform, meaning that there could be constant interaction and movement of information and ideas. Everything that has moving text, multi-media facets and various components that allow for interaction are a part of the Web 2.0 movement.

With your record label, you can take complete advantage of the Web 2.0 movement and the sales that can come from them. This allows you to have a platform to interact with potential fans and network with others who have the same interests in you with your recording label. The more you do this, the more you will have links back into your own website and the more you will be able to sell what is needed. Following are some Web 2.0 platforms you can use.

- **1. Social networks.** These include spaces such as MySpace and Facebook and are renowned for helping musicians find their way through the music industry. If you decide to use these networks, you will want to build your press release online, including your logo or headshot, as well as the information on your recording company. You can also build a space where individuals can listen to your music. Along these lines, make sure that you go out and find friends who you think would be interested in your music.

If you want to make direct sales off of the social networks, the answer is as simple as finding the right tool. Snocap, for example, is a space where you can upload your songs and place the downloads of the music on the social network page that you are using. When someone wants to download the song from Snocap, you will make money from the click. Finding other types



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of sales through these types of tools, such as widgets can help you to build your fan base and can increase record sales.

- **2. Music networks.** Just like social networks, these are an easy and effective way to build your fan base and to sell your music. Areas such as Reverb Nation, Jukebox Alive and Music Forte all work as a combined social network with a music network. Since individuals are already here to connect with other musicians as friends and for potential downloads, this is an easy way to increase your platform and to sell your music.

Just like the social networks, you can create direct sales by using software such as Snocap. Because these networks are for musicians, there are also ways that you can upload your music directly onto the site for sale. Often times, you will be able to sell your CD directly to whoever is interested in listening to the music, allowing you to make a quick and easy sale off of this one area.

- **3. Multi-media sites.** In the music marketing area, YouTube and other multimedia sites were mentioned in relation to placing information out into the public. However, these same areas can be used in order to make direct sales. All you will need to do is find the ones that suit your genre best and provide a potential space for fans to download your music. Depending on the site, you will have the capacity of offering direct downloads that are for sale for the fans that you have.
- **4. Indirect sales.** The Web 2.0 platform not only helps to create ways for direct sales, but also provides a platform for indirect sales. These are links that will lead back to your website and will allow for the CDs to be bought or for the MP3s to be downloaded. You will want to tap into these areas, as this will allow you to find more options with what you are trying to sell

A few places that you will want to try include those that are directly linked to networking with others. For example, forums that fit your interest or blogs that you can connect with will lead others back to your website and will help to give you more traffic, links and sales. The more of these you are able to tap into, the more possibilities you will have in trying to get exposure as well as income coming into your box.

With Web 2.0, the idea is to make connections, friends and networks and to offer sales that can come from these connections. No matter which sites you





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expose yourself on or connect to, you will want to make sure that you are using the tools that are available in order to gain more exposure. As this grows, so will the ability to grow as a record label and with the tools that you offer through your studio.

## Using Podcasts and Blogs to Connect to Fans

If you haven't found that there are endless possibilities towards growing your fan base and towards using the Internet in order to gain exposure, then you can try more options. Two of the Web 2.0 tools that are growing are podcasts and blogs.

Podcasts are used as audio conversations that an individual puts onto the Internet. The podcasts are usually put into a search engine type area that is directly used for audio. Through this, individuals who are interested in what you have to say will be able to go into your area, download your audio track and listen to information that you give them, or even music that you put on the podcast.

Blogs are similar to podcasts, only it uses words instead of audio. This tool was designed as a Web 2.0 platform. It allows you to keep a web log, or journal on what you are doing. The information that you put on a blog will scroll as you add in more information or entries with what you are doing. This particular area also gives you a way to connect to other like minds or to have comments placed on the area that you are blogging in.

The main use of these tools is one that can lead to indirect sales of your recording company and is a way to provide extra information for those who are interested in what you are doing. It will allow individuals to come back for more information and will build a loyalty base with what you are doing.

All you need to do in order to start a podcast or blog of your choice is to connect to a platform that will allow you to post what you want. For podcasts, you can try programs such as Pod Bean, which allows you to put a set of audio posts automatically into the area for free. For blogs, you can find similar areas, such as Word Press or Type Pad, both that offer free areas for you to begin writing and to begin connecting.

The main advantage of these spaces is that it will give you a way to connect to those who are interested in what you are doing, not only by you talking



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to them, but also because of the changing information. You want to keep this in mind as you go along. Blogs and podcasts should be informative, casual,

personable and to the point. This combination of characteristics will keep interest and will eventually lead individuals to your site.

The way to get exposure on these two areas in the beginning is to do exactly what you did when you were building your website. Once you have a couple of posts that are up, you will want to put it into the specialized search engines. This includes the regular search engines, but also includes the blogosphere, a blog search engine, and audio search engines for the podcasts.

As you write for blogs, you will not only want to list yourself in these areas, but will also want to create what is known as a ping. This allows you to ping the different blog search engines every time you update the blog. The more you can do this, the more it is recognized by the spiders that are searching in these engines and the more it can guide you into the right hands of those who are interested in your blog or podcast.

Just like your website, your blog and podcast will be noticed a lot more with the more activity that you have on it. You will want to start by posting things at least once a month. The more you can do, the more likely you will be able to get responses from the blogs or podcasts. Most who are effective in blogging and podcasts will blog or add in audio up to three times a day, allowing traffic to continue coming to your site and to recognize you at the top of the search engine.

Another way to approach both podcasts and blogs is to create links, just like you did with your website. You will want to link to your information so individuals can contact you with information that they may have. You will also want to create links to your website so that others may find you and be led to your music. This can also be links to the social networks that you have built.

You don't want to stop here with your linking. You will also want to link with other blogs or podcasts, either by commenting or by connecting in some other way. This will allow for more traffic to be seen on your site and for more individuals to come your way with the blog or focus on the podcast. The more you are able to connect with others, the more you can grow a fan base that will connect with you.



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Since you are focusing on a recording label, make sure that the connections, networks, comments and other information that is given always connects to

the music that you are doing. You can use tools such as radio.blog in order to have an audio interaction that is continuously taking place. Most blogs and podcasts will have specific spaces where you can put your music so that those who are interested in you can connect with you and can keep listening to the music that you have.

When you have all of these tools set up, you will start to notice that more traffic goes to your site and that you gain more attention. As this happens, you will need to develop an RSS feed, also known as a syndicate. This is a scroll that continues to move through your blog or podcast for updates and links to your fans.

For those who are interested in your music and record label, this will instantly connect them. Whenever you update your blog or podcast, they will automatically receive the news in their e-mail, showing that you have more information to give to them. This is the easiest way to make sure that the information you are giving gets to those who are truly interested, allowing them to keep in touch with your progress.

The advantage of blogs and podcasts comes with the capacity to reach to fans, keep a moving dialog and to build a network with those who are interested in what you are doing and the information that you have for your record label. The more you are able to reach out on the Internet with what you are doing, the more potential you will have for others to reach back.



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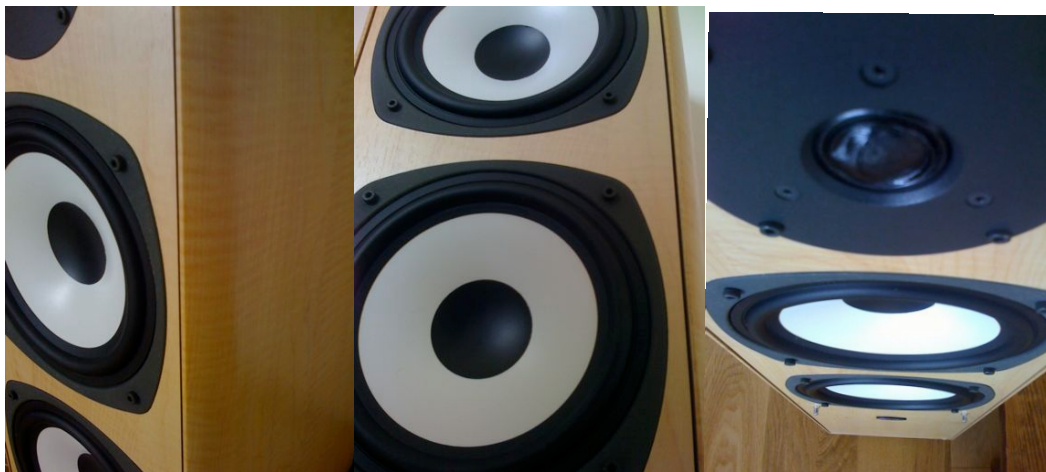
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## Conclusion

No matter what your interests in music and whichever way you want to build as an Independent artist, there are ways to get exposed and to get noticed. With technology, there are a variety of options to help you to get exposed and to take logical steps forward in your musical career. By building networks and finding others who are interested in you as both a record label and as an artist, you can have the same success as hundreds of indie artists who have gone before you and have proven that it doesn't take a major label to make it in the recording industry.

By following some of these guidelines, you will have easy exposure to building your fan base, growing your recording label and allowing you to have a way to go into the avenue of music that suits you best. The result will be the capacity to be just as successful as the bigger labels with the freedom to approach your music in the way that suits you the best.



Feel free to tell your friends, family and or colleagues about this guide. If for any "warped" reason they would like to come along for the ride send them to signup at: [www.independentmusicstartup.com/specialreport/](http://www.independentmusicstartup.com/specialreport/) to get regular updated information about the woes of record label ownership via my newsletter. -

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