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Jingle Singers – Jumpstart Your Singing Career!

By Tom Gauger

As a former talent booking agent with the William Morris Agency and professional jingle singer and

founder of ReelMusician.com, I have written numerous articles on entering the jingle singing and session singing world. Most of my articles have zeroed in on the ground floor stages of creating an incredible jingle demo reel far exceeding your competition. In this article I would like to expand on the secondary phase of jumpstarting your singing career by emphasizing your approach and marketing to producers, jingle houses and ancillary production staff after you have a fully mastered jingle demo that you are sure will make your potential listeners say Wow! With that in mind, let's look at some key areas where you can capitalize and start promoting your singing career in an effective way!

To start with, there is no way that I can hit every question with our limited time together, and neither can I gauge your abilities, ambition and go get it nature. With that in mind, I will start as if everyone reading this article has an incredible sounding jingle demo reel, not the I can do it at my friend's house demo reel, but a demo reel that screams "I gotta hear that again," along with incredible drive and ambition. Any questions you might have with your jingle reel go to ReelMusician.com. So where do you go with your jingle demo and how do you approach these individuals? – Great questions, let's start with where you will go.

You will pitch your jingle demo reel starting in your immediate local market. Some of you will have to broaden your local area as you may live out in the country or more remotely, but you get the idea. You will be sending out your reel, with your name, telephone number and year on the front sleeve along with again your name, contact numbers, email address, order of jingles in sequence and year on the inside sleeve. An extremely short bio along with a picture is not a bad idea. You will send out this package to everyone you might think can help you - This includes other jingle singers that you're not directly in competition with, jingle houses, industrial music houses, and key studios.

Once you have made your initial mailing, you will follow up with a phone call or email, phone call of course being the better option, and asking for their feedback. You will want to come across as confident, friendly, professional, with a great attitude and willingness to be extremely flexible. Now keep in mind that 10 different jingle houses will undoubtedly give you ten different responses much like everyone is an "expert" and has "recommendations" with your resume. Look for common denominators

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in your conversations and make sure that you are a great record keeper.

Keep track of who, when, the date, any follow up material needed and any and all misc information in your conversations that you need to keep a record of. Don't be lazy here. This is a business and you need to treat it as such. Computers make one's life infinitely easier with keeping track of information like this, but you can do it manually. As a side note, emailing is significantly easier and less costly, but it is not quite as effective as actually mailing out your jingle reel. Once you make a connection with a jingle house, they may request it or you might inquire if it's ok to submit via email and mp3.

You will begin to expand your jingle singing campaign to secondary and major markets like Chicago, LA, New York, Atlanta, Dallas, etc. You will want to get familiar with the different jingle houses by either researching jingle houses online or visiting ReelMusician.com clicking on jingle singing and then on music production links. You will again contact these various production facilities sending out your jingle reel and again following up with these potential clients.

As I've stated in previous articles, you might want to consider having a second jingle reel or additional session singing tape to cross over the desks of those producers on the verge of using your singing talents. Sometimes all it takes is a little reminder and you get the next call. Singing commercials can be extremely lucrative and your ability to push a little bit on the front end could really pay off well. Even if your passion is to become a major record label artist, there's no crime in pursuing a money making venture on the front end to help facilitate living expenses, and who knows, you could very easily sing commercials and make a considerable living the rest of your life. That wouldn't be all bad now would it.

Let's spend a few minutes looking at different conversations as you send out your reel. Producer number one likes your reel, but is asking what experience you have. Your answer will sound something like - "As you can tell by my reel, I am a seasoned singer and can deliver the singing goods and I'll be consistent with everything you throw my way." Notice I didn't say, "Well I haven't sung on any commercials yet" - Emphasize the reality that you will deliver on every singing project thrown your way. If you have a real smooth voice and the question is whether or not you can get more of an edge on your voice you can respond, "One of my greatest singing strengths is my ability to blend and with the right tracks and backing, I can deliver an upbeat jingle." Now don't over do it and by all means be honest. Don't tell them that you will sound like a heavy rock and roller when in fact you won't even come close. Just be honest and at the same time put your best foot forward. You will have a number of questions that come up, but be prepared to always give an honest answer, but putting your best foot forward at the same time. Perhaps in another article I will expand on what we're talking about here. As always, good luck and we look forward to hearing about all of your singing successes!

Mr Gauger is a former talent booking agent with the William Morris Agency and has sung on numerous commercials including FOX TV, UPN Station ID's, O'Charley's and many others. Contact

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The Successful Studio Singer

By Tom Gauger

After singing on countless sessions including commercials, backup for many an artist and for an array of producers, I have come to the conclusion that while singing in the studio might seem glamorous, it is definitely hard work. Even as a former talent booking agent with the William Morris Agency, I continued and still do, singing in the studio. I have to admit, though, that I absolutely love session work and accomplishing the task at hand no matter how difficult or challenging the particular session might be. Anyone who sings professionally and states otherwise, is either lying, or plain doesn't have enough work or has a bad attitude or both. As founder of ReelMusician.com, I have had the opportunity to work with singers and get them geared up and ready to go into commercial singing work and I believe that I have enjoyed that as about as much as session work if not more. Seeing singers who have a dream and want to make it happen, and then help them make it happen is incredibly rewarding. With that, I would like to take a few minutes and discuss the successful studio singer and how you might take your talent and dream and enter the field.

You heard me correct. You take your dream and enter the field as a valid and credible studio singing source for multiple producers and session work. Just how will you go about that? - Great question. Let's spend a few minutes looking at some ideas and concepts to get you on the road to success and get you into the studio as a professional studio singer.

Singing talent is obviously at the top of the list, but let's spend a few minutes talking about vocal qualities. There are a number of different types of singers - the blender who sings on a variety of session work, but doesn't sing on that many lead spots. Those are usually reserved for more gritty and husky singers who can carry the lead. Then you have the husky or gritty singer who is asked on occasion to sing in a group sing to give the group a little more bite. This singer usually sings on quite a few leads that are up in your face commercials and backup vocals that require a big sound. There are also a core of what I call specialty singers who don't fit either just discussed and tend to be very unique and used on very specific spots and background vocals. Neither of the singers I've just described is any better than the other in terms of work, they are just called on for different session work. Where do you fit in? You need to get that figured out along with your degree of giftedness. Just be honest - studio singing isn't for everyone, no matter how much they want it. But I would guess that there is more opportunity out there for a lot of singers if they chose to go after their dream.

In order to attempt to get into studio singing you are going to have to have a few key items in place - namely a good deal of practice, an incredible demo, and a follow up with great people skills. Most

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artistic individuals I know usually have fairly good people skills counting out those who either know it all or those with a bad attitude. I'm guessing you have fairly good people skills, will probably need a little help in being consistent with your follow up and will need an incredible demo tape. At ReelMusician.com we specialize in singer's demos and specifically those wishing to enter the jingle singing market. You'd be surprised at the demos we receive on a regular basis that are not up to par. I've stated in other articles, that your demo has to sound like you've already arrived on the singing scene with numerous credits. It is our experience that most don't have a real clue as to how to write and market their voice to compile a singing demo tape that will actually get listened to and if it does, won't garnish the work that they are looking for. There are a number of reasons for this, but in the simplest of terms, there is too much competition out there to be dealing with fairly good or even pretty good demos - they have to say the word "Incredible." For any questions on this at all, please don't

hesitate to contact us at ReelMusician.com for further advice, articles or just to just plain ask us a question. We're more than happy to answer any questions you might have. Our goal is to help singers make their singing dreams and careers come true.

Now starting with the assumption that you have credible singing talent, are practicing everyday, are either working on or are preparing to have an incredible jingle or session singer reel written specifically for your voice, and are ready to take the plunge into the session singing world, I will give you some ideas and tips to get you motivated and hopefully moving towards a rewarding career as a successful studio singer.

Once you have your incredible jingle reel in hand, marketing will be key. You will want to submit your reel to jingle producers in your area, various industrial music houses, and general music production companies. You will want to get to know other jingle and session singers in your area and genuinely get to know them and hand off a reel - keeping in mind that you will want to hand off reels to other singers that you are not in direct competition with. Your follow up with these individuals will be key. Stay in touch with email, letters, birthday notes, etc and keep all of your potential singing clients in the fold. Make sure that you have a follow up reel within a short period of time. You will want to cross the desk of certain producers a couple of times to reacquaint yourself to them. Keep detailed records of who you talk to, when, contact numbers and any misc information. In time, with the right singing reel and follow up, you should start bringing home some singing work. As time grows, so should your reputation and work. In closing, if you will stay focused with a great attitude and voice supported by an incredible jingle reel, you should be well on your way to a successful studio singing career!

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e-books "The Jingle Singer's Guide," and "Secrets To Great Song Demos," may be downloaded at <http://www.ReelMusician.com>



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