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Master Quality Song Demo Reels That Sizzle!

By Tom Gauger

As a former talent booking agent with the William Morris Agency and founder of ReelMusician.com,

I can tell you that reviewing demos can be both a curse and a blessing. Even as demos pile up on the desks in A&R offices and music industry professional's office floors as well, I can almost guarantee that the vast majority of demos 1) won't have a chance, 2) don't get listened to, at least by the major A&R folks and not through a pres-screening process utilizing college interns, and 3) it might not even be the music itself, but the packaging and marketing colors, etc that are used for the artist press kit that result in the artist contract denial. What makes for a master quality demo? What makes for a master quality demo that will get listened to? These are great questions and I can tell you that a host of folks will have all kinds of ideas and suggestions; I will consider some gut level thinking and ideas that I have mentally compiled through the years that I've always felt would be an asset not only musically, but from a marketing perspective as well. Hopefully there will be some nugget of truth that you can capitalize on to further your music career and song demos

As we begin to look at master quality demos and what makes them up, what are your goals and ambitions? The reason I am asking this is because not only does it help to mentally prepare you and help you set goals for your career, but it also helps set the blueprint for where and what your demo ought to be sounding and looking like. There is a big difference in submitting your demo to A&R folks and to the club owner trying to gain playing gigs. But regardless of where you are submitting your demo, you have to exude a professionalism and character of not only your music, but in the credibility of the act as well. That last statement is critical. If your act is perceived as credible with the ball rolling and with some key elements in place, you are much more likely to be 1) reviewed by the actual A&R director and 2) any enthusiasm might snowball down the halls of the record company ultimately landing you a record deal.

But let's get back to your demo. At ReelMusician.com we compile demos for songwriters and for jingle singers trying to break into the jingle singing market and I can tell you from experience, that it's difficult to create a master quality demo when the song itself is not master quality song demo material. So be honest about any material you are recording. Is this top 10 if given the chance, or is this a filler, b side song? Yes, you can take a fair song and make it "listenable" to with a great production, but it still reasons that a fair or b side song cut is still a fair or b side song. You look back through the years at

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songs that held your attention and were almost mesmerizing and this is before the onslaught of incredible and affordable recording gear. These songs were just plain great songs even without the slickest of today's recording abilities.

As you record, don't rely on a bunch of "recording tricks" or padding type effects that detract and try to uphold an otherwise fair song. Many individuals with a lot more authority can speak about effects, etc than I, but I will say that less is more, and you ought to be concerned about the quality of the song and production utilizing all effects that are needed and not just effects thrown in there without reason or cause.

Who are using for players on your demos? Obviously if you are a band you are recording your whole group, but if you are a solo act or a writer creating master demos, then consider a couple of options. If money is not an object, then go for the whole rhythm section and keyboard pads, etc. One thing that you need to know and understand is that it is better to use fewer players who are just incredible, than

to have the full rhythm section with less experienced players or players that just can't support your song. I remember years back when I was first starting out before all of our TV and radio credits, that for the sake of having a full sound I compromised the overall production for players, while more affordable, not as seasoned and consequently my productions were not as strong until I learned that valuable lesson. And even today, I will choose to use a first string guitar or piano player in lieu of a full rhythm section on projects if that's what the song and production call for. Always get the best musicians - It always pays. These players oftentimes have ideas and broaden your production and bring incredible artistic elements that you wouldn't have thought of – Which leads me to my next point.

Keyboards are incredible and there is a vast array of sounds and pads that can be used to create all kinds of emotional tones in your music, but don't get caught in the, "I have a keyboard, mic and computer syndrome. Your music will suffer. You want the creativity of other players. They bring the musical magic that most of us, quite honestly, aren't creative enough to capture, but with their experience, and talent, they are able to deliver not only incredible rips, but a professionalism your demo might not never otherwise of had. Utilize the best players possible whenever you can. I can tell you that our demos at ReelMusician.com sound incredible because of our effort in obtaining the best players - Get the best!

With a few moments left, let's look at some important final notes and ideas. Don't get discouraged after recording a song you thought would turn out differently. You know, without sounding cliché, productions and songs do get better with time and practice. Always look at money spent on demos as schooling. Where would you go to learn the lessons you just learned? - >From a textbook, of course not. Keep at it; be honest about your writing and productions. Continue to learn from great writers and producers. Listen to great classical writers as well and broaden your next pop ballad string arrangement. Don't be afraid to try new ideas. Get the best players in an affordable, yet quality studio, and hopefully you'll start recording the next top ten hit!

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Quality Matters in Fly Reels

By Brett Fogle

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Like everything else in this world, quality matters when trout fishing. If all you will ever do is fish for small trout and pan fish, virtually any cheap fly reel will work just fine. In these situations, all a reel really does is to serve as a place to hold fly line. And even a cheap reel does this task ok.

Unfortunately, this all changes once you get a large fish on the other end of your fly line. If the fly reel you are using is not well made with precision parts, the line will come out with uneven tension or the fly reel may seize up altogether. The reason cheap fly reels are inexpensive is because of what is inside them. Most cheap reels have the cheapest types of parts that can be found. These parts break when least desirable and wear out very quickly. Remember, a fly reel has moving parts inside it. A cheap fly reel will quickly begin to wear out, often only after a year or two of moderate fishing. And it can fail miserably if you get a large fish on the end of the line.

A high quality fly reel will truly last a lifetime. A good quality fly reel, while it may not last a lifetime, will last many, many years and will provide reliable duty in the field. A very high quality fly reel will run around two hundred dollars or more. A good quality fly reel will be in the hundred-dollar range. A cheap fly reel will be less than fifty dollars. To me, at least, it makes sense to spend a little bit more now so that you don't end up having to buy another reel two years down the road or to have a fishing trip ruined by malfunctioning gear.

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Another thing to keep in mind about fly reels is how resistant they are to corrosion. While this is vitally important in saltwater fishing, it is still important in freshwater fishing. A cheap fly reel has often nothing more than a cheap coat of paint on it that soon wears off. Once that's gone the reel will frequently start developing rust spots, among other things. A very high quality fly reel will resist all forms of rust and corrosion.

We're now familiar with quality issues on fly reels and you should be familiar with the different types of drag systems on a fly reel. Armed with that knowledge, it is time to move on to the type of retrieve a fly reel offers.

//////////////////////Who else wants to pull in a bounty of big fish – Every time!Here's how to AMAZE your friends (and maybe even make them a little bit jealous) In 'Fly Fishing Secrets' we show you how.To get your hands on these amazing insider secrets, Click Here:

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