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**Song Demos – How To Get Them Heard!**

**By Tom Gauger**

By now you've probably read a myriad of articles with individuals who claim to have all of the

answers and secrets to getting your songs heard and cut - for a price of course. I will not claim to have all of the answers and neither will I promise you fame and fortune, but I will give you some solid advice as to how to get your songs heard. As a former talent booking agent with the William Morris Agency, I can attest to the number of individuals out there who really don't have a clue as to how to not only write and produce their song demos, but how to market their songs and themselves as viable acts. Let's look at some key ideas that I'm sure will help you and hopefully further your writing career.

As we say at ReelMusician.com, a song worth hearing is a song worth hearing. Is your song that you are pitching worth hearing? I can't answer that, but you can. It's the obvious and we won't say any more other than that - Make sure your song is worth hearing. Is your song that you want to get heard and ultimately cut, have marketing viability? Does your song have too narrow a niche where you are shorting yourself on possible acts and artists that can cut it? Don't adjust a great song just for pure marketing, but the odds are greatly increased with a more broad range of appeal. Are all of your songs starting to sound the same? Do you need a writing partner to broaden your song writing horizons? I am asking all of these questions to get you thinking and then I am going to head into the marketing department for a minute to see where you are at. You see, I can't possibly answer any of the above questions, because I haven't heard your material, but if you're honest you can and will. Answering these questions is your first assignment.

Before I go on, you should know that as founder of ReelMusician.com, that we get an incredible amount of artist material. One of the biggest negatives, and believe me were out there to help you, but what many young artists do is submit a demo reel or press kit that is less than what I would ever recommend submitting. You can't submit fairly good or even pretty good material; it just has to sound like you've arrived. In today's music economy, where there is a computer, keyboard and mic in virtually any songwriters home, you have got to know and recognize that not only is it more difficult to get a song cut because of pure volume of writers, but affordable recording has made it so that the number of and quality of song demos has increased dramatically. Now while I say that, you should also note that most writers aren't in the ballpark of creating master quality demos, but because of the mere numbers factor alone, there are more quality demos and writers than before.

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Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call us at ReelMusician.com. As a side note, we know that many of you are quite accomplished, while there are still most likely even more of you who could utilize our master quality song demos services and press kit writing services as well to further your career. Just visit us at ReelMusician.com for any help you might need and don't hesitate to email or call us.

In terms of your marketing abilities or lack there of, let's look at some real possibilities and venture out into the real world of pitching your material and how you will go about doing that. First off, how are you sending your material and to whom and what exactly are you sending? I will tell you that if your image and look to your material is not polished, then you will not be taken seriously. You can't be doing the hard to read, hand written letter to "whom this may concern" gig - You have to look and act professional! You may want to invest in some inexpensive software to create professional and custom looking CD labels, letters, etc if you haven't already. What is in your package that you are sending off?

Realize that everyone's time is limited, so only send what is relevant to this particular pitch. Sending all kinds of material usually gets you nowhere. How are you finding names to send your material off to? Are you unsolicited, sending this to a warm lead, or is this an individual waiting for your demo? Of course the later is best, but who can get an invitation these days? I tell you what though, that is what you ought to be aiming for. Have you contacted the road managers of the acts that you are sending your material to? Road managers, lighting individuals and other ancillary staff can really help get your songs listened to. A&R is a difficult road to go down. A&R directors are swamped number one and number two, they usually have a college intern sifting through the first round of material to minimize their wasted time.

So where do you pitch your material? As I've just mentioned, it is easier to go through ancillary staff to the artists such as road managers, lighting and sound crew members and of course the artist managers than it is to go through A&R. What you need to know is that it is difficult to get a cut nowadays to begin with. Who usually gets the cuts? - The artist, artist's friends and/or the producers. Go ahead and look at album covers and see if this isn't true. Your job is not an easy one. Going through valid tip sheets and not just companies on the web looking to make money for their "artist tip sheets" is not a bad way to go, but you will have to find relevant and up to date tip sheets. These are not that easy to get a hold of. You will want to write with writers who have these connections or other musicians who do. You will want to spend a good deal of time researching and connecting the dots to folks who can help you without them feeling like they're being used - so be careful and be authentic in your relationships with others in the music field.

I wish we had more time in this article, but don't hesitate to drop us an email or call us should you have any questions about your songs or artist career.

Mr Gauger is a former talent booking agent with the William Morris Agency and founder of

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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>

## **On Picking The Right Graduation Song**

**By Martin Stoleman**

When I was graduating from high school and then from college, there were many details that I was trying to think through and many decisions that I was trying to make, not the least of which was what graduation song I would choose to represent my transition from one season of life to the next. You see, among my family and friends it is tradition for anyone graduating to choose a graduation song to be sort of the theme of their accomplishment and their place in life.

If you have never heard of this, then I'll suggest that you quickly make a graduation song part of your traditions surrounding graduation. Allow me, as an expert on the subject, to enlighten you with some suggestions about how to go about choosing the appropriate graduation song for you.

First of all, keep in mind the significance of choosing the perfect graduation song. Why is it so significant? Because it is not every day or even every year that you will graduate from something. In fact, most people only experience one or two graduations in their lifetime, so don't downplay the importance of the situation. Instead, realize how significant it is that you are about to graduate and therefore take seriously the privilege of choosing a graduation song that will represent your achievement.

A perfect graduation song is one that incorporates two main things. First, any good graduation song should reflect some on the past and how it has affected you up to this point. The worst thing that you can do is to pick a graduation song that means nothing to you and that you've never heard of before. The wise way is to choose a song that you are familiar with and that really means something to you.

A second important element of a good graduation song is one that says something about the hope and purpose you have for your future. Graduation is, after all, not just the end of a season but it is also the beginning of a whole new season of life. So choose a graduation song that reflects how you're feeling about moving forward into something new. No matter what season of life you are ending, you are also about to begin a new and great season, so let that be reflected in your song choice.

A graduation is a small but significant tradition that I think everyone should take part in. What a great way to symbolize a part of your journey and to represent your thoughts for moving on. So choose a great graduation song today! It is one decision that you'll never regret.

Martin Stoleman is a career counselor who works mainly with students dealing with the transition of

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graduation. He encourages all students to find a great graduation song. See

<http://www.coolgraduationsong.info>

for more details on the right song for you.



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