

sequencing THE SHOW

your guide to the ultimate tour marketing system

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First edition

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why we created this system and wrote this book

My name is Ben Coe, and along with my business partner, Michael Allenby, I own The Artist Farm, an artist management and ideas company. Prior to owning this company we both worked at industry giant, Red Light Management. And before that even we both have another 10+ years of experience in the industry.

Over the past 4 years we have worked with nearly 20 professional artists (groups or individuals) and the primary revenue stream for most of them was touring. We have worked on the management teams of some amazing artists including: Los Lobos, Yonder Mountain String Band, John Butler Trio, North Mississippi Allstars, That 1 Guy, Squirrel Nut Zippers, Melissa Ferrick, The Infamous Stringdusters, Charlie Hunter, Staunton Moore and more. Our responsibility for many of these bands was to provide a superior tour marketing service: to be sure as many tickets sold as possible and that the culture and brand of the artist was enforced. While providing these services we made a few discoveries:

1. There was no documented information on tour marketing. You couldn't find a book that described what tour marketing entailed nor could you even find a complete list of what should be done to market a show. Every manager we spoke with gave a different answer of what it included and we quickly gathered that no individual team was doing everything possible simply because they didn't have a master list.
2. There was no timeline for tour marketing tasks. We found that without a preset timeline and due dates for planning a tour or a show, big projects would jam into each other and cause delays. For example, tour art wouldn't be done in time for the ticket presale or the tour announcement email blast. And when should that ticket presale happen in relation to the start of the tour anyway?
3. There was no system to manage this information. With so many shows to manage and so many tasks to manage for each tour and each show, some of the tasks on the list would always fall through the cracks. Did you put that show on Facebook? Did you talk to that promoter yet?
4. Tour marketing is incredibly important! Even in the early days without a system, we found that when you care about the presentation of your artist - whether it be in poster, website, email or phone call form - it generates an equal amount of respect for that artist which in turn strengthens the brand.

With the realization that tour marketing is incredibly important to the success of an artist's career, especially in today's music business climate, we decided to dedicate our time to creating the ultimate tour marketing machine. This system would include a comprehensive, standardized list of show/tour marketing tasks, the best timeline for all of these tasks and a way to manage all of the information we collected and the completion of tasks.

After years of experimenting with different tasks and timeline scenarios, we finally discovered the perfect tour marketing system which combines tasks, timelines, procedures and databases to effectively increase awareness of the artist and brand in every market. The Artist Farm uses this system every day and it serves as the backbone of our business. Tasks don't fall through the cracks anymore. By applying this system for every artist it allows the primary manager peace of mind to focus on the bigger picture opportunities. We feel so strongly about the importance of this tour marketing system and its universal application that sharing it with the music business community is the next logical step. We believe in the vision of artist as small business and the potential for any artist to grow from small business to big business. Given that most artists are making money on the road, we hope that this system provides as much strength for your artist's careers as it has for ours. We certainly wish someone had given us this system 4 years ago!

Ben Coe
THE ARTIST FARM

how this guide is organized

THIS GUIDE BOOK IS LAID OUT IN 2 PRIMARY SECTIONS RELATED TO THE TOUR AND SHOW MARKETING TIMELINE:

Section 1 is an overview of tour marketing and the timeline associated with it from conception to tour announcement

Section 2 discusses the three primary categories of show marketing including: Promoter Outreach / Fan and Community Outreach including Web/Email marketing and the use of Marketing Reps / Media Outreach

WITHIN EACH SECTION YOU WILL SEE THE FOLLOWING COMPONENTS:

TASKS: There are a total of 23 tasks listed throughout this guidebook. These are the backbone of the entire system. It is the completion of each of these for every show that keeps the touring machine strong.

SUB TASKS: These are indicated by bullet points under each Task. While performing any given task there may be a few other pieces of information you need to collect which will be indicated as a sub-task. There are 24 total sub-tasks.

DUE DATES: Each task has a due date associated with it. All due dates relate to either 1) the completion of another task or 2) the number of days or weeks before the show.

TIPS: These are written underneath the tasks to which they relate. These tips are helpful hints for vendors or workflow ideas. In some sections I will reference email templates or the Excel database which you will find in the Tool Kit file which came with your purchase of the Squeezing the Show system. You will find 33 tips listed throughout the guide.

Together, all of these tasks and sub tasks serve as the minimum amount of tour marketing to do for every show. It is a system that allows us to sleep a little better at night, knowing that the touring machine is pushing forward on all cylinders. This document serves as the operational core, the central system, of our business. Doing more is amazing... but these alone are great.

section 1:

TOUR PLANNING OVERVIEW & MARKETING TIMELINE

tour planning overview:

There are two primary types of tour development plans:

1. The band is constantly touring, typically doing small “tours” of a week or two or long weekends. Confirmed shows come in spurts and typically the lead time for these shows is 8 weeks or less. Generally, this type of touring is indicative of a developing band.

2. The band does defined tours – generally 2-8 weeks in length. The routing ideas are conceived well in advance of the tour start date and a specific tour branding is made for that tour. Generally, this type of touring is indicative of bands with decent draw and clout.

The second style is the best in terms of tour marketing. It gives all parties involved with the tour a project to focus their energy on. If you’re not currently doing defined tours, this would be a good goal to work toward.

If an artist is to the point that they are doing defined tours with a specific start and end date, then there are some tasks that relate to the start of the tour which we will discuss first. Once the tour is set up and the announcement made, it is time to dive into show-specific marketing.

At the Artist Farm, we begin the process for all our shows with the receipt of a weekly itinerary from the booking agent. Once we have the first itinerary, we enter the shows into our database and begin the process of marketing the show. This guide book assumes that the first step to beginning the tour marketing process is receipt of the contract or routing itinerary from the booking agent.

tour marketing timeline:

The first responsibility with any tour is to determine the approximate tour start date (even before the dates are actually booked). The tasks and due dates (in an ideal world) for a tour are listed below. We use this timeline for club-sized bands but we've compared it to the schedule of arena-sized bands and it's generally the same.

24 weeks out from proposed tour start date

Come up with a name and concept for the tour.

Determine the approximate tour start date.

Start the routing ideas and begin booking the dates.

14 weeks out from proposed tour start date

Finalize all tour dates.

Start creating tour-specific art (for a poster and ad materials and merchandise).

Start writing a tour-specific press release and bio (mostly for an album release tour).

12 weeks out from tour start date

Finalize art, press release, bio

Announce the tour and ticket presale by email

Put out the call for marketing reps by email

10 weeks out from tour start date

Launch ticket presale

8 weeks out from tour start date

General ticket sale begins, presale closes

Show-specific marketing tasks begin

section 2:

SHOW MARKETING TASKS & TIMELINES

squeeze 1: promoter outreach

task:

CHECK THE PROMOTER AND VENUE WEBSITE FOR EVERY SHOW

This is the first thing to do after confirming the date. If this show is being announced as part of a tour with a specific tour announce date, then it's important to double check that the show isn't listed on the promoter or venue website yet so you can build anticipation for the big tour announcement. Even if it isn't part of a defined tour announcement, it's important to check these sites for use of the correct and current tour photo, bio and/or press release.

Enforcing the image and branding of the tour is important. It builds confidence in the brand of the artist and the tour. You want to earn and maintain that confidence with your fans. I recall working on tour marketing for a Los Lobos tour in 2006. One promoter we worked with sent us a poster design for approval and the photo on the poster was of the band in the 1980s because that was the only image he could find online! Needless to say, that experience helped reinforce the idea for this system.

If the information is not correct, let the promoter know in the first communication you have with them. Then check back in a week to be sure it's correct.

DUE DATE:

This should be done immediately after the show is confirmed and you get the weekly itinerary. It should be done again after the tour is announced and the tickets go live on the venue/promoter website.

task:

CALL THE PROMOTER ONCE THE SHOW IS CONFIRMED

In this first very important call:

Ask the promoter to confirm show details. Ask for any information that the itinerary or contract is missing. Typically this is info like: ages, show time, door time, etc. It's important to gather this information immediately so that you can post the correct information on your artists' various web properties.

Ask promoter to correct website. If need be, ask the promoter to correct their website if they have an old photo or bio on the site.

Get marketing contact info. Ask the promoter who the marketing contact is for

this show. Typically this information is not on your agency itinerary and your communication for tour marketing should be directly with this person. With smaller venues or outside promoters your marketing contact is often the promoter. But double check and make note of this person. As we will discuss later, you will want to have regular communication with this person to push the show along toward a sell-out.

Posters and CDs. Lastly, ask how many posters and how many CDs they would like. Generally speaking the posters are only for the club so they typically ask for 5-20. Also ask them how many CDs they'd like for promotional purposes and which stations or writers they will be sending them to. Lastly, ask whether they would like this package sent to the promoter address or the venue address. We always ask this because if it's an outside promoter (as in, they don't work at the venue) there is a good chance they will never see the package if it's sent to the venue. Be sure to enter all of this information in your database (see the Excel database in the Tool Kit that came with this guidebook).

DUE DATE:

This should be done immediately after the show is confirmed and after you have checked the venue website (so you can discuss any necessary changes with the promoter at that time).

task:

SEND THE PROMOTER POSTERS AND CDS

Now that you know how many posters and CDs the promoter wants it's time to mail them out. Once you have the printed posters for each show, package them up with the CDs and send them out to the promoter or venue address.

DUE DATE:

If your artist is working on defined tours then this should be done in conjunction with the completion of the artwork and tour announcement -12 weeks prior to the tour start date. Otherwise, send these out at least 8 weeks prior to the show date.

tips:

1. Some booking agencies or record labels will mail posters out on behalf of the artist. Generally speaking it is easiest to assume this role in the artist's main office (management) because you can control and record when these ship. This way you know that the artist will get to the venue and see their posters on display.
2. We have found that the most eye-catching posters are 11x17, printed in full color. We leave a 3" space at the bottom of the posters so we can print the show information on the bottom. We print these up in bulk for each tour and use the

same posters for the marketing reps, which we will discuss in the Marketing Rep section below.

3. As for printing the show text on the posters, we recommend getting a printer that can handle 11x17" paper (which you can find online for under \$500) and printing them out in your office. On each poster, in black ink, we print the name of the venue, the date, pertinent support acts and show time. You can create a template for this using MS Word and just change the text as you need to for each different show.

4. As for poster printer recommendations, we have had successful printing jobs with both **ZooPrinting.com** and **4over.com** at very reasonable prices, especially if ordering in bulk (1000-5000).

5. For packaging we recommend the 100% recyclable corrugated mailers from **Uline.com**. These are lightweight which reduces mailing costs and sturdy enough to keep your products safe. (Note: if you are going to stuff these mailers to the maximum expansion, you will need to apply extra tape to keep them sealed).

task:

SEND MARKETING EMAIL TO SHOW MARKETING CONTACT

To recap, at this point the show has been confirmed, the itinerary or contract has been received and the marketing contact info has been received. It is now time to send a marketing email to the marketing contact. This email should thank them for promoting the show and include a link to your press/marketing kit stored online. For Artist Farm clients we typically create a marketing kit to include:

Tour Poster: Layered Illustrator, Photoshop or PDF file which the promoter can use for ad materials

Tour Press Release

Current Bio

Current Photo: 300 dpi for print

Artist Logo or **Current Album Cover Art**

2 mp3s: Generally hits from the most recent album

You can find a Marketing Email Template in the Squeezing the Show Tool Kit. Please feel free to copy it and alter as you see fit.

DUE DATE:

At minimum this should be done 8 weeks before the show date. If the date is booked well in advance then I recommend sending an initial email once you have the marketing contact information and then following up again 8 weeks before the show.

tips:

1. Where to Store your Press Kit online:

We create a press kit folder in a .zip file and store it on our website which allows us to directly link to it. In the promoter marketing email we include the direct link to the download. Update the materials inside as needed by tour and keep the link the same. If you don't want to post press kits on your own website, another simple option is **sonicbids**, where you can store press kit files for a small monthly fee. Lastly, you could create a password protected section on your website where these files are available for the press.

2. Create instant access to digital copies of Albums:

Occasionally a promoter will ask for a full album for promotional purposes or someone in the media will ask for the album. If they don't need a hard copy or there isn't enough time to get them one, you'll want to have a digital copy ready so that they can have instant access. A simple, though admittedly less secure, way to do this is to give them a link to a .zip file containing the album on your server. You could also use a free **YouSendIt.com** account to email large files under 100MB.

3. Write a new press release for every tour.

In the old music paradigm, you toured when you had a new album so the whole marketing machine had significant fuel for publicity. Today many bands tour year-round regardless of album cycles which means that the big news event for publicity isn't the new album – it's the tour itself. A good tour should have a strong concept behind it which will provide the "angle" of the press release. With tour publicity, the point is to provide an explanation of the tour and the band and then to get that information into the hands of targeted, interested media (press, radio, blogs, message boards) who will broadcast your message to the right audiences.

4. Send the promoter your Facebook event.

At this moment in time, Facebook is still on top of the social networking world. Therefore, the more energy you can focus on the Facebook event the better. Include a link to this event in the marketing email you send them. Ask them to attend it (if they don't create their own). Make them an admin of the Facebook event so that they can invite their own lists and edit the event as needed.

5. Create new tour artwork.

When an artist grows to the point of operating on defined tours, many marketing benefits are realized. A concept-based, defined tour helps inspire artwork, merchandise, photos, press release and any other marketing materials. Tour specific art is used for promotional posters, merchandise and ad materials.

Before an artist gets to this point, you could consider doing seasonal branding so each Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter there is a fresh look. When the new poster/ad materials have been created, add them to the press/marketing kit so the promoters have the newest edition.

6. Contact support acts.

If the promoter lines up a local or regional support act, contact them as soon as the show is confirmed (or immediately after they have been added to the bill of a previously confirmed show). Send an email similar to the promoter marketing email (in the Tool Kit) so that they have the right materials to help market the show. Often times they are willing to help by making posters and using their marketing reps. You can also offer to send them posters if they won't be making their own.

task:

CALL MARKETING CONTACT

By this point, the marketing email has already been sent so now you are ready to call the marketing contact to dig into the marketing plan. Your job is to determine where the promoter focuses marketing attention and determine how you can reinforce or compliment these efforts. I have talked with many promoters about this part of our process. Most of them tell me it's unusual for a manager to call about this, so initially they are caught off guard. But as the conversation moves along, promotion ideas start flowing and in the end they have all appreciated our extra effort.

What you are trying to do here is compliment their marketing efforts. You are both partners in the show's success, even if you've got a guarantee, because a full house will help build the artist's career and their draw in the market. You want to get as many fans there as possible so you should put as much marketing effort into this show as you can.

When you are on the phone with the promoter, ask them what press, radio, websites and blogs make sense for this artist. Make note of these contacts on the press list. These will be your key contacts.

Be sure to talk about *all* forms of media. The top 40 radio may not make sense but even college and non-commercial stations can be helpful to reach a target audience. Not all papers will make sense but if you can get an enhanced listing (this is a little plug in the calendar page, like a thumb's up recommendation for example) in the weekly arts paper that's great. Same goes for blogs and local websites. You should be interested in getting all cylinders firing.

Below is a list of topics we discuss in the marketing call.

Marketing Plan. We ask what marketing they do in the following areas and what we can do to help:

Print

- Ask what they are doing for print ads and where
- Ask what papers/writers they are working with for stories and the type (preview, review)
- Ask them who you should reach out to for articles, etc.

Radio

- Ask if they have any radio ads or non-comm announcements and if so, which stations
- If any stations are interesting in presenting the show
- Ask who you should reach out to for in-studios or interviews, if any stations make sense for the artist

Online

- Ask them what they do to advertise the show online: website, Myspace, Facebook, Twitter, email and anything else
- Ask if they have any online articles or blogs they are pursuing
- Ask if there are any blogs, boards or online groups you should pitch

Streets

- Ask if they use volunteers, what they use (posters, handbills, etc) and where they hit.
- Ask if there are any neighborhoods or specific stores you should hit.

Other

- Ask if they do anything else to market the show. Do they advertise with TV, social groups or any organizations?
- Ask if they recommend you do anything else.

Attendance Expectations. We ask how many tickets they expect to sell for this show. We capture this information so that we can compare our final ticket count with the promoter's expectations. We also capture the predicted attendance from the manager for comparison purposes.

Get Press List. If the press lists hasn't been received yet by email, request it again on the phone.

Get the Key Media Contacts. Lastly, ask who the key media contacts are for this market in your genre. If you are a bluegrass band, there may be a Sunday morning bluegrass show that you should get in touch with. Even if the music isn't mainstream there are

probably some media outlets that would support the artist.

DUE DATE:

8 weeks out from the show. Note: We have experimented with the timing on this task and found that calling the marketing contact 8 weeks prior to the show, for club sized acts, is the time when promotions are just getting into full gear.

tip:

1. Lifestyle Outreach.

If you work with an artist that strongly identifies with a certain lifestyle (examples: surfing, gay/lesbian, Christian, a certain ethnicity) then focus some attention on outreach to the appropriate organizations or special interest groups in the market.

task:

2-WEEKS BEFORE THE SHOW, CALL THE MARKETING CONTACT

The purpose of this call is to do one last check-in with the marketing contacts (if you haven't been in regular contact with them). On this call, ask for the current ticket count and how they feel about the number. If the show is lagging, ask what last minute marketing pushes can be made to help the show.

tips:

1. Get Ticket Counts

Generally speaking, when an artist can consistently draw several hundred people per night, the booking agent will get weekly or even daily ticket counts for you. Getting ticket counts for developing artists requires more work on the management's part. But, even for the smaller bands that may not do much in ticket sales before the day of show, it's still worth trying to push your fans in that direction. Keeping track of the sales is the best place to start. In the smaller venues in tertiary markets the promoter may not do advance tickets. Again, push to have this done (even if it's just through **EventBrite** which is a simple, inexpensive online event ticket sales platform).

2. Facebook Ads

Use Facebook ads to target people of a specific age range, location (city or state), and interest group. These ads can be a great way to find new fans in an area to help push ticket sales, and can be great marketing for all types of goods. You can either come up with a ticket sale promotion to advertise or you can simply make an ad to reinforce the artist name and have it click through to the event detail page of that particular show. These ads are cheap too – I recommend the pay per click billing option (rather than the pay per impression) for most scenarios. It is also possible to dictate the maximum amount you would like to spend on a daily basis.

DUE DATE:

2 weeks out from the show.

task:

1 DAY AFTER THE SHOW, CALL THE MARKETING OR PROMOTER CONTACT

In this call you are doing a final wrap-up from the show and keeping any pertinent notes in your database to reference the next time you come to the market. Some of this information will be in the nightly settlement sheets but it's good to have the conversation with the promoter about it. Ask the following questions:

How many tickets sold and were they happy with this number?

How many tickets do you think we can sell next time (especially if it was a sold out show)?

How was the weather (inclement or normal)?

How did the show go?

How was the crowd?

Was there anything you would do differently next time either with the show production or with marketing?

DUE DATE:

1 day after the show.

squeeze 2 : fan community outreach

SUB-SQUEEZE: WEB/EMAIL

task:

ADD NEW DATES TO WEB PROPERTIES

Myspace. The traffic on Myspace may be decreasing as far as the social networking component is concerned but it is still a powerful tool as a web presence for your band. If someone tells me about a new band I should check out, I often go to Myspace first because I know I can hear some of their music there and see the tour dates. All that said, it may not be worth adding your dates to Myspace directly (see TIPS section below for more info). It is easier to use ArtistData (see next).

ArtistData. This site allows you to set up an account for free. Enter the artist tour dates directly into this site and it will update the artist Myspace page, last.fm, Jambase, eventful and a myriad of other websites that display tour dates. It's a powerful, time saving tool.

Artist Website. Of course, it's necessary to enter dates into the one site that the artist actually owns. If this becomes too much of a hassle there is a way to integrate ArtistData into the artist website so that you truly can get away with entering dates only once. (Well, actually, twice...)

Facebook. Facebook is the one place that I recommend taking the time to enter tour dates as 'Facebook Events' rather than just having the dates listed. I am aware that there are several applications which will display tour dates on Facebook, but the power of the 'Facebook Event' is unrivaled in "word of mouth" marketing. We have found that the event pages are most attractive to fans when it is filled with video, photos and show info.

DUE DATE:

12 weeks out from tour start date when the tour is announced, if the band is doing defined tours. If the band is constantly touring, this should be done immediately after you have your first discussion with the promoter in which you finalized and confirmed the show information.

tips:

1. Make note of the Facebook event URL.

Copy it and put it in your database (see the Excel database in the Tool Kit). You can include this link in your email communications with the promoter, support acts and marketing reps (Examples of these emails can be found in the Tool Kit). You can also include it in monthly newsletters to help promote the show. I show an example of this in the next section.

Note: This should be the base for the url of all Facebook events. After the “eid=” is a string of numbers you can fill in. www.Facebook.com/event.php?eid=

2. Create a “Show Information Standard” or SIS for short.

A SIS is a list of information that you want posted on every web property you control. For us that information is:

- VENUE NAME AND ADDRESS
- DATE AND SHOW TIME
- OTHER ARTISTS ON BILL
- TICKET PRICE
- TICKET PURCHASE LINK (If you are going to list the date online always give the person a chance to buy a ticket to it right from the place where they find out... if it's in your control).
- AGES

A SIS forces uniform presentation of information all across the web, and when you're in the business of selling tickets and developing a relationship with fans this just makes sense. I know this sounds simple but it took me 2 years to realize this. Once I came up with the rule it reinforced my efforts to get the correct information from the promoter immediately after show confirmation.

Lastly, note that when you post information in ArtistData, the SIS rules will not be honored every time. I know for sure that even if you post a ticket link in ArtistData, that link will not transfer over to Myspace (and possibly that goes for other sites as well).

3. Facebook geo-targeted notification

When creating a Facebook event there is an option to send a notification to fans around the area. Notifications are a bit hidden within the Facebook experience, but several hard core music fans have told me that they always check their notifications because that's where bands post their updates. So that said, you should do it for your events. It only takes a few seconds extra after creating the event.

I always choose to send a geographically specific update rather than a universal update to all of the fans. I like the targeted outreach rather than the spam approach. If the venue location happens to be near a state border, then send the update to the neighboring state as well. It's also worth noting that when a new artist event is created, it sends an update to each fan's news feed (depending on their preferences settings).

4. Give Support Acts admin access to the Facebook event.

Give them a link to the Facebook event and tell them to “attend” it. Once the artist (or at least one member) ‘attends’ the event, make that person an admin for the event so they can alter it with their information as well. Then ask them to invite all of their friends in the area. If your support act is a local band, chances are their friend/fan base will be very excited to come out and support a larger nationally touring act. Getting the support act onboard with the Face-

book event is one of the best ways we have found to spread the word about the show and significantly increase attendance.

5. Change Myspace/Facebook/Website Image to Tour Art.

At the point when the artist is doing defined tours with tour specific branding, use the tour artwork as the default image for the various web properties. Change it (at a minimum) each time there is a new tour. This keeps the web presence fresh, interesting and topical.

task:

INCLUDE TOUR DATES IN A MONTHLY EMAIL NEWSLETTER

We send an email newsletter once per month at approximately the same time each month but we will shift that date accordingly to accommodate the announcement of a tour or other significant news.

If announcing a tour, then obviously it makes sense to include all of those tour dates in the newsletter with a grand announcement of the tour concept. When we announce an upcoming tour that is at least 8 weeks out, we list those dates in the body of the email and then list the tour dates over the next 5 weeks in a column on the right that runs down the entire length of the email content. If the artist is constantly on tour, then list all of the dates across the next 5 weeks (until the next newsletter comes out). The example below shows a piece of an artist newsletter with dates listed just so you can see how they are laid out.



DUE DATE:

12 weeks out from tour start date, on the tour announce date, if the band is doing defined tours (and no less than 8 weeks out). If the band is constantly touring, then announce new and upcoming dates in a monthly newsletter.

tips:

1. Use your SIS.

Per my previous mention, when you list the tour dates here use your SIS (Show Information Standard) if you have the space. If you don't have the space, provide a link to a place where the SIS is available. Again: always list the ticket purchase link with the tour date. You don't want a fan wondering how to buy tickets if they are ready to do so.

2. Add a Facebook event link.

The one additional piece of information that we add to our newsletters is a Facebook event link for each show

3. Graphics and Videos generate click throughs.

This is a side note, not related to tour marketing but a good tip. Videos, photos and images generate more click-through traffic than any other piece of information on a newsletter... so use them! Our next e-book will discuss online marketing tips and tricks.

4. Email Providers.

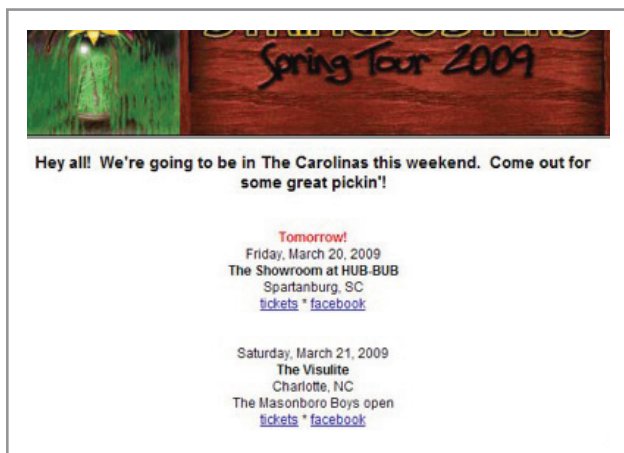
There are a lot of email applications out there. We did research on several of the more popular ones and decided on **FanMail.com**. FanMail (a cooperative effort between Jambase and ExactTarget email service) is targeted toward musical artists, so customer service (which is superior) has you in mind. When you call to talk about street teams or emailing mp3s or fan radius searches, they know exactly what you're talking about.

task:

1 WEEK OUT SHOW PROMOTIONS

One week prior to the show date:

Geo-targeted fan email. Send a regionally specific reminder about the show. Our email program, FanMail, which allows us to do a zip code radius search so that we can find all of the fans on our email list within 150 miles of the venue zip code. Of course, you can expand or shrink the radius search but we've found 150 miles to be effective. We send this group a simple email reminder with a list of the upcoming shows in their area. Below is a piece of what one of these emails looks like.



tips:

1. Personalized outreach.

This tip comes from another manager. For every show they go into Myspace (and you can substitute Facebook, your email list or any other geographically

searchable fan community here) and search out all “friends” who live in the area around a show. They then send that person a personalized email telling them about the show. It’s about as specific as you can get in terms of fan outreach. We’ve tried it and though it’s incredibly effective it’s also very time consuming. If you have the resources then go for it.

2. Gathering Zip Codes.

To send geo-targeted emails you will need zip codes of your fan base. There are two effective ways of gathering zip codes. The first is to ask fans for it when they sign up on your email list at a show (see our email list template in the Tool Kit). The second option is to launch a zip code collection campaign. For a collection campaign, think of an incentive for entering the zip code and a time frame for collecting the data then announce it through a monthly email and your various web properties. At the end of the campaign, deliver the incentive (free downloads for example). Lastly, as a reminder, if you have an online email address collector, set ‘zip code’ as a required field.

task:

3 DAYS OUT SHOW PROMOTIONS

As we continue to get closer to the show, we send more specific reminders. 3 days out from the show we send the following reminders:

Facebook email reminder to event attendees. As an admin of the Facebook event, you can send an emailed update to all attendees of the event. This is not a notification or a status update, it is actually an email that will go into their Facebook email inbox. This is an effective way of reminding someone and getting the event back into the Facebook flow and thus on top of everyone’s mind (if they haven’t pre-purchased tickets especially). Often you will see an up tick in Facebook event attendees after sending this email reminder.

Send a text alert reminder. There are many text broadcast services out there. We found a simple and free solution with **Broadtexter.com** that works well for us. It allows you to geo-target text alerts by state and gives you the opportunity to schedule alerts weeks in advance. For a more advanced solution, you may try Mozes. FanMail has a relationship with Mozes which allows fans to sign up on your email list by texting their email to you. There is a monthly fee for this.

task:

DAY OF SHOW PROMOTIONS

Day of show is time for a last minute web-based marketing push including:

Facebook “status update.” They don’t call them status updates anymore but the idea is still the same. Much like twitter, you can send out a short update to your fan base. Plug in something about the show that night- where and when.

Twitter update. Twitter is most effective as a tool for honest communication from the artist to the fan base. But it also doesn’t hurt to throw in a shameless plug on the day of a show, letting everyone know where and when the band is playing that night.

squeeze 2 : fan community outreach

SUB-SQUEEZE: MARKETING REPS

I have an aversion to the term “street teams.” My first job in the music business in 1997 was working for the local night club, as a street teamer. We were always given too many ugly 8.5x11 flyers and told to blanket the town. I felt like I was littering and I wasn't sure how effective it was- the flyers would either be ripped down or covered up within a few days. However, there were always a few posters that came from the record labels that were large, glossy and beautiful. My job was to take these gems to the local record stores or cafes and politely ask the manager if we could hang them in the coveted window space. Permission was always granted and weeks would go by without those posters being taken down from their prime real estate. It's a bit like the broken window theory. If you show that you care about the presentation of your artist – even in poster form – then people around you will likewise respect that image and the brand strengthens.

So, in an effort to cast away the traditional street team “use them and abuse them” mentality, we have introduced the term Marketing Reps (more accurately, we stole the term from record labels) for our volunteer work force. In conjunction with the change of name, we have altered our theory of how to use these folks most effectively to help spread the brand of the artist.

How is the Marketing Rep model changed from earlier efforts of running street teams?

Send nice posters. As mentioned earlier, we no longer print 8.5x11” flyers, nor do we use fluorescent paper to print our art on 11x17” paper. Instead we have an 11x17” poster designed for every tour and then have this printed in bulk which makes the posters very reasonably priced (approx. \$200 for 1000 posters).

Print show text on each one. When the posters come in, we recommend printing the appropriate show text on each poster as needed (including venue name, city/state, show date/time, support acts) rather than scribbling the text by hand. As I mentioned before, you can buy a printer for your office that can handle printing text on 11x17” posters or your local copy shop could do this for you.

Send fewer posters . Lastly, rather than sending them 100-150 posters (as I used to do), we recommend sending 10-25 per person (we send 10 and ask them to pick the best spots in town). In my experience, when I used to send 100-150, rarely did a team member indicate that they posted all 150. Now, with 10 posters nearly

everyone who does the work will respond with a full list of where each poster went. Additionally, we find that the morale is higher when we only send 10 posters. If you send too many people feel like they've failed you when they can't hang them all so they drop off the team for good. Nearly everyone can succeed with just 10 posters!

Now that I've explained the difference in marketing reps vs. street teams, let's explore a thorough system for using them effectively. This work can be very time consuming but also well worth the time. Through the connections we have made with our artist's core fan base, doors have opened in each market that we (as managers sitting in an office) never would have been able to do on our own (including connections to radio stations, underground message boards, the tape recording/trading community and so on).

task:

MARKETING REPS – CALL TO ACTION

The first step in gathering a marketing rep team is to announce the Call to Action in conjunction with the announcement of the tour. The Call to Action includes the following information:

A list of the dates for which you need assistance

What is required as part of the team. For our teams we require:

- Hang 10 posters in high traffic, relevant retail locations
- Promote online in 2 ways, possibly to include: inviting Facebook friends to the event, posting a banner on a site or message board or spreading the word on message boards.
- Assist at the show for 15 minutes gathering email addresses.

What the incentive is. Some fans will volunteer as a marketing rep just because they want to help. But we have found it always helps to have an incentive for them to join the team. The most effective incentive is one that relates to what the fan is marketing. In the case of marketing for shows, we recommend granting one guest list spot (a free ticket) at the show.

How they can sign up for the team. There are several ways to do this. The most rudimentary is to give them an email address of the marketing rep coordinator in your office. Alternatively, you could set up a preference in your email program that allows the fan to join the "marketing rep" group.

Announcing the call to action can take place through the following channels:

Email newsletter. This is the most effective when tied in with a tour announcement.

Myspace bulletin. Myspace may be dwindling in effectiveness but it still generates good results for these campaigns.

Facebook. Notes, notifications, emails and 'status update'

Twitter update. The announcement could direct fans to the email address or sign up page.

Email to current marketing rep database. Keep track of any marketing reps in a spreadsheet database (see the Excel spreadsheet database template in the Tool Kit) with name and contact info so you can easily access and contact them in the future.

DUE DATE:

12 weeks out if this is in conjunction with a tour announcement. The latest possible effective date for launching a marketing rep campaign is 8 weeks before the show date. (That gives the marketing reps approximately 5-6 weeks to promote the show).

tips:

1. Reminder Call to Action.

One week after announcing the Call to Action check your shows to see if there are any that need more marketing reps (typically you want 3-5 reps per 1000 audience members). If you have shows that are falling short, post a reminder call to action that lists the same info but only lists the shows with which you still need help. You can do this once per week all the way up to 7 weeks out from the show. At 7 weeks out from the show you will want to close the team and mail out posters.

2. Email List Collection.

We send our artists on the road with 3 clipboards and ask that they get left at the merchandise table. We then ask the artist marketing reps to pick up the clipboards from the merchandise table before and after the show to collect email addresses. There are other ways to collect email addresses (like asking people to text it to the database or using an electronic fan email collector) but of all the methods we have tried, this is still the most effective (though clearly not incredibly efficient).

task:

MARKETING REPS – COMPILING AND FINALIZING TEAMS

Next you need to decide which applications you are going to accept for each particular show. We try to use one to five marketing reps per show for an average-sized club show. On average about 3-5 marketing reps per 1000 seats makes sense. In certain markets, you will have too many marketing rep applications and need to trim it down.

After selecting the team members, we close out the team and don't accept any further applications. We select our team members on the following criteria:

Their distance from venue. If we are playing a show in a tertiary market and a fan from 2.5 hours away in a small town volunteers to hang posters, it won't make sense. They could be helpful in promoting online but the posters won't be helpful there.

Size of their home town. If a fan lives 1.5 hours from the venue but it is the closest big city to the venue then it will make sense to use them.

Their previous performance. We keep track of how each marketing rep performed on each show. Keep this information in your spreadsheet database (in the Tool Kit) so you can compare notes next time they apply. We rate performance on a scale of 0-3 (0 = did nothing, 1 = poor, 2 = use again, 3 = awesome)

DUE DATE:

7 weeks before the show date.

task:

MARKETING REPS – EMAILING FINAL TEAMS

If there were any applications that weren't accepted for this tour then email those fans thanking them for their application.

Once you have finalized the team, send an email to the team members by market (see example email in the Tool Kit) outlining the following:

The duties for each show:

Promote online in 2 places – We ask that everyone promote on Facebook and also give them HTML code for a small banner they can put on a website or blog. (see notes below in TIPS section)

Hang 10 posters

Complete a feedback form which is due one week before the show date. A simple feedback form can be created in Excel (an example is in the spreadsheet database in the Tool Kit).

To assist on the night of the show with gathering email addresses on the mailing list.

The list of fellow team members to that they can coordinate with each other.

DUE DATE:

7 weeks before the show date.

tips:

1. Based on data from the past 3 years, about 65% of untested marketing reps will complete some portion of the work assigned. With sending a smaller amount of posters you stand a better chance of a rep hanging all of their posters (whereas with 150 they might a small fraction posted).

2. Handbills are another good method of getting the word out. Ideally, make a tour specific handbill on quality card stock, full-color, with nice art and all of the tour dates listed on one side. Make them souvenirs rather than trash. You can include a small stack of these in your team mailings or send some to the promoter.

3. Clizxtrac.com offers a free service whereby you can load a banner into their system and it will give you code that will track how many impressions and clicks your banner gets. A nice feature is that you can change the image of the banner at any point in time. This allows the banner to stay in place on the fan's page but display whatever image you have loaded in at the time (per tour branding). If you have the time, you can create a unique banner for each show on the tour so that you can see which marketing rep team is doing the best job with promoting the show through the banners.

task:

MARKETING REPS – MAILING POSTERS

We discussed the printing of the posters and getting the text printed on them in your office. Now it's time to mail them out. As referenced earlier, we recommend using the recyclable mailers from Uline and sending them out via USPS. The rate is approximately \$3 per package if you are mailing up to 14 posters (after 14, the weight pushes it into the next level of cost). Your cost (per team member) for the packaging, the posters and postage comes to approximately \$5.

tips:

1. If you don't have one yet, renting a Pitney Bowes postage meter is definitely worth it if you see yourself mailing hundreds of marketing rep packages each month.

DUE DATE:

7 weeks before the show

task:

MARKETING REPS – FEEDBACK FORM DUE DATE REMINDER

We require feedback forms to be due 1 week before the date of the show. The day before the due date we look through our database to see who hasn't returned the feedback form yet and send them a reminder email. It is easiest to set a deadline and stick to it so if a marketing rep doesn't return the form by the deadline, they will not be on the guest list. An example of our reminder email is in the Tool Kit.

DUE DATE:

9 days before the show

task:

MARKETING REPS – RATING FEEDBACK FORMS AND SUBMITTING GUEST LIST

When all of the feedback forms are in, review and rate their work and make note of it in your spreadsheet/database (in the Tool Kit) so you can reference it in the future. Again, we rate performance on a scale of 0-3 (0 = did nothing, 1 = poor, 2 = use again, 3 = awesome)

DUE DATE:

6 days before the show

task:

MARKETING REPS – THANK YOU EMAILS

The day after the show, we send a thank you email to all of the marketing reps who helped make the show a success (they get a thank you if their performance rating was 1-3). It's a simple thank you but it's important to let them know you appreciated their help.

DUE DATE:

1 day after the show

squeeze 3 :

media outreach

When an artist achieves a certain level of financial success they are able to afford both a publicist (to focus on print and online media) and a radio promoter (to coordinate in-studio performances, radio station 'presents', phone interviews and more). If your artist has reached that level, that's great! If not, then the tips in this section provide an outline of what you can do in-house to manage all forms of publicity.

In many cases, even if you hire an outside publicist your management office can supplement the work with these tasks. For example, we have worked with bands that had hired a publicist but that person did not spend any time working radio. Therefore, we were able to step in and provide radio outreach.

Below is a plan for pursuing at least one media event (preview, review, interview, in-studio, in-store, phoner, and so on) in each market. If you have hired a publicist or radio promoter, you can use this system to help augment their efforts.

The process of media outreach begins with your communication with the promoter marketing contact. This contact will give you the press list that they have for the club. In your conversation, ask them for the key media contacts in the area – that is, which radio, press and blogs will support your artist. These contacts will be your primary focus for your media outreach efforts.

task:

GET THE PRESS LIST

Ideally, you want to have the press list by 8 weeks out from the show so that you can begin reaching out to all of the print media. You may miss the deadline for a monthly magazine this close to the show but for all weekly arts papers and online outlets, you will be well ahead of deadlines.

DUE DATE:

8 weeks out

task:

SEND AN INTRO EMAIL WITH THE PRESS RELEASE TO THE ENTIRE MEDIA LIST

In many cases, there will be old email addresses on the press list you get from the promoter. There will also be many press outlets that don't really make sense for your artist. Regardless, we send an email to the entire list for 2 reasons. One, you never know where a closet fan of your band may be hiding within the media community. Two, many of these media outlets may not support your artist directly but they would be willing, at least, to put the show on their calendar.

Though we never expect much response from this email blast, we have been surprised by the occasional response of an outlet that wasn't a target.

DUE DATE:

8 weeks out

task:

SEND A PERSONALIZED EMAIL AND CALL ALL OF THE PROMOTER- RECOMMENDED KEY MEDIA CONTACTS.

I always name drop here, letting the media contact know that the Jim Bob, the promoter at Venue A, recommended I give them a call. Generally speaking, the person on the other end of the phone will be happy to hear from you. Give your pitch and ask if it would be possible to line up a preview, review, interview, phoner or in-studio.

If you are doing this work 8 weeks out from the show you may be asked to follow up again around 4 weeks out from the show. Also keep in mind that no single media outlet will want to burn out on your artist. So trying to line something up every month won't work.

Keep track of who you have contacted and when (you can use the spreadsheet database in the Tool Kit for this) and if you get the request for an interview. The simplest way to keep track of any confirmed event is in your calendar or in your database. Much like we have a SIS for listing shows, we also ask for a standardized list of information that we capture to relay to the artist or tour manager. That information includes:

Company

Interviewer name

Phone number

Email

Type (phone interview, radio in-studio, preview, review, email interview)

Deadline

Interview location

Notes (idea, story idea/angle, length of story)

DUE DATE:

8 weeks out

tip:

If you work with what is not traditionally considered a radio-friendly band there is still a world of options for you to explore in terms of radio exposure. Granted it's not the type of exposure you get from Top 40 or even Triple A radio, but you can still find a niche who will support you. Explore the non-comm, college or community radio options with the promoter. Ask if there are any specialty programs which would make sense and then try to line up an in-studio or interview on one of these.

Radio can be a great way to get the word out to a larger audience. And it increases the chances that they will play some of your tunes that day, even if it's just on the specialty program.

task:

CONFIRMING INTERVIEWS / REMINDING THE ARTIST

Once the interview has been confirmed, mark it in your calendar with a reminder. On the day of the interview, we send a text reminder to the interviewee and/or the tour manager to remind them of the appointment.

DUE DATE:

Day of media appointment

closing words

The hardest aspect of providing amazing tour marketing for your artists is the coordination of all the tasks and due dates. For that reason, we have included a simple spreadsheet database template as part of the Squeezing The Show system kit which will help you manage your task check lists. You will find that it's hard to commit to doing all of these tasks but I guarantee you that it makes a difference. Apply these systems consistently and watch the artist's touring machine grow more smoothly than you ever thought possible.

We hope you enjoyed reading this text and that you will begin applying what you've learned today. Thank you for your purchase and for reading!

How can I stay connected with The Artist Farm?

Send us your thoughts – Let us know what you've thought of this system by emailing ben@theartistfarm.com. If you have additional marketing ideas or corrections to this text, drop me a line.

Check in on our blog – We will be posting more tour marketing ideas and general thoughts on the industry in our blog. We hope to announce more industry guide books in the future and the launch of music industry task management software. Check us out at: theartistfarm.com/ideas.

Coaching/Mentoring - We offer mentorship and coaching services for artists and managers. Read any book on business success strategies and you will find that coaching and mentorship are key to success. Email me today to learn more: ben@theartistfarm.com

what's in the tool kit

EMAIL TEMPLATES

Marketing Reps – Confirmation Email

Marketing Reps – Declined Email

Marketing Reps – Feedback Form Reminder

Media Outreach – Email to entire press list

Promoter Outreach – Marketing Email for Festival

Promoter Outreach – Marketing Email for Venue

SHOW DATABASE / CHECKLIST

1. Tour Marketing Checklist

In this sheet you will list the name of the tour and the approximate tour start date. The deadlines for various tour related tasks autopopulate in the sheet so you can stay on top of tour timelines.

2. Show Marketing Checklist

In this sheet you will enter the Show Date, venue and artist name in each column. The rows display the tasks and sub-tasks you need to perform for each show and the latest possible due date for each task. The due dates are based either on the completion of another task for number of weeks/days before or after a show.

3. Show Database

This is where you can keep pertinent show information like communication notes, marketing plan notes, ticket counts, contact information and post-show information. You will reference this archived information to make better decisions next time you are in the market

4. Show Marketing Reps

In this sheet you will list your upcoming shows and the information for each marketing rep you have listed on that show. In the columns after the marketing rep information you will find the tasks associated with each individual team member. In these columns you will write the date of completion for each task. Finally, there is a notes field to keep track of any additional information.

5. Marketing Rep database

This is a place to keep the contact information for your marketing rep database. This will be especially useful if you do not have an email program that manages this group for you.

6. Media Interviews

In here you will write the show information and the contact information of the media outlet that wants to interview your artist. There is a column for the media event type, deadline, time of interview, etc.

7. Feedback Form example

This feedback form is a simple example of what you can send to your marketing reps to turn in before the show. Copy this and paste into a Word document or put into Excel to email to the teams.

MAILING LIST SIGN UP TEMPLATE

This is the email list sign up form that we use for most artists. It's simple but effective.

resources

Clixtrac.com

Clixtrac allows you to create an account and load up as many banners as you desire. For each one it creates trackable code which you can give to a promoter or marketing rep to post on their website or blog. You can then log into the Clixtrac system to see how many impressions and click throughs your banners have received. Cost: Free.

ZooPrinting.com

A web-based print company that provides good bulk rates and good quality for 11x17" full color posters.

4over.com

A web-based print company that provides good bulk rates and good quality for 11x17" full color posters.

Uline.com

A web-based warehouse of shipping, packaging and industrial supplies. They have amazing turn around time on shipping. Typically it will be at your door the day after order. We order our 100% recyclable corrugated cardboard mailers from them.

ArtistData

A website that allows you to enter tour dates in one place and have them broadcasted all across the web. Cost: free

Broadtexter.com

A text broadcasting company with a focus on music related business. Cost: free.

Facebook

Love it or hate it, it's where everyone is right now so it's great for business.

Yousendit.com

Web based large file delivery system. You load your large file (up to 100 MB) into their system and they email you a link to it so you can share it.

FanMail

An email software solution that is a cooperative between JamBase and ExactTarget. Pretty much any email feature you need, they have.

PitneyBowes

You can rent a small Pitney Bowes machine for approximately \$40 per month with all the fees included. They have a year contract though, so beware of that. It's a good deal if you mail lots of packages (it saves you time on UPS/FedEx websites or standing in line at the Post Office).