

Making a Time Released Press Kit.

By David Hooper (email via <http://www.indiebiz.com/>)

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DEMO SUBMISSION POLICY: We're always looking for good bands and musicians to work with. To submit your demo, please fill out the form at the end of this document and mail your package to the address below.

Kathode Ray Music
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I order a lot of promotional materials for my company. Stickers, shirts, pens, postcards, and CD openers are just a few of items we have used over the years. Some of them work for us, some of them don't.

When going through my mail today, I got a sales solicitation from one of the companies we had purchased pens through. This one contained a new pen style they were trying to get me interested in. Imprinted on it was our name and mailing address.

Every week or two, I get something new from this company. I can't wait to open the package to see what is enclosed. Most of the time it contains a new type of pen, but I have gotten letter openers, pocket knives, calendars, clocks, day planners, and several other promotional items as well.

Over the years, I have ordered a great number of pens and other promotional items from these guys. Why? It's not because I need them. It's because they constantly put their name and product in front of me.

How does this apply to you and your band? Because the same techniques will keep you on the minds of people you know...or just want to know.

PART 1: GETTING IN THE DOOR OF THE MUSIC BUSINESS!

Have a record company guy that you're interested in meeting? Instead of sending him your press kit in one big chunk, why not break it down into several pieces?

Keep the image of your band in front of him! It's a proven fact that it often takes more than a single exposure for something to stick, so dragging your promotional materials out over time will be of great benefit to you.

Before you start, make sure you have a logo or some sort of symbol that DOES NOT contain any words. Not only will this be important to develop the curiosity of your subject you are targeting with this promotion, but it is also important in general since we live in a society of symbols, graphs, and sound bytes.

1. Start with a fax containing just your logo or icon on it. Don't mention where you're from or what you want.

If the office is small (less than six people), don't include a cover letter in order to add to the mystery. Also be sure to change up the contact information on your fax machine.

A promotion I did on Sniffing Glue by the Visitors sent two faxes. The first simply said, "Do you like Sniffing Glue?" The next was a few days later with the symbol from Elmer's glue and the message, "We think you will!"

2. Send a postcard with the symbol and/or message about a week later.

3. Do you have a gimmick with the symbol such as a shirt or pen? Wait a week and send it.

Do you have a novelty item that will be attention getting? That is even better!

We sent out tiny glue bottles to promote Sniffing Glue. I know a band that sent out vibrators to promote their song called "Bzzzz (the Sound of Love)." Novelty items work especially well!

NOTE: Everybody has done condoms and matchbooks! Stay away from these unless you can find some way to relate them specifically to your album or band!

4. Send your CD along with a cover letter encouraging the recipient to act! Make sure that they can associate your package with the promotional materials you have already sent. Chances are, they'll be very curious and put you on right away.

5. Follow up in a couple of days with your request!

PART 2: KEEPING YOUR FANS EXCITED ABOUT YOU!

While a "time delayed" promotion is a great foot in the door, it is also an excellent way to keep your band on the minds of your fans! It's a great way to combat all of the distractions we have in the World today!

At Kathode Ray Music, we send out a monthly newsletter of promotion

tips and other music opportunities. Your band can do something similar with gig dates, stories from the road, and DEFINITELY a sales pitch to promote your latest single.

One of the best newsletters I have ever gotten was from a band in Memphis called Techno Squid Eats Parliament.

These guys were on the road almost all the time and had a section of their newsletter called "Bitchin' Product Alert!" about interesting regional products they found. For example, they once wrote an entire article about finding "Coconut Yoohoo" and spending all of their money on it since it was not available in Memphis and they had never seen it before.

Make your newsletter as interesting as possible and try to appeal to everybody. Your die hard fans may be extremely excited you're finally going back into studio after two years, but you want to win people over. Interviews with the band members' first grade teachers, recipes from the singer's grandmother, or a crazy advice column from the bus driver are all things I have seen make band newsletters very successful.

Send your newsletter out via mail (not email!) monthly. Any more than that may turn people off. Any less and people might forget about you!

Have fun with it and you'll soon be able to get people as excited about your music as you are! Good luck!

If there is anything I do to help you with your music career, please contact me via the IndieBiz.com website!

David Hooper is the founder of the music business resource, IndieBiz.com (<http://www.indiebiz.com/>), and Kathode Ray Music (<http://www.kathoderaymusic.com/>), an artist development organization specializing in promotion and marketing of independent musicians and bands. He is known for combining traditional music business knowledge with the guerrilla marketing necessary for independent bands to compete. He has worked in the past with Lords of Acid, Marcy Playground, and Bush. Current clients include Confederate Fagg and Dresscode.

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SEE NEXT PAGE FOR DEMO SUBMISSION INFORMATION!

KATHODE RAY MUSIC
DEMO SUBMISSION FORM

NAME OF ARTIST/BAND:

ARTIST/BAND CONTACT:

DAYTIME PHONE NUMBER:

EVENING PHONE NUMBER:

EMAIL ADDRESS:

WEB URL:

NUMBER OF UNITS SOLD:

SHORT TERM MUSICAL GOALS:

LONG TERM MUSICAL GOALS:

TYPE OF ASSISTANCE NEEDED:

MAIL THIS FORM WITH CD/CASSETTE TO:

KATHODE RAY MUSIC
PO BOX 121135
NASHVILLE, TN 37212-1135