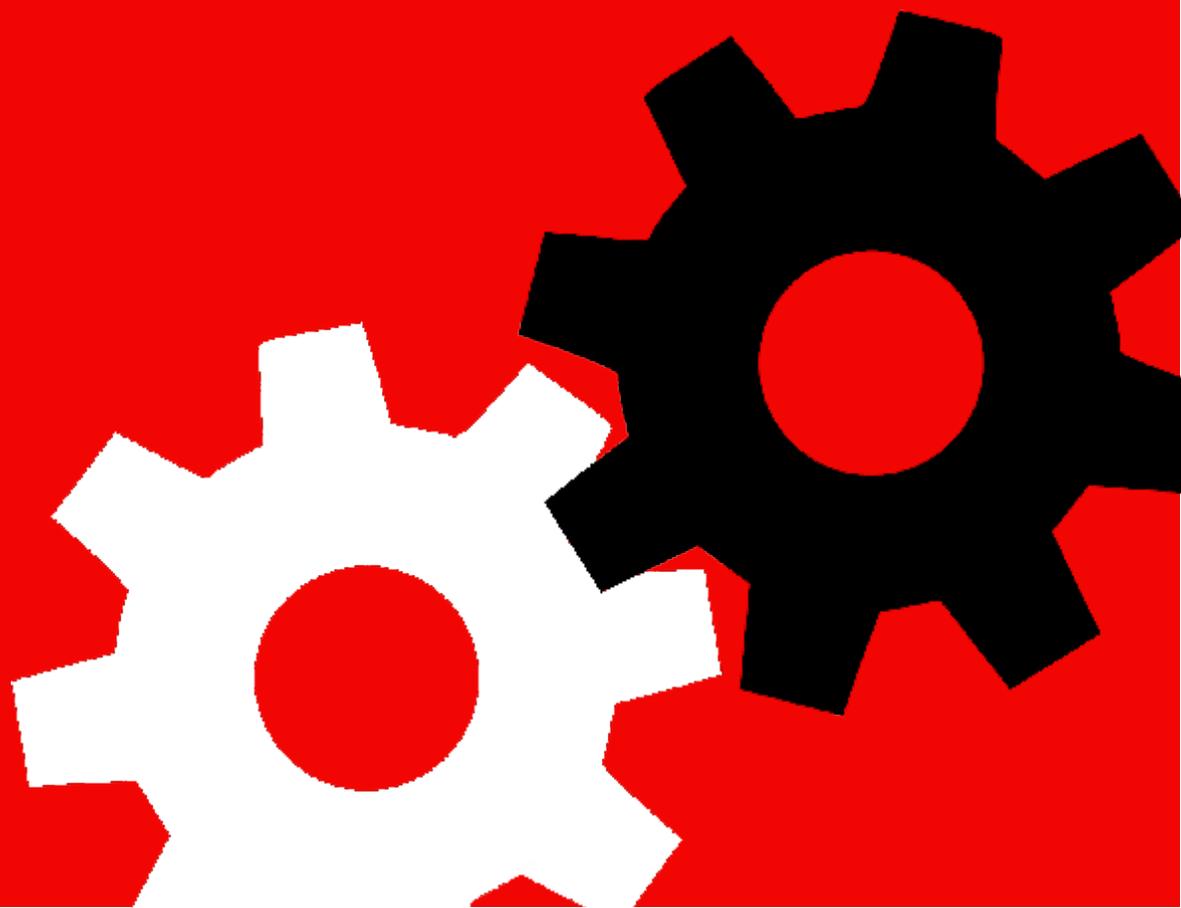


Music Marketing Machine

by Carla Lynne Hall



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***Strategies to Sell More Music, Get More Fans,
and Grow Your Music Business!***

by Carla Lynne Hall,
author of *The DIY Guide to the Music Biz*



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Why I Wrote This eReport

When I first started making music in the late-1980's, Ani DiFranco was the first well-known indie musician to release her own CD, and make a full-time living from touring and merchandise. As Ani's audience increased, so did the interest from major record labels who wanted to sign her. Now that Ani had the upper hand in negotiating a major label deal, she still refused. Although Ani was not trying to be the poster child for the indie musician, her decision to stay indie became a revolutionary act.

After that time, the indie music world experienced a number of breakthroughs: Cheaper cost of creating a high-quality home recording studio, MP3s and file sharing, CD Baby (the first online retailer at the time), and iTunes. All of these smaller steps made it easy and inexpensive for an artist or band to release and sell their own CD – and even get it into a record store.

Since writing my first edition of *The DIY Guide to the Music Biz* in 2000, the indie music biz has evolved by leaps and bounds. Bands all over the world have embraced this DIY ethic, choosing to take matters into their own hands.

Bands who insist upon staying independent are no longer out of the ordinary, but the number of bands actually making a living from their music leaves a lot of room for improvement.

While exercising your independence to make music the way you choose is empowering, in my opinion, it's time to take this game to the next level: **Entrepreneurship.**

If you're a band or a musician with a CD to sell, you're in *business*.

After making your music, your top priorities are marketing and selling it. Since many musicians are a bit hesitant in this area, I started writing my next book, which teaches basic business skills that can be learned. Even if you choose to delegate some of the duties to others, it's still important that you have a basic understanding of how to make your music business grow.

The time has come for the world to see more "Middle Class Musicians", and I want to help you to become one of them.



1000 True Fans

Kevin King, a senior editor at Wired Magazine turned the indie world on its ear with his breakthrough manifesto, "1000 True Fans":

"A creator, such as an artist, musician, photographer, craftsperson, performer, animator, designer, video maker, or author - in other words, anyone producing works of art - needs to acquire only 1,000 True Fans to make a living.

A True Fan is defined as someone who will purchase anything and everything you produce. They will drive 200 miles to see you sing. They will buy the super deluxe re-issued hi-res box set of your stuff even though they have the low-res version. They come to your gigs. They have you sign their copies. They buy the t-shirt, and the mug, and the hat. They can't wait till you issue your next CD.

These are your true fans."

In truth, some musicians can be supported by less than 1000 fans, but the basic points behind this concept are:

- **A True Fan spends \$100 or more per year** on your music and merchandise
- **If you have 1000 True Fans, that totals \$100,000 in music income**
- You will also have Lesser Fans who spend less than \$100 per year, but they can be converted to True Fans when you engage them
- This number is based on a solo artist, and can be increased for bands

LTV = Life Time Value (of a Fan)

Next time a new fan buys your CD, remember that he or she doesn't have to stop with one purchase. A loyal fan could be worth thousands of dollars to you.

For an artist, musician, or band: **Success in the music business depends on your ability to connect with your fans, and create a growing fanbase.**

Musicians vs. Entrepreneurs

Over the past few years, I have helped a few non-musician entrepreneurs with their marketing strategies. The interesting difference is how many musicians are



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uncomfortable with marketing themselves.

Let me tell you, entrepreneurs don't have that same issue. With rent and utilities to pay, and mouths to feed, he or she understands that the only way to make money - for people to buy what they're selling - is for potential customers to know that they have something to sell!

And that means **PUTTING YOURSELF OUT THERE!**

It's not enough to have a CD of your own. You still have to bring it to shows. You still need to mention it from the stage. You still need to have an email sign-up sheet. While it would be lovely to have someone come and shower us with money and opportunities, that's not the way the world works.

The old music business was based on a fantasy of a major record label swooping bands up from obscurity, signing them to a million dollar record deal, and then living happily after.

The trouble with this scenario is that it's a fairy tale, like Cinderella.

It's important for a band to be self-reliant, and know who they are, with or without a record deal. Investors and agents are more interested in how you handle your **BUSINESS**, and they're mostly interested in how they're going to get a return on their investment. If you're not already creating \$500,000 worth of excitement for your music, why should they invest \$500,000 in you?

It's easy to assume that you'll make the big moves **AFTER** you get the investors, but if you're not already making \$500,000 moves and decisions now (in time and effort), how can you expect to be taken seriously??

When we're **NOT** expecting someone to take over the reins, only then can we understand that we are the only ones who can make anything happen. It's up to us to create the energy and the heat for our career, which in turn will create those opportunities that we seek.

The 3 Ways to Grow YOUR Music Biz

Guess what? There are **ONLY 3** ways to grow your music business:

- 1. Increase your number of fans**
- 2. Increase the average size of sale per fan**
- 3. Increase the number of times fans return and buy again**



Here are some tips for each:

Increase your number of fans

- At gigs, have a sign-in form at your merchandise table, and also have someone walk around the venue with a clipboard.
- When you meet people in person, follow up with an email asking to sign them up to your email list.
- Hit up your social network friends who aren't already on your email list, and ask them to sign up to your newsletter.

Increase the average size of sale per fan

- Create a line of promo merchandise for your fanbase, not just CDs. Offer products at price points from 99 cents to \$500 (or more!)
- Bundle some of your products together, and offer a special price.
- Create bulk discounts of your CDs, so fans can give them as gifts.

Increase the number of times fans return and buy again

- Keep in touch with your fans regularly
- Create more offers for them to buy your merch
- Offer specials and sales for holidays and other special occasions

What's Your Nut?

Back in the day, circuses traveled from town to town in a caravan of wagons. After finding a spot to set up show tents, the circus' wagon wheel nuts were removed and held by a local real estate agent. In order for a circus to get their wagon's wheel nuts returned, the circus would have to make enough money to buy them back. This became known as the "Daily Nut."



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If a circus company did not make enough money to cover their daily nut, the circus would have to stay in town until they covered their expenses.

So before you quit your job to pursue music full-time, you have to figure out your monthly nut. If you're not sure how you'll make that nut, here are some tips:

Create a Budget

How much money have you made annually from your regular job in the past three years? Where does your money go? Find out exactly how much money you'll need to live on. Don't neglect considerations like health insurance and future CD recordings.

Decide What You Are Willing to Do

Would you consider moving to a smaller city with a lower cost of living? Will you live with your parents, have a lover support you, or seek investors? Are you willing to cut some luxuries in order to lower your overhead? Are you prepared to spend a lot of time "working the phone?" Can you turn down gigs that pay little or no money, and hustle for the ones that will fill your pockets?

Create Multiple Sources of Income

Would you consider wedding bands, cover gigs, being the occasional side player in order to pay the bills? If you're computer-savvy, could you build websites or design graphics for others? If you have office experience, perhaps you can be a virtual assistant who works from home. Can you produce CDs for other bands? Make a list of all your talents and offer them to people who need them. Craigslist.org is a great start for this.

Stay Within Your Budget

Avoid "retail therapy" and other bad spending habits that require your spending money in order to make yourself feel better. This creates more debt, which will only cause you to feel worse in the long run.

The 4 C's of the New Music Biz

Running a business – any kind of business – requires that special attention be paid to manufacturing, prospecting, and marketing before money can be made, and it's no different for musicians.

To break this concept down into easy-to-remember terms, I've come up with "The 4 C's of the New Music Business:



CREATE + CAPTURE + CONNECT = CASH

“The 4 C’s of the New Music Biz” are the basic steps followed by just about every successful entrepreneur - selling any kind of product. There is nothing new about these four pillars, except that an indie musician takes an active role.

Each of these areas is important to the growth of your music business, and cannot be skipped. Furthermore, to be a successful working musician, you will always be working in at least one of these areas at any given time.

CREATE – The CREATE pillar of the new music business is all about the fundamentals. When you’re working on this area, you may be focusing on writing songs or your live show, but this area also includes details such as setting goals, developing time management strategies, and building your team. The CREATE pillar builds the foundation upon which your music career is built.

CAPTURE – The CAPTURE pillar of the new music business includes all of the ways that you attract new fans. When you’re working in this area, you may be focusing on improving your live shows. This area also includes developing strategies to build your email list.

CONNECT – The CONNECT pillar of the new music business focuses on how to build an ongoing relationship with your fanbase. Whether you mail thank you notes or send email newsletters, the CONNECT pillar keeps you in touch with your fans

CASH – The CASH pillar is the area that deals with the money you make from your music. Whether you are expanding your product line, or hiring a bookkeeper, the CASH pillar is about making money – and keeping it!

The Original C: CALLING

Whether you are an indie musician, or Grammy Award winner, the music business has more than its share of challenges.

When the going gets rough, I find that it’s important to be in tune with the “Original C” of the music business: your CALLING.

When you get that inner call to make music, it becomes a passion that can last a lifetime. This passion is important to have, as it will get you through the tough times



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Whenever you find yourself hitting a plateau, or even a wall, in your music career, it is important to remember your WHY:

Ask yourself:

- **Why do YOU make music?**
- **Why do you LOVE music?**
- **How much do you enjoy singing/performing/playing your instrument?**

Sometimes, the creative journey can be discouraging. When that happens, it's good to remember why you started making music in the first place. Remembering a past highlight in your career can perk you up, as well as taking a few days off to get some perspective.

One of my favorite ways to get back into the groove is to watch performances of my musical heroes. I always end up getting the inspiration I need to begin again.

If it ever happens that you try some of the above methods, and still find yourself disconnected from your musical goals, please remember that it's okay to do something else with your life. If you no longer have the passion to make music, then it may be time to find another passion. Life is too short not to live the life you were meant to live.

Conclusion

I hope you've enjoyed this sneak peek of my upcoming ***Sell Your Music!*** book.

If you'd like to sign up for the Rock Star Life Lessons newsletter, and receive more free tips to build your music career, just visit:

<http://rockstarlifelessons.fanbridge.com/>



About the Author



Carla Lynne Hall is a musician and music marketing consultant based in New York City. Her mission is to make music and share her knowledge with other musicians.

As a musician, she has released three CDs on her Moxie Entertainment label – FRONT & CENTER (2000), SUPERNOVA (2006), DIRTY5 (2008), and has toured the world as a singer/songwriter, and professional vocalist. In addition, she has also spent a number of years behind the scenes in the music industry, in publishing, management, publicity, and radio promotion.

As well as being the former music business columnist for Vibe Magazine, Carla writes how-to articles for MusicDish.com and other music and mainstream publications around the world. She is the author of *The DIY Guide to the Music Biz*, *Twitter for Musicians*, and *The Musician's Roadmap to Facebook and Twitter* with Ariel Hyatt.

Carla has given music marketing lectures at many venues, including ASCAP, Songwriter's Hall of Fame, and The Learning Annex, and is currently the Director of Online Courses for Ariel Publicity.

Carla blogs the life of a musician at <http://RockStarLifeLessons.com> and is preparing for the Fall 2011 launch of the ROCK STAR LIFE LESSONS online TV show and podcast series for musicians.



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