

Instructions: Develop an artist management proposal for the following hypothetical artist: Marwood is a relatively new artist that is nearly finished with the recording of a new EP, has developed a sizable local following and local shows and recently started touring outside their home region. They expect to release this new EP within the next six months. Marwood believes their live sound and experience is where they shine. They want to capture their growing following, capitalize on their strong live shows, and set the stage for a larger tour that can help Marwood expand their audience and also generate increased merchandise revenue. Marwood is currently self-managed and is finding that handling both the business and creative side of their career to be in conflict with each other. Marwood may be missing out on opportunities because they haven't been as responsive to booking inquiries and other new business opportunities while they've been writing and recording their EP.

Preframe: The information provided for Marwood in this assignment is too limiting for a proposal, which is synonymous (in my experience) with a contract. I have a standard intake and would request further discussion before creating a proposal. Thus, I will frame this assignment as to the questions I need answered to assemble a more formal document for review. The first two steps rely heavily on artist input. Afterward, I would have enough to offer suggestions and explanations to come to a consensus on the more tactical and logistical side. While the instructions mention he is releasing a new EP, it doesn't state if he had music released mechanically before, though I will assume he has for this assignment since he is performing music live – but it is a clarifying point. Even though Marwood seems to desire a focus on live music, it is important to thoroughly review if this is the best route for him and make recommendations. I want to understand why he feels this way. Perhaps, he didn't test enough other channels or know certain channels were available to him. But I have included some questions that help surface and pertain to what he has already relayed. I also expressed in the email what I have gathered from previous discussions so he does not feel unheard.

Note: The italicized in red in the footnotes will not be relayed to the artist, but instead is more insight for my instructor as to why I would be inquiring about certain information.

The Making of Marwood: An Example of an Artist Intake & Email For Proposal Development

Subject Line: Exploring Opportunities To Expand Your Career

Dear Marwood,

I am very interested in learning more about you regarding any challenges, aspirations, and expectations as we look to form a worthwhile partnership for both of us. I have attached a 3-step

document with some questions and inquiries for you in the first two steps, followed by what you can expect from me moving forward. The document may be daunting at first glance, and I am happy to discuss the questions and inquiries in person if it is easier for you. I wanted you to have them in advance to better prepare for our next meeting.

I have taken into account what we have previously discussed such as how live music is where you most shine and that you want to capitalize on that, as well as increase merchandise revenue. And by all means, we can do so, but I also want to be able to review other opportunities for which you might not be aware. If you're open to it, we may find overlap to meet your primary goal while also hitting on some ancillary revenue drivers. This document will provide much-needed information for me to present a solid plan to you.

I believe in being thorough because this is how I can best find areas of improvement and opportunities to devise the best strategic plan for your unique needs, situation, and audience. I don't believe in offering a cookie-cutter approach when working with artists as I look to form a long-term relationship and feel confident that the services provided will drive the best results.

To do this, I ask that you do your best to answer the questions in the document openly and honestly, so I can put my best foot forward to assist with your development as an artist. In return, I promise to do the same with any information relayed now or in the future as we continue this journey together. My goal is to take the lift off your shoulders for some of the business aspects so you can focus on what you love and do best – making great music!

I look forward to hearing back from you soon.

Kind regards,

[My Signature]

In Attachment:

Step 1: Define Your Vision & Persona¹

1. What is your musical style, identity, and message?
2. Are there any brands for which you have an affinity for? And why?
3. Have you worked with any brands via brand sponsorship or partnerships? If so, which ones? If so, did you find the outcome desirable? If not, why?
4. What are your short- and long-term goals, and when are you hoping to achieve each?²

¹ *I want to discover artist direction, target audience, and competitive edge. The vision needs to be realistic, specific and measurably as well as reflect the artist's passion and personality. Additionally, it may give some guidance into potential brand partnership opportunities.*

² *I wouldn't want to lead the witness but I would be looking for how much monetary gain, fame, or authentic artistry play a role.*

5. What are some of your strengths and weaknesses?
 - a. As an artist/musician
 - b. As a person in general (i.e. outside of music)
6. What are your values and motivations?
7. What is the history behind why you started making music? Anything that you enjoyed or found more successful on your journey thus far?

Step 2: Current Standing in the Music Industry³

1. First and foremost, being you're a newer artist to the scene, I want to ensure your works are protected and that you are set up to earn all you are due for your engagements⁴:
 - a. Are you currently part of PRO? If so, which one?
 - b. Are you currently registered with Harry Fox and the MLC?
 - c. Are your works registered with the Copyright Office?
 - d. Have you logged the metadata for your songs and submitted this information to appropriate parties before you took to performing or releasing music publicly?
 - e. Are you registered with those who serve neighboring rights like SoundMouse?
 - f. Are you currently or have you worked with a label, or are you open to signing with one? Do you own your master's? If not, what percentage split have you agreed to?
 - g. Are you currently or have you worked with a publisher? If so, who? If so, what percentage split have you agreed to?
 - h. Could you outline your Discography with the following co-artists or co-writers who have been part of any of the songs? Also, I would love to get a few lines about the inspiration for each song, or at least each album.
2. How long have you been playing? How long have you been performing publicly and what size venues? Have you filled a high percentage of seats in general within the current spaces you perform?
3. How are you currently managing booking inquiries?
4. How are you currently selling and managing the supply chain for merchandise? Do you have your own e-commerce website? If so, could you please share the link?
5. What are your achievements and your challenges?⁵

³ *The goal is to learn the artist's performance, potential and position in the market. Then, analyze objectively, comprehensively and regularly.*

⁴ *The artist may need help here if he/she is unfamiliar with any of the aforementioned or may not know the steps in the process.*

⁵ *We know Marwood believes live music is a strong avenue for him, but I would be curious to also hear why other avenues seemed to not work; have we tested and tried all we could with other channels? We could look at using them to supplement. For instance, individuals who could not attend a live show, may get a replay in a VR environment from their home.*

6. What are your resources and constraints? How much budget do you currently have to work with and are you willing to invest more if you see a positive ROI or is there a hard cut-off with the budget?⁶
7. Could you please provide me access to any reports or platforms where I can view metrics such as streaming or social platforms you may be part of (e.g. Spotify for Artists, Facebook page, etc.) or a sheet where you have tracked live performance details, costs and ROI up until this point?⁷
8. Could you please provide links to pages, profiles, or channels for you as an artist?
9. Could you please provide a shared Drive where I can access the digital assets you currently have?⁸ Which have been publicly used in posts, ads or promotional efforts?

Step 3: Contract and Action Plan Details⁹

Once I get Step 1 and Step 2 completed, here is what I will outline for you:

1. **Key Actions & Milestones:** Suggestions pertaining to each overarching goal, covering the following areas:
 - a. Assembling the right team (i.e. business manager, creative and marketing specialists, booking agent) - including how I will help manage relationships to champion your ideas, secure new opportunities, and safeguard you from being taken advantage of.
 - b. Actions that tie into different revenue streams - keeping live music and merchandising at the forefront such as what coordination tours and promotional efforts we will engage in for upcoming shows but not negating how other avenues can facilitate
 - c. Communication with fans - including nurturing plans for direct-to-fan relationships and especially the relationships you have with superfans
2. **Risk Assessment** - outlining the opportunities and threats
3. **Roles and Responsibilities** - setting expectations upfront of the scope of work I will provide, what I expect to be paid monetarily for certain responsibilities, and when deliverables are due. In return, there may be some expectations I have for you to ensure I can best meet the expectations you have of me.

⁶ *The goal would be to lay out a timeline based on goals and how much one expects to earn from different efforts within a budget reasonably. Then, to further expand the timeline with budgetary increases as certain milestones are hit.*

⁷ *If the artist doesn't have tracking mechanisms in place, we will want to set up for them or even improve the ones they currently have to be more robust and better tie in data across various touch points and activities to truly gain a better view of attribution. But this allows me to assess their current engagement and following on a deeper level through digital channels.*

⁸ *It's important to understand, especially when on budget, what assets we already have to work with as well as opportunities to repurpose content (i.e. the archival treasure trove).*

⁹ *From the Intake in Step 1 and 2, now it is my turn as an artist manager to provide an artist development plan and scope of work that ties it all together.*

4. **Term, Key Person, and Sunset Clause** - including what happens should the contract end. Luckily, I am self-employed which means you will not have to worry about me leaving a firm and you being stuck with an artist manager you do not like.

Rest assured that while a formal contract is important to have in place to protect both parties, we will leave room for flexibility, creativity, and collaborative adjustments. We don't have to make it overly cumbersome as long as we touch on the key points we both care about.