

## NOTES AND GUIDANCE

# PUTTING A PACKAGE TOGETHER

When you are looking for work as a musician, or if you are looking for interest from a manager, promoter, record label or publisher, a musical package is essential. The package is a promotional tool that helps to market your skills. Presentation can be as important as the quality of the material, so take time planning it.

A package for a manager, agent, promoter, publisher or record company should include:

### 1 Compact Disc / DVD or MP3 files

Make sure...

it is a good quality duplication.  
Include titles of songs/material.



### 2 Copy of a recent biography

Make sure...

it is clearly written and presented.



### 3 Copy of recent press cuttings

Make sure...

it is a good quality photocopy.



### 4 Copy of your forthcoming activity

Make sure...

to include gig information, radio sessions etc.



### 5 Recent publicity photographs

Make sure...

do they reflect the styles of music and the image you're trying to put across?



### 6 Copies of additional material

Make sure...

to include, for example a promotional DVD.



### 7 Contact Details IMPORTANT!

Make sure...

to include details.



Some people like to protect their interests by mailing a package to themselves and keeping it safe in the event of a dispute as to who owns the copyright.

➤ WORKBOOK 7 – COPYRIGHT, LEGAL AND MANAGEMENT – CHAPTER 2

PREPARING THE MUSIC

The demo itself should ideally include no more than three or four tracks with your best track first. Production should be clean and clear, but it doesn’t have to be an expensive studio recording.

A&R people listen out for good songs, exciting material and raw potential. Avoid long solos and intricate arrangements and concentrate on concise production. This should include your best performances and songs which make an impact on the listener.

Don’t forget to write a contact name and number on everything you send.



PREPARING A BIOGRAPHY

A basic biography should include:

- Name of the act, and a brief profile of the line-up
- Brief description of your musical style and influences
- Good quote from a press reviewer ( if you have one! )
- Contact details.



PREPARING A FLYER

A flyer is used to promote an event ( for example a showcase you intend to stage for the attention of the music industry ).

The information for your flyer may include:

- logos or branding
- details of the event
- ticket prices ( if it is a gig )
- ticket outlets
- times of the event ( opening / closing and onstage time ).
- Invitation for people to join your mailing list
- Your website information or My Space link

You may want to highlight extra information such as an imminent record releases or radio & TV appearances.



PREPARING A COVER LETTER

A cover letter intended for a manager, agent, record company or publisher. The contents may include a brief description of the contents of the enclosed package. You may also wish to outline some brief facts to summarise what you hope the package will do for you, plus any pending events of interest.



2 Cromford avenue  
Manchester  
M1 15SH

tel \*\*\*\*\*  
fax \*\*\*\*\*  
mobile \*\*\*\*\*  
contact@leverstreet.com  
www.leverstreet.com

Mr. Chris Turner  
MX Records  
Address  
Address

( Date Here )

Dear Chris

Please find enclosed a copy of our current CD containing three of our most recent demo tracks.

LEVER STREET are a four piece rock band from North Manchester who have been together now for two years.

Since introducing our music via the internet ( both on our own website and on community sites such as MySpace.com ), we have received a lot of positive feedback about our music both on-line and from our live audiences.

We are now looking to promote our material to a larger audience and wish to find parties that are interested in marketing, distributing and promoting our music.

I would like to invite you to attend the next LEVER STREET gig at the Academy Unsigned night on Friday 10th September ( on stage at 9pm ). I have enclosed two tickets, should you be able to attend.

We would be very grateful if you could acknowledge that you have received our package and when you have had the time, offer us some comments/feedback.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact us on the number above, by e-mail, info@leverstreet.com or by posting a comment on our website at www.leverstreet.com or www.myspace.com/leverstreet where you can find our music streaming along with images and biography text.

Kind Regards

*N. Smith*

Nick Smith ( Bass Player – Lever Street )

PRESS CUTTING AND PHOTOGRAPHS

Press cuttings are always important to include in your package. If you don't have any, try and get some! See later for information on 'Press and Media'.  
If you think that a good photograph will make an impact, include it.



ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

A video of the act on DVD is always a great selling tool, providing of course that your performance is good!



PRODUCING MATERIALS

A lot of performers, musicians and DJ's produce their own packages at home.  
Firstly, your packaging and other promotional materials should have a consistent theme. It may help to have a logo, or a certain way of writing the artist/band name. Look how other artists use their name and logo.  
You don't have to be a professional graphic designer to develop a logo or theme. Using software you can very quickly make something look different.

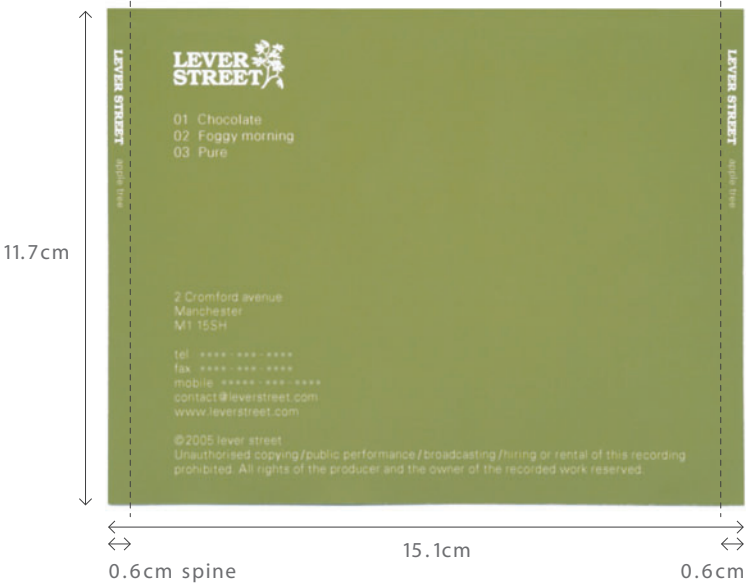
Designing a CD inlay and booklet

All you need to develop basic packaging is a word processor like Microsoft Word. If you want to make an inlay ( the back and edges of the case ) or a booklet for a CD Jewel Case ( a standard plastic CD case ), the template below shows the dimensions you need to make them.

BOOKLET



JEWEL CASE INLAY





On body design

You will probably want to put some information or images on the face of the CD, this is called on body printing. Templates can be downloaded from the internet, or if you are doing your own printing then CD labels usually come with some software to design the label with. It is wise to be careful with the amount of information and images you put on the CD surface, as sometimes it doesn't come out too well, and often the cost of duplication varies depending on the number of colours used on body.

If you want to make your own template, then the dimensions for the CD body are alongside, and you can use a circle drawing tool in a word processor to make your template.

If you aren't using jewel cases, then your options are clear plastic or paper sleeves, or a slim case with a j-card in. J-cards give you two sides that you can print on, and are produced by using a template that you print on then fold in two. Again, there are templates available on the internet.

If you are using a sleeve (whether paper or clear plastic), a cheap way of putting your information on is to print onto a sticker, and stick the sticker to the sleeve. Alternatively, use clear plastic sleeves and print the information onto card, that you can slip into the sleeve.

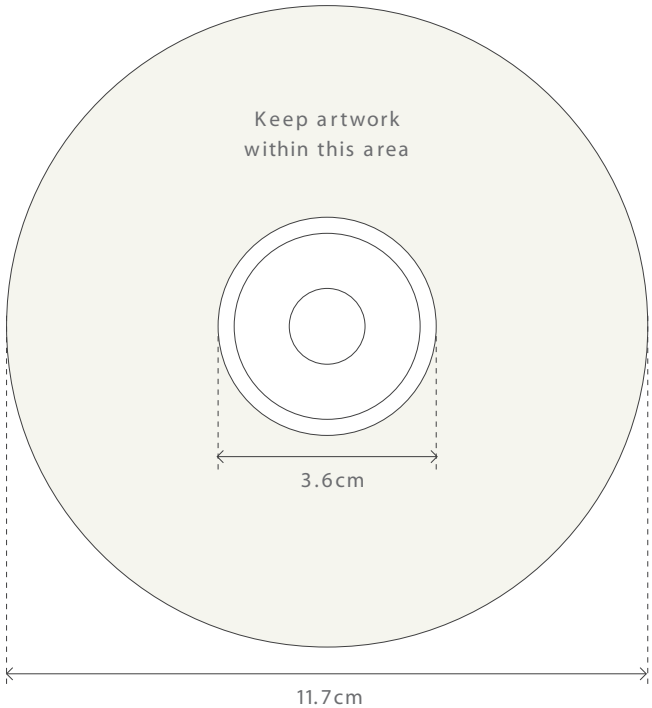
What information needs to go on the CD?

What you decide to put on your packaging is totally up to you, but most CD's tend to have similar information.

- Band /artist name
  - CD title
  - Tracklist
  - Details of members of band/artist
  - Details of who composed what
  - Contact information
  - Pictures
  - Copyright statement
- WORKBOOK 7 – COPYRIGHT, LEGAL AND MANAGEMENT – CHAPTER 2

Alternatively, find a friend who is a graphic designer and ask them to help you. Lots of people do this too!

- Look in Workbook 5 Chapter 4 for more on how to duplicate and manufacture CD's.
- WORKBOOK 5 – RECORDING AND PRODUCTION – CHAPTER 4



# SENDING OUT THE PACKAGE

So, you have the package ready, with a list of people to send it to...

No fairytales are needed when advising you about mailing demo's to the music business. A small percentage of demos do get through, although few 'unsolicited' packages result in a deal straight away. It is more likely that this is the first stage in the process of attracting industry awareness.

The good news is that, if you are creating interest, the industry will generally find you! However it can be a very long and hard struggle to get to that position.

Make the package as neat and professional as possible and allow a couple of weeks, sometimes a little longer, for the person (be it a venue promoter, agent, publisher, manager or recording company) to listen to it.

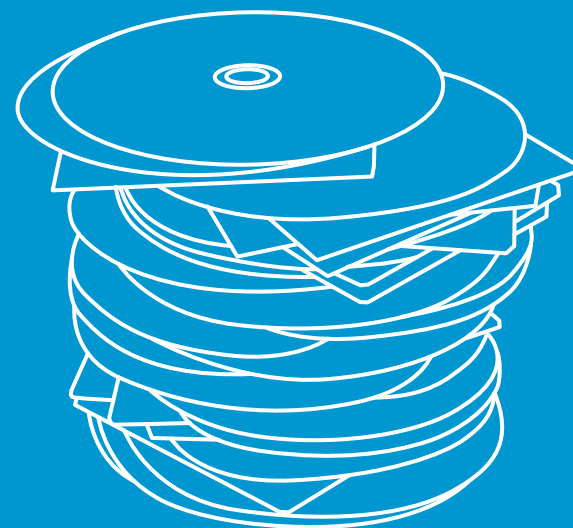
Follow-up the package with a telephone call to check whether the package arrived, but don't be put off if it hasn't been listened to yet. Be patient but also be subtly persistent.

Phone back and keep checking on the progress. Remember that your music will usually be heard!

## TIP

When sending to Talent Agencies, mail a comprehensive package, best songs first, ( they might be made up of mainly 'cover' versions of other people's work ) and a biography and photograph.

Be prepared to showcase. Most agencies hold regular regional audition showcases. The purpose of this includes vetting the act and showing the act to other venue promoters and landlords.



# MARKETING YOURSELF

Today, bands, musicians and DJ's need to be very pro-active in marketing themselves in order to create that effective buzz. Gigging, Networking, Telephone, Word-of-mouth, Website, Newsletters, e-mail...

## GIGGING

Obviously, if you are a performer, musician or DJ – then you have to gig!

Gigging is a very important way of marketing yourself to the industry, and you need to get people down to your gigs to show that you are a force to be reckoned with!

You need to send out emails with up to date information informing your fanbase of new gigs, news, releases, special offers, merchandise etc. Make them want to follow you.

## TIP

Give a job to a friend to hand out your latest flyer/newsletter at gigs with details on how to contact you and about your website: try to collect the details of new audience members, include email, name and mobile when possible. Music fans are generally happy to join bands mailing lists in order to receive offers, incentives and upfront information.



TELEPHONE

Calling people you have met at gigs, events or even those you have researched is a good way of promoting yourself or your music. Calling previous clients you have provided a service to and reminding them of what you are currently doing can be a very effective way to generate attention and potential sales.

NETWORKING

The best way of promoting yourself and your product is on a face to face basis. This gives you that unique opportunity to really sell your product or idea and get some feedback. For more on networking, got to  
» WORKBOOK 1 – THE MUSIC INDUSTRY AND YOU – CHAPTER 4

EMAIL, NEWSLETTERS AND MAILING LISTS

The use of e-mail, mailing lists and newsletters is an integral part of a marketing strategy. Musicians often overlook how effective this can be. Most music businesses (including bands), send and receive regular news updates on products, services, gig listings, news, links and demos. They do it the same way as you would do it, by building a database (a list) of potential clients, fans, industry contacts, and the media. Some successful bands now use this method to completely sell tours, merchandise and albums in advance!

A mailing list is also a key part of running a successful marketing campaign. At each gig, there is an opportunity to build up more of a fan base. Even if one person at each gig liked the music, then that's one more potential sale once your product is released.

Building an account on sites such as [www.myspace.com](http://www.myspace.com) can create so many new 'friends' on your site, that you are able to market your gigs and product. One band had over 30,000 'friends' on their site, you can imagine the potential the band had when selling their album direct to the fans.

WORD OF MOUTH

If you asked music industry professionals about what works best in marketing, a high percentage would say 'word of mouth'. But what does it mean? How many times has a friend said, "listen to this"?, "check this web site out"?, "have you seen this band" – all this is Word of Mouth.

It's about letting other people know.



WEB SITES

Every performing artist, DJ or band should have a web presence now as a matter of course. It is a key focal point for fans, potential fans and music industry professionals such as A&R to find out information, updates, gig listings and music that you are producing.

Posting information on web noticeboards, using forums and using media listing websites is another useful way of marketing a gig. Websites such as [www.myspace.com](http://www.myspace.com) are increasingly popular for this and can generate a great deal of interest.

You can upload your latest tracks for people to listen to. If you want to go one step further, there are safe ‘micropayment’ systems you can utilise to turn your website into your on-line store. ( See chapter 4 for more information ).

TIP

Loyalty goes hand in hand with the value you place in your client. Incentivise, always strive to widen the appeal of your site to new audiences, provide value-added products and sensible prices in order to maintain your fanbase.

TIP

Refresh the site regularly, there is nothing worse than finding completely out of date information on an artists's website.

PUBLICITY AND THE MEDIA

A media review or article is an endorsement of your music products and services. In general more people will believe what the media says about you over anything you or your promotional material says. If you want a radio station or newspaper to plug or let you plug your latest gig or product, you will generally have to pay for this service although many artists and entrepreneurs are successful in achieving this themselves. Read Chapter 4 for more information about the Media.

TIP

Value that plug by offering something in return. It maybe tickets to your gig, a competition giveaway, latest release, writing an article or review or judging a competition.

RUTHLESS

In the music industry, you are competing with an incredible amount of other talent. In terms of promoting career and music you will have to be quite ruthless in getting yourself heard above the crowd. Self-belief and determination in the mix with a little of the old ‘not taking no for an answer’ will be a requirement in your efforts to make the industry and public know that you exist.

TIP

Get ruthless but at the same time, be honest with yourself, are you good enough, is the product right? If that door keeps slamming shut and that telephone call never returned, it may be time for plan B!