

The Music Industry Secret to Networking For Musicians

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The music industry has been keeping a secret from you. No one will tell you. Not just because its a secret, but because it is simple. If you want to improve your networking in the music industry here is all you have to do.

Stop Talking About Music!

An A&R, producer, publisher—any one who can do anything for you in the business is much more likely to listen to your demo once they know you. We have all been there. Hungry—Trying to get our music out, trying to get people to listen.

You might want to sit down before you read this:

The cold reality is that no one wants to hear your music, especially some one you gave a CD to after a 10 second pitch.

Some one who you are friends with might not want to hear your music but at least they might listen.

“But my music is hot!”

Your music might be hot, It might not. The bottom line is that the music industry, and any other industry for that matter, is built on relationships and trust. The product comes after.

The other major concept most musicians cold calling a&rs and handing out CDs don't understand is that you are trying to fulfill your life long dream of making it big, the A&R just wants to get home to his kids. At the end of the day he just wants to catch the Yankees game before he passes out and goes to work again tomorrow. Working in the music industry is a job just like any other job. You could be an artist, an a&r, an intern, an assistant in a recording studio, but it is still a job.

Finally if your at a networking event and happen to end up talking about music, don't talk about your music. Talk about a hit on the chart the other person might like, or a project they are working on. Ask open ended questions and do your best to get their contact information in a friendly way.

3 Things To Talk About Instead Of Music

(These are also easy ice breakers)

1. Sports - people are fanatics about sports. They often will wear clothes supporting their favorite teams. The night before a major networking event watch 30 minutes of ESPN sports center and catch up on your local teams. Bottom line—people, especially guys, like talking about sports.
2. Food - every one loves to eat or cook. Some people are into home cooking, some health food. Food is a universal topic every one can relate to. Eating food with some one also builds trust and comfort. It's not coincidence that the big dogs wine and dine their clients over meals and drinks.
3. Fashion - people are into sneakers, jewelry, women love hand bags, shoes. Where did you get those..... Try that line a few times to get a conversation started.

Now just in case your still not getting it lets look at a short real world example.

Example 1.

(This is hypothetical but you'll get the idea)

At a music industry networking event a rapper, MC Trash, sees the A&R of the hottest new record label called Pimp My Music Inc. The A&R is sitting at the bar waiting for a drink. Excited that this could be his big break, he rushes over. Nervous and rudely he interrupts the A&R's conversation. He pulls out a black plastic cased mix tape like he's about to hold up a bank.

“You got to hear this man. This is the hot shit. Me and my boys got this group. You got to sign us. Take my CD. You got to hear this man. We are gonna be famous.” he says to the A&R.

The A&R gives a quick glance at the mix tape. The photoshoped cover reads:

Hosted by DJ No One Famous

The A&R looks at it for a second and throws it on the bar. “Aight man, thanks I'll take a listen”

The A&R turns back around to the bar. He puts his arm around some wanna be model, and continues trying to get her phone number. The bar tender brings him a highball glass filled with ice and Hennessy. The A&R takes a sip and places the sweating cold glass on the CD.

The bar tender smiles and saves money on coasters.

The CD eventually makes its way to the trash at the end of the night.

Example 2.

At a music industry event MC Not Desperate sees the A&R of the hottest new record label out called Pimp My Music Inc. The A&R is sitting at the bar waiting for a drink. The rapper causally goes to the bar and orders a drink. He says to the A&R, “Are the drinks good or are they being cheap with the liqueur?”

“I tipped the bar tender good when i got here so he’s been taking care of me, but usually they make good drinks.”

While he’s talking, glancing at the television on the wall, MC Not Desperate noticed the Yankees just scored a run. MC Not Desperate and the A&R start talking about game.

The conversation goes on for a few minutes. Eventually MC Not Desperate asks the A&R if he works in the industry. The A&R starts talking about Pimp My Music Inc.

MC Desperate and his new friend the A&R buy each other a few drinks. The A&R thanks him for the drink and hands MC Desperate his business card.

A few days later MC Desperate sends a follow up email to the A&R just to say whats up.

They begin to build trust.

A week later MC Desperate bumps into the A&R again. This time at a music industry showcase. They talk a few minutes about last nights baseball game.

A month later the A&R and MC Desperate cross paths once more. This time MC Not Desperate asks how the A&R’s current projects are going.

“The R&B project I am working on is taking for ever. We just can’t seem to find the write song for a single”, the A&R says.

“I got something you should take a listen to.” says MC Not Desperate.

“Email it to me I’ll take a listen when i’m in the office tomorrow.” , the A&R says interested.

Quick Summary.

Networking is a a lot more effective when you are making friends in the process. Its also easier and you won’t be as nervous. People working in the music industry love music, that doesn’t mean that they want to talk about it all day.

Want to learn about working int he music industry? Leave your questions and comments below.

Must read books about networking.

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