

# ***The Savvy Guitarist***

*A few tips for making a living in the music world*

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## **Your Brand and Product**

Brand: a name, sign, symbol, slogan or anything that is used to identify and distinguish a specific product, service or business

A good brand is...

1. Broad enough to provide many opportunities
2. Specific enough allow the creation of a business plan

Bad brand: "I'm a Musician!"

Why? Not specific. A musician can do any number of things.  
How can we plan for something we don't know?

Good brand: "I'm a studio guitarist/teacher/editor"

Why? It's specific enough to formulate a plan detailing how to achieve professional success, but broad enough to provide many income streams.

"What do I want to be when I grow up?" is the same as asking,  
"What do I want my brand to be?"

## **Marketing Vehicles: Tell Your Story**

Marketing is not advertising. Marketing is telling a story and creating interest in your brand. There are several tools for telling our stories.

1. The Bio lets folks know who you are, and highlights experiences and awards relevant to your brand. A good bio is concise and should grab the readers' attention.
2. Press Photos should also support the brand you wish to convey. If you give fun, pops-style performances, extremely serious photos don't really make sense, etc.

3. Business Cards and Print materials should display your brand, "Your Name, brand," and provide contact information in an interesting way. Make them reflect your personality.
4. Recordings are a must in many press kits, and finding fans is about letting them listen to what you do (assuming part of your brand is performing). Recording gear is cheap. Record every performance you do.
5. You must have a website. It should...
  - Have a good domain name
  - Contain all of the above marketing vehicles
  - Be updated regularly
  - Have an attractive design
  - Be easy to navigate

### **Online Marketing in Four Steps**

1. Build a House. That is, get yourself a website, a base of operations. Fill it with content that supports your brand.
2. Make Friends by engaging folks with similar interests. Interact with people on various social media.
3. Invite Friends Over to check out all the great content. How? Send out a link on Facebook; post links on forums, etc.
4. Keep Adding Content and keep inviting friends over.

**- number four is the most important -**

## Other Marketing Ideas

The goal here is to get as much press as possible without paying for anything. If you choose to pursue some of the ideas listed below, be sure to let the local paper know about it.

- Start and lead a local "guitar circle."
- Give benefit concerts for local charities.
- Give volunteer concerts at local libraries or hospitals.
- Offer lesson scholarships or contest for free lesson tuition.
- Make friends with every other professional guitarist in town. When you can't do a gig, pass it to them (and they'll do the same for you).
- Post fliers wherever they are allowed.
- Interact with all local arts organizations.
- Sell CDs at coffee shops - it's more important that people see your name out there.

## Additional Resources

### Books

"The Savvy Musician" by David Cutler

"The 22 Immutable Laws of Marketing" by Al Ries and Jack Trout

"Permission Marketing" by Seth Godin

"Tribes" by Seth Godin

"The Tipping Point" by Malcolm Gladwell

### Online Reading

Seth Godin: <http://sethgodin.typepad.com/>

David Cutler: <http://www.savvymusician.com/blog/>

Derek Sivers: <http://sivers.org/blog>

Tim Ferris: <http://www.fourhourblog.com/>

### Make a Website on the Cheap

<http://www.weebly.com/>

<http://wordpress.com/>

<http://wordpress.org/>

<http://www.squarespace.com/>