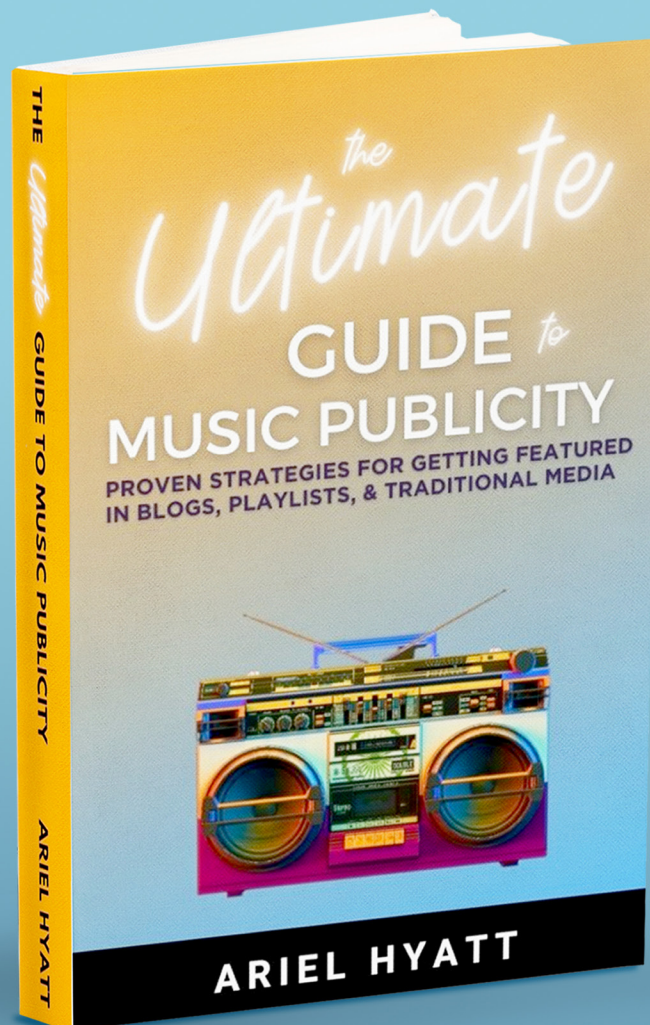


 **DISC MAKERS®**

Excerpted from  
*The Ultimate Guide to  
Music Publicity*

# GENERATING PR IN TODAY'S MUSIC INDUSTRY



Ariel Hyatt has been collaborating with Disc Makers since 2009, including numerous contributions to the [Disc Makers Blog](#). Ariel's latest book, *The Ultimate Guide to Music Publicity: Proven Strategies For Getting Featured In Blogs, Playlists, & Traditional Media*, recently hit #1 in the Music Business Category on Amazon.



Get your eBook [directly from Ariel](#) (Disc Makers readers get \$2 off) or purchase your [print copy on Amazon](#).

Here's an excerpt from the book that she's prepared exclusively for you. Enjoy!

*“In a dark world where every artist wants publicity but most don't really understand exactly what it is, Ariel's Ultimate Guide to Music Publicity is a bright shining light. Tapping into her decades of personal experience, Ariel lays it all out—from the basics of what PR is to strategies for optimizing every part of a publicity campaign, from bio to press releases to press kits to the pitch. And she makes it all real (and actionable) by including tons of examples from her years on the front lines of music PR. A must have for any artist looking to build their brand!”*

— **Tony van Veen, CEO, Disc Makers**

# Hello.

I'm psyched you are here. Whether you're a new artist looking to take your first steps towards getting publicity or a veteran seeking new tips, there is something here for you. The information contained here comes from my experience working on countless music PR campaigns and from coaching artists through the choppy waters of publicity in the ever-changing music business.

Many music industry PR veterans, music journalists, bloggers, and playlist curators have been generous enough to weigh in with their advice and observations.

Music publicity has changed radically over the years from the traditional publicist model, to a journalist model, to a new model that now provides anyone with a social media account access to almost any member of the media.

Post COVID-19, artists are facing new challenges due to a lack of touring and live performance opportunities, coupled with the hard fact that many newsrooms and outlets have shuttered as a result of the pandemic. The publicity landscape continues to transform.

Here's a harrowing statistic: 60,000 new tracks are released on Spotify every single day.

Here's another one: According to Muck Rack, there are six PR pros to every one journalist.

In short, whether you want to hire a publicist or do it yourself, there's a lot of competition. This means, as an artist, you must consistently cultivate new relationships with outlets as you release new music.

*The Ultimate Guide to Music Publicity* will act as a template for how to do this, whether you choose the DIY route or hire a professional publicist to help you.

# Music Publicity Today

As an artist, you'd probably like to have publicity because you want to gain new listeners and fans. You may also be looking for name recognition and notoriety. Or, perhaps you are deeply curious about what music media and tastemakers will say about your music. And it may be possible that you think that if you get enough publicity, bigger and better things will happen to you and your music career.

All of these reasons are valid and absolutely the right thinking. However, after 25 years of launching and executing publicity campaigns, I've learned a lot about the mindset of many musicians and their false perceptions about what publicity does (and doesn't) do.

## THE NEW MUSIC BUSINESS PARADIGM

We live in a singles-based market and, in many cases, the music is recorded, mixed, and mastered days before it is released online. Long-lead press still exists, but the norm is the media shows up a few hours or days after the pitch goes out.

The evolution of devices, expanding social channels, the 24-hour news cycle, and instant access to every imaginable type of media for all has shifted the publicity landscape. Media outlets are under enormous pressure to publish content that attracts eyeballs, drives traffic, and gets clicks. This is how they survive. Sadly, this means unless you can bring traffic or something truly newsworthy or clickable to the table, the larger outlets will pass you by until you are in a position to help them. Publicity is now a two-way street.

One thing that has not changed is that many artists still believe or are told that the first thing they should do is hire a publicist. *This should not be the first thing you do.* I advise that you start by focusing on your brand and online voice and get a few fans before you even think about publicity.

## PUBLICITY IS A LONG GAME

It's perfectly OK to have a big fat goal of getting coverage from a notable newspaper or a national publication. However, if you are just starting with publicity, I implore you to check your expectations at the door.

Starting small and building is the best way to ease into publicity. In the beginning, shoot for smaller outlets. There will be plenty of time to build as you go.

The good news is that the day your music drops is, in many ways, the beginning of your publicity journey with hundreds (if not thousands) of online outlets, blogs, podcasts, and playlists to choose from. However, you must work fast so that your release doesn't get too stale. Planning is key.

## **PUBLICISTS CAN STILL BE INVALUABLE**

Publicists, of course, can still be invaluable. Nowadays, they work faster and create shorter bios—and even shorter pitches—for media who have to cover ten times the amount of music and whose attention is harder than ever to grab.

## **DON'T TRY PR UNTIL YOU HAVE A SOLID BRAND AND STRONG SOCIAL MEDIA**

Your brand, of course, starts with your music. Visuals are also a part of your brand, as are our color schemes, fonts, logo, photos, singles, EPs, and album artwork. Your brand also incorporates your **signature story** which should answer the question of what separates you from all of the other musicians.

## **STRONG SOCIAL MEDIA**

Your brand immediately gets extended to your audience through your social channels, and creating a communication plan that is cohesive and interesting is an integral part of how you'll grow as an artist. There's a mind-numbing amount of social channels to keep updated and, of course, each one has different parameters as far as what you include as your bio, links, and visuals. Last but not least, there's continuous updating and posting.

## **START WITH AN EXCELLENT ARTIST BIO**

Your bio, or what I like to call your "Signature Story," should tell a memorable story that the reader remembers after they read it. The story should contain a moment that stands out as *the* talking point. I call this the hook.

The old music business set a standard for the artist bio. This is something you are probably familiar with—a one-page, single-spaced, typewritten bio that goes through an artist's entire history, starting with something like, "So and so began playing music at age three..." It then goes on

to include every single milestone and accolade the artist ever received. It may also go into deep detail about every artist they ever opened for, all of the venues they played, and who mixed and mastered the album. It may also go into how the band came together and talk all about the trials and tribulations of the band members who left the band, etc. This is not a compelling way to entice fans and media.

## **MUSIC**

Any PR plan assumes that you already have fantastic music that is mixed, [mastered](#), and ready for the world. Completing your music comes way before publicity and is the reason you're doing any publicity at all. SoundCloud is what most bloggers want because it is easy to embed. Make sure you have [professional artwork](#) for your EP or album and separate single artwork if you are releasing singles. You should also have your music in a Dropbox/Google Drive in multiple formats (wav, MP3, etc.) on the off chance a writer or online radio programmer requests it.

## **PHOTOS**

If you take this seriously, you will benefit tremendously. Create photos that are clear, well-shot, and attention-grabbing. Showing movement is a plus (sitting on a couch or up against a brick wall has been done too many times before).

Arrange a photo shoot with a professional photographer or with a friend who has a great eye and with whom you feel comfortable.

Be prepared to spend at least three hours shooting and capture a lot of shots. The wonderful thing about digital cameras is you have unlimited opportunities to capture images and you can always delete what you don't like.

## **EPK**

Now that you have the main elements in place, it's time to build an electronic press kit (EPK).

First, don't make your EPK password protected! A trend in the business is to have a fully "protected" EPK that is only accessible with a password. You should consider this if you are displaying multiple images or links to music that is not yet released. Otherwise it's better to have your EPK available for all of the world to see.

## **STRUCTURING YOUR PITCH**

Always start your pitch for press by addressing the writer by his or her first name.

Be sure to get straight to the point of who you are, what you are reaching out to them about, and be very specific about what you are asking for. Your first paragraph should be customized, keeping the site they are writing for in mind. For instance, you might want to mention why your music would be a good fit for the blog or why you personally love it.

Your second paragraph should include your basic info (who, what, when, where, why) and a description of your sound that is focused and absent of superlatives.

## **CREATE MANY VARIED PITCHES**

In a 24-hour news cycle where all blogs are expected to post multiple times a day to stay competitive and relevant, something very bad can happen. Overwhelmed bloggers tend to get lazy and many will simply cut and paste what you write in your pitch and will not add any of their own unique content. This makes it necessary to write several pitches. This way, if you get a lot of “copy and paste placements,” they won’t all be exactly the same.

## **PREPARING YOUR PRESS RELEASE**

Press releases announcing that your new album is being released were standard practice in the past, but if you are seeking digital publicity, most bloggers prefer focused pitches, playlisters don’t need them, and “blasting” and seeing what sticks is not a strategy—it’s a fool’s errand.

There are reasons to write a press release for a very specific event (a show, benefit, or special occasion) or for a very niche market. Note, a genre of music is not a niche, but your headlining a charity benefit or the release of a tech-related news piece about you being featured in a new app is.

*“Ariel Hyatt is a true ally of indie artists and one of the most knowledgeable and talented professionals in the music business. The title of Ariel’s book is no exaggeration—everything that musicians need to know to build their brand, tell their story, and promote themselves effectively can be found in its pages. It’s all there, and it is perfectly organized to help artists develop and execute actionable strategies right away. Ariel’s vibrant writing style and engaging prose make this book a great cover-to-cover read, but the incredible advice packed in each page also make it a valuable reference guide that musicians will want to come back to again and again. I would strongly recommend this book for any musician who is looking to master all aspects of their music publicity strategy. It is the only book they will need.”*

— **Ryan Kairalla, Entertainment Lawyer and Host of the  
“Break the Business” Podcast**



## *Like what you've read so far?*

There's so much more to learn from *The Ultimate Guide to Music Publicity*. Get your eBook [directly from Ariel](#) (Disc Makers readers get \$2 off) or purchase your [print copy on Amazon](#).

Ariel has also prepared a special bundle for Disc Makers readers that includes her [musician's communications map](#), which visualizes all of the forms of communications artists should be aware of (communications is not just about publicity) and her music publicity checksheet which has helped over 5,000 musicians get organized and prepared for effective publicity campaigns.

**The free communications map visualizes each communication domain you need to manage to build a successful music career, including:**

- What you need to know about your artist brand
- The real reason people don't notice your social posts and how to change that
- How to get the attention of the music industry, media, and sponsors

**The free music publicity checksheet covers all major sections of a music publicity plan, including:**

- Preparing your digital press kit
- Determining your messages and targets
- Effective outreach and tips for following through

This is a tried and true music publicity checksheet that follows the Cyber PR Music methodology!

## What You Will Find in *The Ultimate Guide to Music Publicity*

### **PART 1: IT ALL STARTS WITH YOUR BRAND**

- Chapter 1 Music Publicity Today
- Chapter 2 The Musician's Communication Map
- Chapter 3 Building Your Brand
- Chapter 4 Getting Your Social Media House in Order
- Chapter 5 Developing Your Social Media Themes
- Chapter 6 Increasing Your Social Media Engagement

### **PART 2: YOUR STORY, HOOK, POSITIONING AND PITCHES**

- Chapter 7 Getting Your Music Ready For The Media
- Chapter 8 Telling Your Story is Crucial
- Chapter 9 The Hero's Journey
- Chapter 10 The Hook—Your Unforgettable Bio Moment
- Chapter 11 Bio Writers Break it Down
- Chapter 12 Creating Your Press Kit
- Chapter 13 Posting Your Electronic Press Kit (EPK)
- Chapter 14 Preparing Your Press Release
- Chapter 15 Writing Your Pitches
- Chapter 16 Pitch Examples - Niche Angle, Music Blogger & Video Premiere

### **PART 3: PLANNING YOUR CAMPAIGN**

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- Chapter 18 Researching Media Outlets
- Chapter 19 Curating Your Targeted Media List

### **PART 4: YOUR PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN IN ACTION**

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- Chapter 21 To Premiere or Not to Premiere?
- Chapter 22 How to Rock Interviews
- Chapter 23 Live Show Publicity
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### **About The Author**

Ariel Hyatt runs Cyber PR Music, an artist development, social media, and content strategy firm based in New York City. Her agency just celebrated 25 years in business and she and her team of women who get sh\*t done run digital PR campaigns and advise on how to create online influence and release impactful projects. Ariel has spoken in 12 countries to over 100,000 creative entrepreneurs and is the author of five best-selling books on social media, marketing, and crowdfunding, including *Cyber PR for Musicians*, *Music Success in 9 Weeks*, and *Crowdstart*. Her latest book, [\*The Ultimate Guide to Music Publicity\*](#), recently hit #1 in the Music Business Category on Amazon.