



cdbaby™ Presents

50

**MUSIC PROMO IDEAS
YOU CAN DO RIGHT NOW!**

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Often it's a lot of little things that add up to buzz and momentum in the music world. Don't stake your success entirely on one song hitting big or one video going viral. Instead, get to work on some of these "smaller" promo ideas that can be accomplished without spending much time or money.

1. RECORD A COVER-SONG VIDEO

Cover songs are a great way to build your audience and attract listeners to your original music. Keep it simple: one camera, one take. Press record, film yourself doing a stripped-down version of a popular song, and upload it to YouTube, Facebook, and (if it works in vertical) IGTV. **Total Time: 60 Minutes**

2. MAKE A SPOTIFY PLAYLIST

Create and share a playlist of songs that are grouped according to theme, genre, or region. Feature some of your favorite tracks by other artists and sprinkle in a few of your original tunes. For extra credit, keep the playlist changing every week or create a collaborative playlist that your fans and friends can edit with you. **Total Time: 30 Minutes**

3. CREATE A FACEBOOK AD

When you have something cool to share, promote it on Facebook to build your following. Target people who listen to music that sounds similar to yours or who follow similar local/regional bands. If your fanbase is large enough, create a "lookalike audience" and target your ads to that group. **Total Time: 15 Minutes**

4. BORROW IDEAS FROM OTHER BANDS' ONE-SHEETS

At a certain level you'll need a one-sheet to help you communicate with talent buyers, promoters, DJs, etc. But before you create your own one-sheet, spend an hour looking at other artists' material online. Take notes on what you love and incorporate those approaches into your one-sheet. **Total Time: 60 Minutes**

□ 5. RUN A SPOTIFY-FOLLOW CAMPAIGN

With Show.co, you can grow your Spotify following (for free) with a follow campaign, pre-save, or stream-to-unlock campaign. We suggest starting with a ‘follow’ campaign, since it doesn’t require that you have brand new music. Get started [HERE](#).

Total Time: 30 Minutes

□ 6. GET VERIFIED ON SPOTIFY, TWITTER, AND INSTAGRAM

Want to have one of those “verified” badges on your accounts? With Spotify, it’s guaranteed – because CD Baby helps you get [instant verification](#). Twitter and Instagram? Maybe you can, depending on your credentials. Look up the process and give it a try. If it works, you’re official! If it doesn’t work, you’re still official in our eyes. **Total Time: 5 Minutes**

□ 7. UPDATE THE BIO FOR ALL YOUR ONLINE PROFILES

Make sure your bio and tagline are up-to-date on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, SoundCloud, Snapchat, YouTube, etc. Social media trends shift quickly, so it’s easy to let this stuff get stale, but a refresh will take you less than an hour. Double-check all your links too.

Total Time: 30-60 Minutes

□ 8. REACH OUT TO A LOCAL BAND IN YOUR SCENE

By supporting your favorite bands in your region, you are building an opportunity to exchange gigs with one other. So retweet one of their tweets, share their music on Facebook (and tag them), or send them an old-fashioned email saying you dig their tunes.

Total Time: 5 Minutes

□ 9. MAKE A VIDEO POSTER FOR YOUR NEXT SHOW

Use an app such as gifX, or even editing programs like iMovie, Premiere Pro, or Final Cut, to make a short 15-second video containing the relevant information about an upcoming show (date, time, artist name, etc.), plus the music of one or more of the bands on the bill. Then share it on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook. If your video works well in vertical, share it as an Instagram Story too. **Total Time: 30-60 Minutes**

□ 10. TWEET ALBUM REVIEWS BY CRITICS YOU ADMIRE

Every time your favorite music writer reviews an artist you enjoy, tweet about it with a comment and tag the writer. That way they are aware of your existence for when your album comes across their desk. Music journalists are usually pretty active on Twitter.

Total Time: 5 Minutes

□ 11. STREAM A CONCERT FROM YOUR HOME

Give Facebook Live a try. Pick a time to broadcast a short live set. Promote it on social media in the week leading up to the event, and email your list too. Not a Facebook user? You can stream a live set using other tools such as Instagram, YouTube, Periscope, or Twitch. You can even use a tool like Restream.io to broadcast to multiple platforms at once. It doesn't have to be fancy – on the couch, in the studio, on the porch. Play some songs. Do a Q&A with fans. Whatever sounds most exciting. **Total Time: 1 Hour**

□ 12. TAKE SOME NEW BAND PHOTOS

Grab a friend with a good camera and do a DIY photo shoot. Have fun with it! What you may lack in photography skills, lenses, or lighting, you might make up for in capturing the perfect moment. Bring a few sets of clothes (or even costumes!). Once you get over the initial awkwardness of posing for the camera, photo shoots can be a blast. Plus, every time you do a shoot you'll get better at defining how you want to present your musical identity to the world. Make sure to get a variety of shots: square, landscape, portrait, close-ups, etc.

Total Time: 3-4 Hours

□ 13. TEAM UP WITH OTHER BANDS WHEN HANGING POSTERS

No need to spend the whole weekend blanketing the entire city with posters for your next show. Instead, find some other (reliable) bands that are playing shows around the same time as yours and ask if they'd like to divvy up the work by neighborhood. You might individually spend a bit more time in each location you're responsible for, but overall you'll save yourself many hours. **Total Time: 3-6 Hours**

□ 14. BUILD RELATIONSHIPS ONLINE

Stop passively reading or liking things; start commenting! Spend time following new people in the music industry, including other bands, bloggers, and more. Engage with them on Instagram and Twitter. Leave comments on music blogs and always sign it with your name AND your artist/band name. **Total Time: 1 Hour**

□ 15. TAKE SOMEONE OUT FOR COFFEE

It's important to build relationships in the "real" world, too, and chatting over coffee can be a fantastic way to learn from a local music industry professional, make friends with fellow bands, or brainstorm for your next big show, video shoot, or album release.

Total Time: 1-2 Hour

□ 16. CREATE A YOUTUBE CHANNEL TRAILER AND/OR FACEBOOK COVER VIDEO

A channel trailer is the first video people will see when they visit your YouTube channel. A cover video is the video that automatically plays at the top of your Facebook page. It doesn't need to be fancy; it just needs to communicate something about you and your music and give your audience an idea about what to expect from you on that platform. For YouTube, it could be as simple as you talking to a webcam for 20 seconds. For FB, it should be something that looks cool when the audio is muted (because that's the default setting). **Total Time: 1-2 Hours**

□ 17. PUT TOGETHER A VENUE SPREADSHEET, AND THEN TRADE WITH OTHER BANDS IN OTHER AREAS

Make an Excel sheet of venues in your town or region with all the info another act would need to make smart booking decisions: venue name, address, capacity, vibe, genre, booking contact email and phone, etc. Then, reach out to bands in towns you'd like to tour through and ask them to trade similar info with you. **Total Time: 1-2 Hours**

□ 18. WRITE A BLOG POST TELLING THE STORY BEHIND ONE OF YOUR SONGS

The meaning of the lyrics, the inspiration, the recording, the arrangements. There's a lot you can talk about. Pick a song you're proud of and give your fans a deeper understanding of the things that make that tune so special. **Total Time: 1 Hour**

□ 19. PITCH A BLOG PREMIERE FOR ONE OF YOUR SONGS OR VIDEOS

Premieres are harder to come by as a DIY musician, but if you can score one, it gives you some good bragging rights – and something to share on social. Got a new song or video that you think one of your favorite blogs might want to feature? Upload the track privately to SoundCloud or upload the video to YouTube and leave it set as private. Then send a private link to a few bloggers asking if they'd like to be the first to share it on their site. In exchange, you'll send all your fans to that blog to hear the song! (You don't need to spell out that last part in your pitch, though; it's understood). **Total Time: 1-3 Hours**

□ 20. REGISTER WITH SOUNDEXCHANGE

Not a promo tip exactly, but one that can certainly help you earn more money. In fact, you may have a chunk of change waiting to be claimed at SoundExchange already. This is non-publishing money you earn when your recordings are played on digital radio (including services like Pandora and Sirius XM). **Total Time: 1 Hour**

□ 21. RECORD A “RIG RUNDOWN” VIDEO

Shoot a short video (2-10 minutes) where you talk to the camera and demonstrate the instruments and effects you use, how you get your favorite tones, and how that all works in the larger sonic context of your band. Not only will your existing fans love it, you might be able to attract new listeners to your music who are searching on YouTube for information about the gear you're discussing. *Total Time: 1-2 Hours*

□ 22. RECORD A “HOW TO” VIDEO

The same search principles as above apply to any subject. You can attract people to your music by teaching them how to do something specific: book a tour, screen print a t-shirt, install guitar pickups, etc. *Total Time: 1-2 Hours*

□ 23. OVERHAUL YOUR MERCH TABLE

Your merch display needs to be brightly lit, preferably at eye-level, and have enough room to properly show all your albums, shirts, hats, or whatever else you're selling. Also, make sure you have a clear way to list the prices! Not accepting credit cards? Time to sign up with Square or PayPal! *Total Time: 2-3 Hours*

□ 24. CREATE OR UPDATE YOUR EMAIL CAPTURE FORM

Email is still the most effective way to communicate with your fans. That's why you need to have a means of collecting contact info when they visit your website. Put a capture form on your site – along with a good **REASON** why people should subscribe. A big, bold call-to-action is best: “Subscribe to my newsletter to get tour updates,” or “Join my email list and get a free eBook.” But remember, in order to be GDPR-compliant, it's gotta be clear the person is subscribing. *Total Time: 1-2 Hours*

□ 25. HOST A LISTENING PARTY

Loud music clubs aren't for everyone. But fans might still love to hear your music in a group setting. Set up listening parties at private homes or at local pubs to share your newest recorded music. It's intimate and easy: all you need is a space and a stereo system. In the virtual space you could even host a Twitter listening party. Create a hashtag, set a time when everyone will press ‘play’ at home, and then chat about the album! (The more tweets you have prepared ahead of time, the easier it will be to keep up). *Total Time: 3 Hours*

□ 26. EVERYONE LOVES TOUR DIARIES, SO KEEP ONE

Whether you shoot a regular vlog series from the road (like Brett Newski's Crusty Adventures), contribute an occasional essay to the blog of your local weekly, or post pictures to Instagram of all the tacos you're eating on tour, your fans want to experience a taste of the glory and shame of your touring life. Remember, what's mundane to you might seem exotic to them, especially if they spend their days in a cubicle. **Total Time: Varies**

□ 27. SUBMIT ONE OF YOUR SONGS TO A PLAYLIST ON SPOTIFY

Spotify's editorial team is difficult to reach, and harder to impress. But there are millions of independently curated playlists on Spotify. Do some sleuthing – searching for genre playlists on Spotify, and then cross-referencing the info via Google, Twitter, Instagram, or Facebook. Once you've made a match, reach out to that person to see if they'd add your song. **Total Time: 30 Minutes.**

□ 28. FIND THE OPEN SLOTS AT YOUR LOCAL VENUES

Make a habit of looking at the events calendars on your favorite venues' websites. There might be a bigger act touring through town that you'd be the perfect opener for. There might be a big empty square amidst an otherwise full month of shows. But you won't know unless you're looking. Always refer to the club's website for information on submitting booking requests, follow those requests to the letter, and explain why you'd be a great fit for the night and for the venue. **Total Time: 10-20 Minutes**

□ 29. SHOOT A "TAKE AWAY" VIDEO OF YOUR BEST SONG

Strip your best song down and play it acoustic (or even acapella) at an interesting public location: a monument, a popular street, a storefront, an amusement park, etc. One song, one camera, one take. Post it! **Total Time: 1-2 Hours**

□ 30. INTERVIEW YOURSELF OR ANOTHER BAND MEMBER

Whether it's in print or on camera, these types of self-directed interviews can provide a really interesting glimpse into the life and creativity of an artist. Not sure what to ask yourself? Open it up to your fans and take questions from them. **Total Time: 1 Hour**

□ 31. USE HASHTAGS, AND HERE'S HOW...

TAG EVERYTHING – Relevant tags have a way of supercharging your social media activity. Use one or two hashtags every time you tweet. Use even more hashtags when you post to Instagram. Go back through your YouTube videos and blog posts and add any new tags that might apply. Seriously, new fans will find you through smart tagging. *Total Time: 1 Minute.*

CREATE A HASHTAG THAT IS UNIQUE TO YOUR BAND – As your following grows, you can prompt them to use special hashtags you've created for live events, new albums, or just general discussion about your music. This makes it easier for you to monitor the conversations and engage with your audience, and it gives fans a simple way to connect with one another too. *Total Time: 5 Minutes.*

COMMENT ON POSTS OR VIDEOS WITH HASHTAGS OR KEYWORDS RELATED TO YOUR MUSIC – Got a new cover song video? Find other videos or posts that concern the original artist and leave a non-spammy comment that links to your content. Got a new song that uses a TR-808? Find blog posts or videos about that drum machine and talk about your experience using it (with a link to your song). *Total Time: 15 Minutes*

LOCATE OTHER BANDS LIKE YOU ON INSTAGRAM AND LOOK FOR "COMMUNITY" HASHTAGS THEY'RE USING – Oftentimes using these hashtags can get you exposed to a much broader audience. *Total Time: 10 Minutes*

POST A PHOTO OF YOUR FAVORITE INSTRUMENT – Now tell us the story behind finding it, buying it, playing it, fixing it. Use a ton of hashtags. *Total Time: 5 Minutes*

□ 32. SEND A "THANK YOU" NOTE

An actual note. Not an email. Do you appreciate a recent booking, song placement, radio play, or review? Let them know. It'll be memorable, and set you up for more of the same attention from that gatekeeper. *Total Time: 15 Minutes*

□ 33. DO AN EMAIL "TRADE"

Will your audience be interested in music by another artist, or another local brand? Partner up with them, send an email to your list on their behalf, and have them email their list about your music or events in exchange. This can be a great way to get your most important messaging in front of a totally new audience, but you don't want to do it too often since you might burn out your list sharing news that isn't directly related to your career. *Total Time: 1 Hour*

☐ 34. MAKE A NO-BUDGET MUSIC VIDEO

A music video is pretty much a requisite for a modern promotional campaign. But it doesn't have to cost you thousands of dollars or dozens of hours. Check out CD Baby's article with [6 tips for making a music budget](#) the quick, affordable, and effective way.

Total Time: 6-10 Hours

☐ 35. SEEK OUT GIG OPPORTUNITIES AT NON-TRADITIONAL VENUES

Play a gig at a college student center, a library, a farmer's market, a city park, or your favorite record store during peak hours when there are the most people coming through.

Total Time: 1-3 Hours

☐ 36. BE VOCAL ON ISSUES!

Aligning yourself with a cause you really believe in is not only a way to work towards social, environmental, or political change; it's also a great way to brand yourself, and gives you another way (beyond your music) to interface with the media. Important: you always run the risk of alienating some fans when you speak out on important issues, but if you handle yourself well and make cogent arguments, you might be able to change a few minds AND attract likeminded folks to your music. *Total Time: Ongoing*

☐ 37. GO TO A LOCAL SHOW AND INTRODUCE YOURSELF TO SOMEONE NEW

Open the local paper, find a show that interests you, then go meet someone in the band before or after they play. This is a key step in forming a sense of community in your music scene, and you might also be able to share shows (and fanbases) down the road.

Total Time: 2-3 Hours

☐ 38. RECORD A ONE-OF-A-KIND CASSETTE

People love getting their hands on rare stuff. Make a live recording of an old song or a demo of a new song and announce that you'll make it available at your next show to one lucky person. It could be raffled, it could go to the highest bidder, or some other fun way to include your audience. If you do this at every show, there might even be a press angle there!

Total Time: 1 Hour

☐ 39. RUN A FUN CONTEST WITH SHOW.CO

Give your fans an incentive to take action with your music. Using Show.co, CD Baby's **FREE** music marketing platform, you can run a contest to build your Spotify following, grow your email list, and lots of other goals. In exchange, you can offer the lucky winners free CDs, t-shirts, VIP access, posters, and more. *Total Time: 2-3 Hours*

- 40. **ASK YOUR FANS TO USE YOUR MUSIC IN THEIR VIDEOS**
Your song might be perfect for someone's wedding montage, vacation slideshow, or even a 15-second Instagram Story. So make sure your songs are signed up for CD Baby's Social Video Monetization program, and let your fans know they can use your music in their videos on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and more. *Total Time: 30 Minutes*

- 41. **CREATE INSTAGRAM-FRIENDLY VERSIONS OF YOUR BEST-PERFORMING VIDEOS**
Instagram videos can be 60 seconds in the feed and 60 minutes on IGTV, which gives you a lot of opportunity to repurpose or tease video content that's performing well elsewhere. Just remember, if it's used on IGTV or in Stories, it should work well in vertical.
Total Time: 15-60 Minutes

- 42. **SCHEDULE YOUR SOCIAL POSTS FOR THE WEEK**
Feel like social media is controlling you all day long? You can use a tool like HootSuite to schedule many of your updates, and then get back to living your **REAL** life.
Total time: 30-60 minutes

- 43. **INTRODUCE YOURSELF TO THE MANAGER AT YOUR LOCAL RECORD STORE**
Don't forget that even though the Internet makes our world feel vast and anonymous, every music success story is based on relationships. Build strong ties to your local music hubs. It'll come in handy when you want to feature your new album or just get connected with more musicians in your local scene. *Total Time: 30 Minutes*

- 44. **GIVE YOUR WEBSITE'S HOMEPAGE A MAKEOVER**
It's the first thing someone sees when they visit your site, so put your best foot forward. Is everything up-to-date? Are your best press quotes featured? Do you need to upload a new photo? Are the news items relevant to what's going on in your life right now? Are all your embedded widgets, audio players, or videos still working properly? When it comes to getting a gig or making a new fan, your homepage can mean all the difference.
Total Time: 10-30 Minutes

□ 45. RE-RECORD THE VOCALS FOR YOUR BEST SONG IN A DIFFERENT LANGUAGE

The Beatles put out German-language versions of some of their hits. Harry Nilsson sang “Without You” in Spanish. Are you proficient in a language outside the one you normally sing in? If so, do a translation, pull up your old session, redo the vocals, and put this version out as a single. That one song could be the thing that brings your music to a huge new audience.

Total Time: 3-4 Hours

□ 46. SUBMIT YOUR BAND INFO TO WIKIPEDIA

This one is a little tricky, because: 1) you have to be at a level in your career where the Wikipedia community (their huge group of editors) feels like a Wikipedia entry is warranted for your music, and 2) you have to craft the article in such a way that everything is well cited, meaning you need to have a decent amount written about you already in the press.

But... if you meet those two criteria, it's time to do a little Google search on how to submit to Wikipedia, spend an hour or so researching best practices, and write up an article with citations.

Total Time: 3-4 Hours

□ 47. SUPERCHARGE YOUR EMAIL SIGNATURE

Does your email signature say “Sent from my iPhone?” Yeah, that's not gonna cut it.

Your signature should contain, at minimum, your name, email address, website link, and most important, social links. For a bonus you could include a call-to-action (“Subscribe to my email newsletter”), physical address, and one or two of your best press quotes.

Half the battle of being a DIY musician is fought online, sending lots of emails. Don't waste those opportunities to share your music. *Total Time: 5 Minutes*

□ 48. WRITE “MERCH” AT LEAST TWICE ON YOUR NEXT SET LIST

When your adrenaline is pumping on stage, it's easy to forget (or easy to ignore) the fact that you should be telling your fans about your merch table. So write it down on your set list, just like a song. And be sure to announce that you'll be hanging out at the merch table after the show, so come say hi. If you're uncomfortable with the straightforward merch shout-out, you can always talk about the song you're about to play and conclude by saying the song is on an album available at your merch table. **1, 2, 3, 4...** *Total Time: 1 Minute*

□ 49. STUDY YOUR ANALYTICS

Spend an hour each week going through the stats of **WHO** is listening to your music and **WHERE**. Check out analytics in your various accounts, including Spotify for Artists, Apple Music for Artists, Pandora AMP / Next Big Sound, Facebook Ads Manager and Insights, your YouTube channel, your CD Baby members account, and wherever else you can find relevant data about your fans (including Google Analytics information about your website traffic). Does your **ACTUAL** audience look like what you imagine your audience to be? How old are they? Where do they live? What is their gender identity? This information can help you in so many ways: better targeted ads, smarter tour routing, and more effective band branding in general. *Total Time: 1 Hour*

□ 50. INSTALL THE FACEBOOK PIXEL ON YOUR WEBSITE

When you place this snippet of retargeting code on your website, you'll be able to do more effective Facebook advertising, because you know you'll be able to reach audiences who've proven to have interest in your music – and you'll know exactly **WHICH** pages on your site they've visited, so your messaging will be in line with their previous actions.

Total Time: 1 Hour

FUN BONUS TIPS

□ PUT YOUR BAND STICKER ON THAT BATHROOM STALL OVER THERE!

Many clubs are cool with a little band décor. Once you have a badass sticker design with a website URL, why not put them up where we all occasionally have to spend some time?

Total Time: 1 Minute

□ WEAR YOUR MERCH TO SOMEONE ELSE'S CONCERT

If your t-shirts and hats are cool enough, they become conversation starters. At the very least, concertgoers in your area will see your band name, and of course that's the first step in building name recognition. *Total Time: However Long it Takes You to Get Dressed*

□ SCREEN PRINT YOUR OWN T-SHIRTS

There are plenty of tutorials on YouTube that will show you how to screen print t-shirts from home. **This one is great** because it also includes a list of all the supplies you'll need. If you can come up with a simple design that works well with this diy approach, you'll save yourself a ton of money when making band merch. *Total Time: 1 Day*

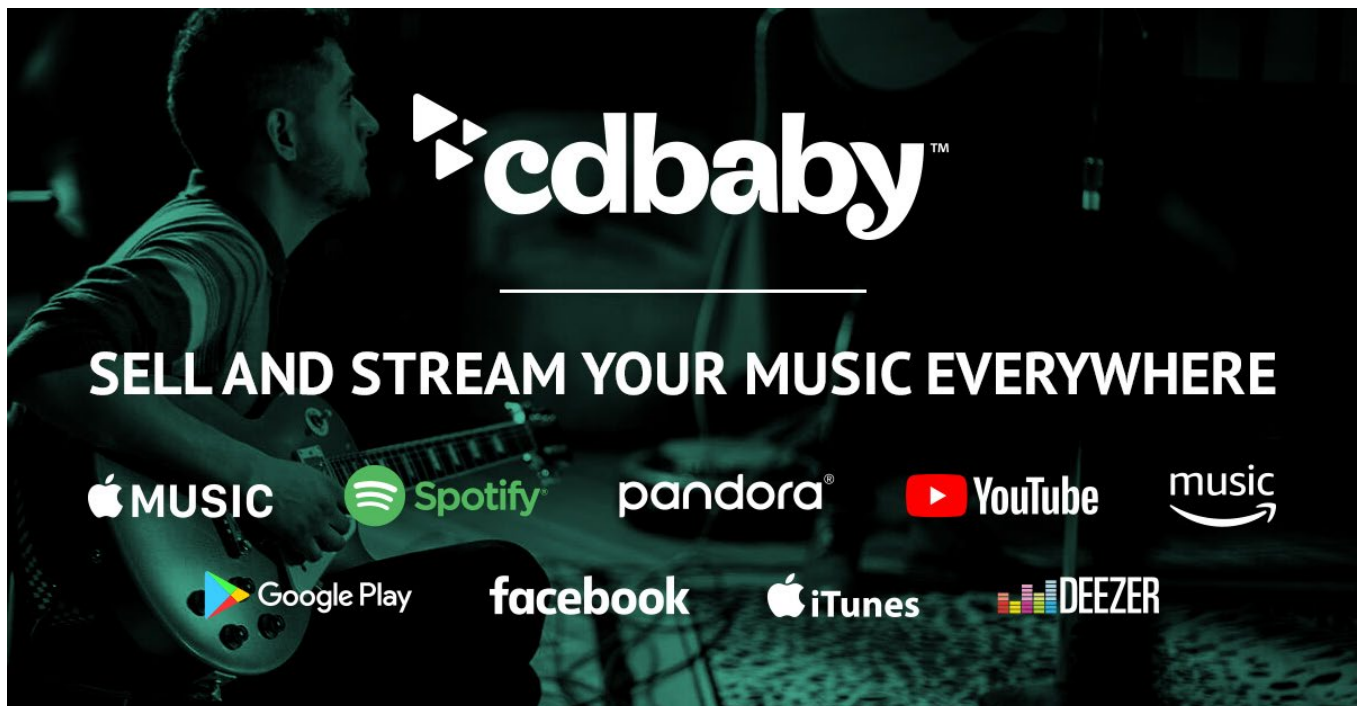
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50+3 tips to help you promote your music **RIGHT NOW!** We'll let you get to it, but if you check all these items off your list and are hungry for more promotional advice, check out CD Baby's [DIY Musician Blog](#) & [DIY Musician Podcast!](#)



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