

SPECIAL REPORT

# Music Career

# Killers!

20 Things That May Be Holding You Back In Your Music Career, And How To FIGHT BACK!



**MUSIC** **Marketing**  
classroom

*"Step By Step Music Career Training"*

by Chris Rockett - Founder of [Music Marketing Classroom](http://MusicMarketingClassroom.com)

Every hour of every day there is a talented musician somewhere on the planet, who makes the mental decision to put their artistic side on the back burner in favor of a more stable career.

Although they vow to themselves that they will still pursue music in their spare time, just this simple mindset shift will mean that writing songs and doing gigs will always take a back seat in the face of almost everything else in life.

In a way it hurts too much to do music when you make this decision, because it reminds you of all the dreams you had, and a feeling of being a failure.

Well I have good news...**it's not your fault!**

Because nobody teaches you a real practical way of making music a viable career.

So Where Did It All Go Wrong?

Even the most committed musicians are ground down to nothing after a few years of playing empty shows, and sending out 100's of demos with no reply.

In this guide I want to show you some of the common pitfalls that attack the enthusiasm of DIY musicians, leaving you feeling like there is no chance for your career.

It's my hope that once you start to recognize the common mistakes that people make, you will be able to avoid them and get on with the real work of consistently creating music that your fans will appreciate...

...and then use the tools and tactics you're learning inside Music Marketing Classroom to easily get in-front of the fans who are going to be most interested.

## **Music Career Killer 1: Not working on your music everyday...**

You can spend your whole life learning music marketing and still fail if you don't have great music to promote...but you can suck at marketing and still do well if your music is on point.

The ideal though, is to find that perfect balance between marketing and music creation...

It can help to make this into a little game, so every once in a while go back three months in time on your YouTube channel and see the kinds of songs you were writing then.

Over that time period you can really start to notice an improvement if you just commit to work on your music skills for an hour a day, and do the marketing for the rest of the time that you can spare.



## **Music Career Killer 2: Not having a clue who your fans are...**

If you try and market to everyone then nobody will feel truly connected to you or feel you're making music just for them...

The problem comes when you're trying to work out where to focus your marketing, because unless you have a clear idea of where your fans hang out then the options will be literally endless, and it will seem like a massive mountain to climb.

So start off by really thinking about where your music fits into the world and how you could describe it to someone you met in a lift for five seconds.

I think most people would agree that there are not many other musicians on the planet quite like Bjork...she is always coming out with something new, interesting and exciting for her fans, and whether you like her music style or not she's definitely got something interesting to say...

But if you really want to make rapid progress with your marketing then trying to be a total one off and create something totally new is tricky!

Personally this held me back for a long time...I wanted to appeal to every person on the planet and every song I recorded was in a different style, trying to model the recording techniques of each genre.

When people would ask me what kind of music I did I would reel off Country, Rock, Folk, Punk, Prog... quite frankly I think people were sorry they asked.



***“Got to find those ideal fans!”***

So forget the ego thing for a minute, sure you have something cool to offer the world but you should make it your mission to find successful musicians who sound similar to what you do, and rejoice when you come across a new one. Because they will probably be surrounded by a whole heap of music fans that you can start to funnel on to your mailing list, using the marketing tactics we talk about.

Even if all your songs are quite different from each other, think of each song as a key to another market of fans.

The main thing to remember is that when you describe your music or songs to people you're really describing the ideal fan for that piece of work...

So now when I hit a site to try and get featured I just keep it simple, if I'm trying to pitch a rock song I might just say "I sound like a mixture of Prog Rock and Michael Jackson"... interesting and is simple enough that people will know what they're getting.

## **Music Career Killer 3: Not collecting email addresses on your website, and everywhere else...**

90% of the people who have a spark of interest in your music may visit your website once and never come back...

So if you don't do your very best to offer them something extremely cool and try to capture their email address, then your website is like a leaky bucket and you're fighting a losing battle.

If you don't have email capture set up right now then drop everything and spend a few hours getting it done.

First sign up for an [Aweber account](#)...

This service is relatively cheap and can grow with you as your email list builds.

Then you want to add email capture forms to your website. Here are my top 5 spots...

1. Pop up your freebie to every new visitor to your site.
2. Put an opt in form in the sidebar of your website or blog.
3. Make sure that you have an "about page" on your site that gives a quick summary of your back story and the chance to sign up.
4. Have an email opt in form at the end of every blog post you write so that interested people can keep up to date with what you're doing next.

Once you've got your email capture set up just follow this simple formula for making money from your music.

*"Entertain your fans then link to something they can buy..."*

Don't get all hung up with being the greatest sales person, just show your people a good time and then give them the option to buy.

You should also collect addresses on your Facebook page, have a Twitter link back to your fan-capture and most importantly of all **at your live shows.**

The people at your gigs have just seen the merchandise (your music) up front and will often come up to you and tell you how cool it was, so whip out your phone or just a sheet of paper and offer to send them your killer freebie to their email address...

Forget about selling CDs for now, because the email address is the real asset and will let you keep on making sales for years to come...

...and then turn those email addresses into even more fans by asking your people (or giving them an incentive) to pass your music onto their friends. Make it really easy with [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) share buttons or the [Add This widget](#) that will detect what social networks they use the most and then show buttons to match. Pretty smart ;-D

It's that simple...

## Music Career Killer 4: Not selling anything...

So many musicians drop the ball at this stage, they will produce great music for the fans but then feel bad and not ask people to take the next step to buy something....

Or they do try and sell, but because they don't feel comfortable with it they get all nervous and it does not come across in a cool way.

Selling is just letting people know about the cool things you've set up for them and you should never feel ashamed about it.

It's like there is this unspoken law where all but the top few famous musicians have to be penniless and work for nothing.

So if you don't currently have anything for sale on your website then don't do anything else until you have.

It can be as simple as a \$5 per month subscription to get a song of the week delivered to their inbox.

This will cost you nothing to set up and you can have it up and running in under 10 minutes.

Just use a PayPal subscription button on your site.



## **Music Career Killer 5: Not collecting money from your non-paid fans in the form of ads...**

The truth is that only a small amount of people on your list are going to buy your music...maybe 20% if you're very lucky.

That does not mean that the others are not a very valuable asset in your music career as well...they may still be just as into your music as the next guy, but just not at the stage yet where they want to make a financial commitment.

But these people might hit a share button and pass on your stuff to friends who might buy, or click on an ad that you place around your content and that you get paid for.

Cool! you just turned someone who never wants to spend a penny into cash, and in my book that is like creating gold out of thin air and a very important concept in the business model of the modern DIY'er.

Always be thinking about how you can turn your non paid fans into gold.

## **Music Career Killer 6: Not using YouTube...**

The cool thing about YouTube for musicians is that it's probably one of the top places on the whole of the internet to find a mountain of your fans hanging out, because quite frankly nearly every musical style that you can think of has a major foothold on there.

It's also quite easy to get ranking and traffic to your videos once you start to test a few different things.

So if you have not yet started to post videos now is the time.

Post up an interesting cover version, create a musical response to something that is buzzing in the news, write a song for a cool blogger that you follow or just take a song that you've already written and post it up in a way that people will be searching for in Google. (For instance you might find out that a bunch of people search Google for "songs about love" and realize that you have the perfect tune to satisfy that search.)



***“Drop everything and get on YouTube now...”***

These are all easy ways that you can get started now and have hits on your videos in a few hours, but the real power comes when you have a body of work uploaded over time that are all sending you hits.

I can't say enough in favor of YouTube for your music marketing so get to work.

## **Music Career Killer 7: Trying to do all the marketing yourself...**

I'm not sure about you but I sometimes wake up and feel totally brain-fried!

It's like I know everything that I should be doing but the tasks and workload seem so overwhelming that it's almost paralyzing...I find it's very annoying that the more there is to do, the more I feel like sitting down and eating some pie!

But then I just accept that I'm a flawed human being like everyone else and set the pie aside in favor of some positive music marketing actions.

In that situation anything is better than nothing and months of procrastination...

The other thing that keeps me going in these "GREY ZONE" moments that we all face from time to time is the thought that there are other people out there in the world helping with my marketing efforts.

So even if I have a day off and go for a picnic with my good lady wife my site will still get a bunch of hits because I've set up systems that motivate other people to work toward my goals too.

*"One day you have to sit back and realize that there is just too much for one person to do all alone, and enlist the help of others to assist you in your mission."*

This is kind of like an online street team...

Like I said at the start of this guide, your main mission is to make incredible music first and foremost and you can't do that if you spend every hour of every day trying to get hits and writing blog posts.

The answer here is motivating your fans to promote your music for you.

After going through these cheat sheets you will know what works, so there is no reason why you can't just get someone else to do some of the work for you.

I've found that if you take a very enthusiastic fan and sprinkle on a little financial incentive to pass on your music you create a very effective music marketing machine.

This is the whole basis of my "**Rapid Fan Formula**" process, but even if you don't have access to that yet you can still use this mindset of sharing the workload to great effect.

## **Music Career Killer 8: Not taking at least one marketing action everyday...**

When we began here I mentioned the importance of daily progress with your music, but also just as important is the power of just one thing per day that will get your music out into the world and in front of a targeted, interested fan.

See, music marketing is like trying to push a car with your bare hands.

At first it seems like it won't budge, but then you start to get a little movement and before you know it you're going at a steady and predictable pace...

...and once in a while you will come across a hill where you can sit back and let things roll, all you have to do is steer.

But if you just start to push for 5 seconds then stop for a few days, then come back and try again for 5 minutes you will never build up enough momentum and it will never get easy.

One of the biggest challenges that faces the modern DIY musician is consistency, because things will come up in your life that seem more fun or more important than working on your marketing.

But a little bit of focus on one really cool project can work like magic, all you need to do is remember why it's important and why you decided to start learning music marketing in the first place.

For me it's being able to work for myself and have freedom from the rat-race...I find that idea always allows me to re-focus on what's important and always stay in the minds of my fans.

## **Music Career Killer 9: Not having your own website...**

Ask anyone who based their music career around MySpace how they feel about it now...

If I can risk one more analogy its like taking your life savings on board a sinking ship and watching with horror as everything you've worked for goes into the cold ice water.

[So get your own site...](#)

It's easy, it's fast and it's cheap and it gives you complete control over every part of your career with no weak points.

No website is too big to fail and any other site apart from your own may one day kick you out for something that they suddenly decide is against their terms and conditions.

## Music Career Killer 10: Not offering high end products...

Most people are happy when they make a few bucks from their music, and you should be happy because it's a very important step to take something digital and charge for it. That gives you the makings of a very special music career where everything you sell is 100% profit.

But it takes a lot of \$1 downloads to keep you afloat and means that you're constantly in selling mode.

The important thing to remember is that not all music fans are created equal...some will not have an extra penny to spend on your stuff from their pay packet, but a few people on your mailing list will literally be millionaires and have money to burn.

What's the point in selling a millionaire something for \$1? Obviously we don't want to charge them \$1000 per download just because they are rich, but the idea is to cater to all kinds of bank accounts with higher value products.

So have something that you can sell for \$1000 or \$2000 or even \$10000! All it takes is putting a link on your site and letting people know what you have set up for them...

Most people will never go for it, sure, and if you're reading this you're probably highly skeptical about offering these services...that's because you and me aren't millionaires and we don't have the same financial perspective as someone who is.

These high ticket items usually come in the form of a personal appearance like a gig, or a one off personally written piece of music. You could even give someone a "red letter day" where they come out to where you live, come and jam with you then you take them out for a slap up meal, basically show them a killer time...that is the kind of offer that you can really charge a premium for.



***“You can charge a premium price for a personal appearance...”***

Or you might buy a new guitar, play it at a bunch of shows and get some pictures then sell it on ebay as “signed memorabilia”.

...all I can say is that if you don't have that high ticket button on your site then nobody is ever going to click it.

## **Music Career Killer 11: Not creating a second income...**

It don't matter which way you look at it, creating enough money to live off your music is a challenge...it's harsh but some people don't want to buy music right now because they are too busy stealing it from file sharing sites.

It can and has been done of course, no doubt about it, but it will take time and commitment on your part to get there.

Luckily there are easier ways that you can make enough money to cover your bills, because there are a whole heap of other things that people do buy on a daily basis where you can jump in on a piece of the action.

The way it works is like this...

The potential buyer hits the internet with a mission to spend some cash on something cool that you know a thing or two about, maybe it would be a guitar, new piano or even Music Marketing Classroom.

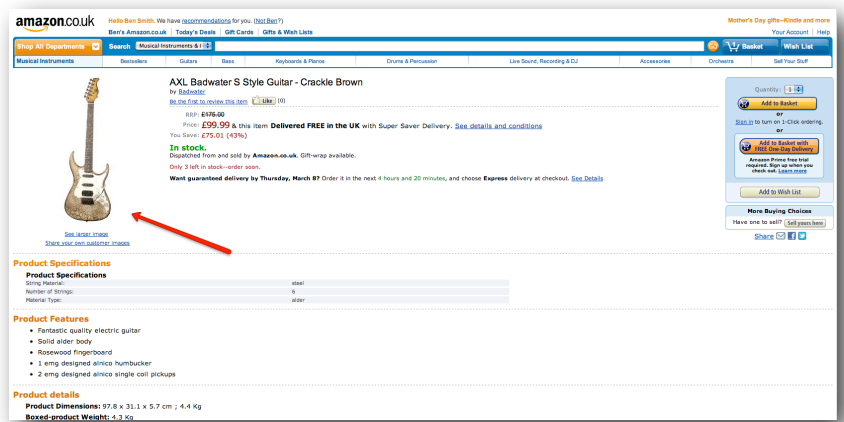
They do a few searches and find that that you have written a great review or provided some training on the product that they're interested in...

They come over and check out your thing and now feel ready to pull the trigger and click your special link to buy, and **Shazammer!** You get paid!

The key with this is not to create a whole other business separate from your music career because that will make you lose focus and take up too much time.

But if you can make money from things you're doing anyway like practicing guitar or even marketing your music then why not do it?

[Click here for more on creating your second income.](#)



***“Make additional income recommending products on Amazon...”***

## **Music Career Killer 12: Boring your fans and playing it safe...**

I can't tell you how many times I have seen this happen...

You go to a show and see a new band rocking out some amazing tunes, but each time you see them again they just continue to play the same old set over and over again.

The bottom line is that one set of good songs does not make a career. I think some musicians feel a fear that they will not be able to match their previous work and this becomes kind of like a block.

So again, make sure that you write something new everyday and the gems will come by default. You'll be showing people considering an investment into your music (a fan or record company) that you will be consistently productive in the future.

## **Music Career Killer 13: Playing every crap gig you get offered...**

When you first start out you might as well play any show that comes along because this is valuable experience, and can even save you some money on the practice room.

This becomes a “career killer” though when musicians continue to play every bad show in the hope that they might just convert 1 new fan.

Playing to empty rooms with no pay not only sucks ass, but it's also like a cancer to your career because it will destroy your enthusiasm.

Next time you get offered a bad show turn it down, and spend the evening connecting with promoters of popular club nights and venues.

One really good gig is worth a hundred empty venues.

## **Music Career Killer 14: Forgetting to be a human...**

This one is simple...

If you ever have to write “to whom it may concern” in your messages to promote your career, then you are not on good enough terms to ask for any help. You need to get out there and do a little bit more networking first.

Also try and mix “professional” with “human” because people in the music industry don’t want to deal with self promotional robots.

There is no reason why you can’t pack your promotions with your own personality and have FUN. Most people are sick of corporate bullshit.

Remember that there is a real person behind every email address, so stop thinking of your music marketing as a numbers game.

Which brings me on to...

## Music Career Killer 15: Spamming

People often start out in music marketing messaging everyone they can on YouTube, Twitter, Forums, Blogs, Facebook and Myspace in the hope that one day so many people will hear about them that they will get famous...

...or they find a bunch of contact info for industry people and send a mass email along the lines of:

*“Hey, we are a cool band and are looking to get signed, please email back if you can help.”*

But just think about that for a second.

If you got an email like that would you think good things about the band?



NO WAY!

You have just missed an opportunity with a massive section of the industry and also wasted the time you spent opening your can of spam. ;-)

A well thought out, targeted promotion will take more time upfront, but in the long term it could get someone interested and move your career forward.

## **Music Career Killer 16: Music in a vacuum...**

As well as making daily progress with your career you also need to be tracking what's going on in your music scene as well.

This is very important because when you follow all the latest news you start to notice little opportunities that will pop up from time to time.

If you just sit in your bedroom and never get involved with your music scene, then it will be much harder to get your work in front of the right people.

[Use Google Alerts to track your music niche.](#)

## **Music Career Killer 17: The curse of the solo musician...**

Sometimes being a solo act can be great, like when it comes to getting paid at the end of the night!

But the problem with being a one man (or woman) show is that you never get to brainstorm new ideas with anyone, and you always have to go with your gut.

For instance...

You might have a marketing plan you've been working on for the last year, then suddenly you speak to a music PR person at a gig and find out that if you just made a few tweaks you might achieve success much faster.

So it's a good idea to find a group of other solo musicians and get together once every couple of weeks for a mastermind session. Talk about new ideas and projects you have going.

When you put your brains together with a clever group of people you become a SUPER-BRAIN!

## **Music Career Killer 18: Getting fed up...**

Music can be a bitch and some days you will feel depressed and like nothing is going your way.

This is a very dangerous time, because a nice steady job with benefits will suddenly seem a little bit more appealing.

At this point you need to take a couple of days off and get away completely.

After a little while you will start to realize that things are not so bad, and with that clarity you can plan your attack in a new and better way.

## **Music Career Killer 19: Creating the “Perfect” music marketing plan...**

I know that a lot of people like to think of themselves as perfectionists and I used to be the same way, but rather than helping your career this will ultimately kill your spirit.

Perfection sucks!

Writing the perfect music marketing plan and never actually putting anything into action will get you nowhere FAST.

For example, if you are making a YouTube video and mess up a chord or two just laugh and post it anyway...

Set a short deadline for planning and then get to work and test your music marketing theories.

## Music Career Killer 20: Getting jealous of other musicians...

Nobody feels great about getting jealous, but it's natural right...?

You work your tail off for months to try and get hits to your site and then you see another musician getting featured in the press and you know that in one day they are going to get more hits than you got in the last three months.

I'm sure you may have felt something like this at some point and I know I have...

But it does not have to be that way if you just make a little mindset shift that I think will give you a new perspective on the success of others...

...and that is simply this...

When you see another musician doing something cool like getting played on the radio, getting signed or getting press think to yourself "Cool, that means I have the opportunity to do the same thing, because the other musician has just uncovered another potential opportunity for me to market my own music as well".



***"Attack of the green eyed monster!"***

See, if you track other musicians who have a similar fan base to your own using Google Alerts you get daily updates with new opportunities where you might connect with people who will be open to what you do because they just featured something very similar.

This follow up approach is something I call the “**Slip Stream**” because you get to ride on the wave of the hard work of other musicians and PR companies and takes a lot of the guess work out of your marketing.

## The Tipping Point

There comes a time in the life of every successful musician, when you have added so much value to the world that suddenly your Twitter and Facebook numbers are going up everyday, and your website traffic is increasing by itself.

This is the point at which fans start to become your automatic promotion source, and if you give up before this ever happens you will never know what it feels like.

Having reached The Tipping Point you can scale back your music promotion, and focus much more on the creative process.

Diligently promoting your music on a regular basis for an extended period of time will bring you great rewards.

As Bon Jovi once said...

“Oh you got to KEEP THE FAITH!!!”

- Chris

**Feeling inspired to get to work?** I created **Music Marketing Classroom** to be an indispensable tool for any DIY musician who wants to fast track the marketing slog...

Imagine that you could be on top of all of these killers, and still have time to work on creating mind-blowing music everyday!

[Login to the classroom now](#), get started with the lessons...and make sure that you never fall into any these traps again.

Download Your Complimentary  
**Music Marketing**  
**CHEAT SHEETS**



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