



THE JAZZ SERVICES
GUIDE TO
THE MUSIC INDUSTRY
FOR JAZZ MUSICIANS
BY DAVE STAPLETON



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR – DAVE STAPLETON

In less than ten years since graduating in classical piano from the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, Dave Stapleton has carved out a successful career as pianist, composer, producer and founder of forward thinking record label, Edition Records. He has released eight albums as a leader with various ensembles earning him international and critical acclaim as an innovative and original composer. His commission for the Lunar Saxophone Quartet, *Catching Sunlight*, garnered five star reviews, whilst his first String Quartet was premiered in 2009 and his recent album *Flight* earned a stream of rave reviews from the international jazz press. He has also written a number of scores for animations and short films, including *Pellegrina* for the S4C (Channel Four Wales) and *The Outsider* (Best Welsh Film Award at the Cardiff Film Festival), and is the recipient of a number of commissions from ABRSM. In 2008 he founded Edition Records, with co-director photographer Tim Dickeson. Edition has quickly emerged as one of the most innovative and creative companies in the business. As well as providing an outlet for emerging talent such as Troyka and Phronesis, Edition have released albums by established artists like Keith Tippett, John Taylor and Neil Yates and promoted stars of the future such as Marius Neset and Josh Arcoleo.

ABOUT EDITION RECORDS

Founded in 2008 by pianist/composer Dave Stapleton and photographer Tim Dickeson, Edition Records has developed a formidable reputation as one of the leading and most forward thinking jazz labels in the UK. With over 30 albums in their catalogue, Edition exists to provide emerging talent and established artists a platform to promote their music and release pioneering new recordings.

Edition quickly established international praise through the release of Keith Tippett's *Live at Le Mans*, Bourne Davis Kane's *Lost Something* as well as Edition's label boss Dave Stapleton Quintet's *The House Always Wins*. Following these acclaimed releases, Edition signed, among others, Troyka and Phronesis, two bands with outstanding musical identities who have developed strong reputations and gone on to tour extensively in the UK and Europe. In 2010, Edition expanded their sound-world via the release of two vocal albums by Tamco and Robert Mitchell's *Panacea*. 2010 also saw releases by Neon Quartet and Martin France's improvised electronic group *Spin Marvel*, featuring Nils Petter Molvaer. In early 2011, Edition released three albums by Meadow, Kairos 4tet and Marius Neset who further pushed musical boundaries, all achieving huge acclaim from the international press.

Driven by a love of the music as well as a passion for design and photography, Edition aims to achieve the highest quality in every aspect of a release. With new albums by Phronesis, Troyka, Ivo Neame, Dave Stapleton, Neon Quartet and Marius Neset over the next 12 months, Edition looks set to confirm their reputation as the driving force behind European jazz. www.editionrecords.com

INTRODUCTION

Over the last 10 years the record industry has gone through some dramatic changes. Many new technologies have emerged which have provided huge benefits in recording, manufacturing, selling and promoting music to a wider audience. However, to counteract this positivity, the digital age has brought around many problems that have greatly affected the industry in a negative way. Piracy is just one of the main problems that face small independent labels. With file sharing, illegal downloading and the emergence of streaming services such as YouTube and Spotify, there's a wealth of music readily available, for free, at the click of the button. Inevitably this has changed the ways people listen and buy music and in turn has caused a steady decline of specialist retailers, as well as the major retailers, stocking specialist music. With the closure of many shops, the browsing and personal recommendation elements from your local indie shop have vanished and with them the decline of CD sales. Even with the emergence and growth of legal download sales, the revenue generated as yet, although it is growing, does not replace the loss generated from the declining sales of CDs.

Throughout this process music has been gradually devaluing, forcing record labels, distributors, retailers and musicians to work harder and more creatively to produce the same revenue. To combat these problems many organisations, businesses and musicians have had to change their business models to achieve the same level of success as well as providing security in their income streams. Many businesses are now working on multi-revenue streams, with the musicians and the industry working together more closely and creatively in promotion, booking, and managing, publishing and releasing music.

Releasing a CD, especially a debut album, is not necessarily a money making venture but must be seen as one part of a larger process or long term strategy plan, where the release of the CD and the reviews generated will help generate income from live work, publishing rights, performance rights, CD and download income and composition as well as teaching and working as a sideman. Then once your career is well established, selling albums can become an income stream in its own right.

This guide is aimed at providing some underlying knowledge and insights into the music industry as well as providing some tips to developing a successful career as a professional jazz musician. I have written this guide based on my experience over the last 10 years, as a musician and label owner, working with a number of diverse musicians, with varying degrees of profile, in developing album campaigns and strategies to increase audiences and develop profile.

This guide looks at the five main areas of the jazz industry that you will come across early on in your career. They are recording industry, marketing and promotion, touring, publishing and management.

1. PLANNING

1.1 LONG TERM GOALS & CAREER STRATEGY

To have clear ideas about your long-term goals, whether it is two, five or ten years down the line, will be vital in achieving success in this industry. Through understanding your short and long term objectives, it is possible to work backwards, with regular assessment and adjustment, to help clearly outline the steps needed to achieve your goals. If you are just starting out in the industry as a performer and composer, I expect you are currently driven by a strong passion and love for the music and will want to tour, record and write music as much as possible. While there is absolutely nothing wrong with this at all, it must not be forgotten that you are running a self-employed business. It is therefore vital to starting thinking more business-like in managing yourself and planning and developing each aspect of your 'business' to achieve your goals. There's no need to do this formally and develop official business plans, but it can be a good idea to keep a note book and write down, in bullet points, thoughts, ideas and strategy to develop your career. Being this all-encompassing musician will be demanding and will require certain characteristics but the more planning you do, especially early on in your career, the greater the journey will be.

1.2 NETWORKING, SUPPORT & ADVICE

Starting out in this industry can be a daunting task, especially in the current climate. Continual talk of declining album sales, closure of shops as well as the struggle to make gigs financially successful makes it all less appealing. However, it isn't all doom and gloom, and I firmly believe the market is strong enough for musicians to not only survive but prosper. One of the vital parts to your success will be your contact base and networking skills. As a self-managed artist, it is your responsibility to create new contacts and develop relationships with your existing contact base. You never know what opportunity can occur and sometimes, when you least expect it, a chance meeting can provide a huge lift in your career, so always be prepared with CD promos at the ready and most importantly always follow up any leads.

Networking is not usually a musician's best friend and you will frequently see a huddle of musicians in one corner at any networking event. However, networking is one of your most important tools in developing awareness about what you do and creating opportunities that might otherwise never happen. You never quite know who you're going to meet so always be prepared.

2. RECORDING INDUSTRY

2.1 THE PURPOSE OF A RECORD LABEL

The purpose of a record label is to manufacture, promote and distribute sound recordings in CD, vinyl or digital formats. Each record label will have their own network of distribution for both physical and digital products around the world that are responsible for getting the product into the shops. Each distributor will then account, usually on a monthly basis, sales within their territory. Stock will be given to the distributor, in most cases, on a consignment sale of return basis, and the record label will not get paid until a CD has been actually sold to a retailer. Even then, if a CD doesn't sell in the shops, it can be returned to the distributor who will then show a negative balance on their statement.

In most cases, it is the record label's responsibility to co-ordinate press and promotion campaigns; however for larger labels the distributor may designate a PR agent or manager to promote the labels catalogue and their artists in their territory. Once the distribution and promotion are in place, the label must then liaise with the distribution and PR agents about touring and any gigs surrounding the release.

In my view, a record label should go beyond the traditional infrastructure outlined above and look to bridge the gap between the artists and fans. There are many additional factors, which can often go unmissed, that create a difference in an album campaign and can often determine the success of the album, from the pricing structure of the album to the small detail that goes into marketing a CD. Obviously the larger the label, the greater the marketing and distribution power they will have, and the more exposure the artist and album will receive.

The idea of releasing and promoting CDs is not rocket science and the more thought, detail and work that goes into a CD then the more awareness, and exposure it will receive. However, it doesn't mean every release will be a successful album, as releasing music is dependent on so many uncontrollable variables and the process is certainly not an exact science. You are dealing with people's psychologies and perceptions, listening and buying habits that can be changed and affected by a further set of factors. But if there's one thing I have learnt it is the more you expose a record with time and energy, the greater the chance you have of releasing a financially and artistically successful album.

2.2 TYPES OF DEALS

The majority of deals with record labels are either:

1. **Licensing Deals**
2. **Recording Deals**

Within a licensing deal, the label has been granted the rights of the sound recording, which is owned by the artist and given permission to act as the manufacturer, distributor and promoter of the sound recording within an agreed time period and agreed territory. Usually, a term will be between three and five years with options to extend the term on completion.

Licensing deals give the artist more control artistically, as they will be responsible in delivering the final master to the label and it's only then, once the master is complete, that the label gets involved in the process. A licensing deal also limits the financial risk for the label, as they do not pay for the recording, mixing or mastering. Royalties are then paid, usually 50% of net profits, meaning the record label will first recoup its costs before paying the artists their royalties. Later I will discuss in more detail about the finances of this deal.

A recording contract works in a different way, in that the label will pay for everything involved with the making of the album and therefore will be entitled to complete ownership of the sound recordings. The publishing rights or ownership of the actual music still resides with the composer(s) of the music. As the owner of the sound recording copyright, the label has complete control in all decisions relating to the album, which for some more established labels will provide the freedom to imprint their own brand across the artwork such as ECM or ACT have done. However, recording contracts give the label greater risk, as they have more upfront cost and more to recoup, but allows for a greater potential return on each CD sold.

In the majority of cases, most recording contracts for new artists will be licensing deals as the benefits for both parties are greater.

2.3 OWNERSHIP AND CONTROL

It is worth pointing out at this stage the importance, as young a musician, of taking control of your own destiny early on and giving yourself every opportunity to bring in as much revenue as possible from any circumstance. Later on in the guide I will discuss the pros and cons of working with agents and managers, where of course you will be giving up a certain percentage of your income in return for their services, but at this early stage being able to control and keep every pound of income will be invaluable in giving you security. Of course, sometimes you will be faced with decisions of finding a balance between making money or increased profile but ultimately to build long term career, taking ownership as much as possible will reward you in the long term. Sometimes these decisions can be hard to make but with correct advice from your peers and your friends within the industry, these decisions can be made easier.

2.4 PROS AND CONS OF SELF-RELEASING YOUR ALBUM

There are more and more artists these days self-releasing their own music whether they are new artists or high profile established artists. For many musicians it may seem a daunting prospect and they may feel they don't have time, but in fact it is getting easier and easier to form and manage your own record label on a day-to-day basis. Your decision to do so, however, will be based on a balance between artistic control, profile development, your own funds, the time you're able to put into the album, distribution, your contact base and your own drive and ambition.

I first started my own label in 2003, mainly because I didn't think that any other labels would be interested in my music but also because I had strong ideas and wanted to maintain control in my output. I set up the label with no real understanding and absolutely no experience of the industry and never intended it to provide a large income stream for me, but for it to act as a platform to release my music and to gain some profile to kick-start my career. Throughout the process, I gradually understood more and more about the infrastructure of the industry, marketing and presenting music.

Now, I am fortunate to have complete control of my music, maintain 100% of all income generated, release music on an international platform as well work with fantastic musicians. However, it hasn't been easy and has swallowed up a huge amount of time over the last 10 years.

Over the page I have laid out some of the key advantages and disadvantages of 'doing-it-yourself'.

Pros:

- **Control: Self-releasing will give you 100% control and ownership of your sound recordings.**
- **More financial reward: You will be able to retain 100% of all income generated from sales.**
- **Time Management: You will not have to wait for people do get things done**

Cons:

- **Greater cost: You will have to foot the bill for manufacture, promotion and other traditional label costs as well as your recording costs.**
- **Distribution: As a one artist label many distributors will not take you on as there is too much administration work to set up just for one release every year or two.**
- **Profile/Promotion: Whilst you may be able to achieve certain leverage from your own publicity, you may not be able to accomplish the same results as a well-established label with a strong contact base.**

Whichever route you choose there will be a huge amount of work involved in promoting your music. Even if you get signed to a label, the work to promote your album will be a collaborative process in the decision making, tour booking and strategy of the release campaign, so whichever way you turn, you will not be able to shy away from hard work.

Artists signed to a label must not become reliant on the label to produce results. The label's primary focus will be in selling CDs, whereas the focus of the artist should be from a more managerial position of developing profile and opportunities so with clear roles established between each party there should be the making for a fine collaboration.

2.5 SETTING UP YOUR OWN LABEL

Forming a record label is not as difficult as you may think. Firstly, you need a name that reflects your character and the type of music that you putting out. Make sure you research your short list of names to be sure it hasn't already been used. Once you've decided on a name you need to register the name with PPL, who license the use of music played in public or broadcast on radio, TV and on the internet. They will provide you with unique code that represents your label called an ISRC (International Standard Recording Code). You will need to embed this code on all your albums in the mastering process. The code works as follows:

Example code: GBAAA1200001

GB – Great Britain

AAA – This is your unique label code

12 – Year of release

00001 – 1st track of the 1st album of the year. The second track will be 00002 and so on.

These codes are used to track correct royalties owed to you from any public broadcast on TV or Radio.

You will also need the following items for each release:

Barcodes

A barcode provides a unique product number for your album. This is vital and you will not be able to add your album to Amazon or other shops without it. You can either get a barcode from your manufacturer or distributor, or alternatively you can sign up to receive barcodes from GS1 –

www.gs1.org.uk.

Remember your physical and digital product will need separate barcodes as they are essentially different products

Catalogue Numbers

The purpose of a catalogue number is to provide a clear differentiation between your releases so distributors and retailers can easily manage the different titles.

Website

A website will be the hub of your label, where you will base all your promotion from. More and more, you do not need to spend a fortune to develop websites with many free blog sites, such as Word Press, designed to work with Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Soundcloud. With a little knowledge about html coding and embedding images etc. you should not need to pay much more than purchasing your website address. Remember as a small cottage industry business, keeping costs as low as possible will be vital and so embrace all media technology as much as possible when developing you brand and online infrastructure.

2.6 PLANNING

Planning is vital to a successful release. If you work backwards from the period of touring to support your album release, you'll realise how long before release you'll planning. Remember releasing an album is not about just going in to the studio and recording an album. To be successful you need to create buzz, set up your tour, send your promotional copies three months before release and then there's the recording, editing, mixing and mastering, which always takes time, especially if you want to achieve the best results or if you are using musicians who are busy. So you can see why planning is so important.

Ideally you will need to record your album between six and nine months before the scheduled release, however if it's your debut album and you would like to book a tour then you may need the CD recorded to send off to venues and promoters. Bear in mind, some venues can book up to a year in advance of the concert so based on that, for a debut album, it is better to record your album up to a year in advance. The more profile you generate, the easier it will be to arrange concerts and interviews without sending a CD so it can be possible to record an album four to five months in advance and still be able to set-up a tour and generate press interest. At Edition, the longer we have had the album before release, the more buzz it will generate.

Be as organised as possible with all the information such as ISRC Codes, barcodes, composer info etc. There will be times when you may need to check or send this information off to someone so it's useful to keep everything together in one place.

Timeline

Here's a suggest timeline in the run up to your release based on a debut album:

12 months - Book studio

12 months - book musicians

10 months - rehearse

9 months - record

8 months - edit / mix / master

8 month - book tours / gigs

7 months - photo-shoot, video shoot

5 months - album artwork

4 months - press release / biography / additional promotion tools

3 months - send promos to radio station, journalists, magazines

3 months - applying for funding / manufacture CD

2 months - start generating buzz, pre release awareness / update websites, social networks with news of new album

1 month - release promotional videos, recording session photos, and podcasts

1 month - start promoting concerts

1 month - chase up press / radio contacts

1 month - ensure distribution has stock

1 month - reviews start coming in, use to promote album and concerts

2.7 CHOOSING YOUR STUDIO

Deciding on which studio to use to record your album depends on many factors:

Instrumentation

Every studio has its own sound and so choosing the right studio will depend on the music and instrumentation you will record. For example, if you are recording drums, guitar and Hammond organ, it will be important you have a more controlled environment possibly with a drum booth, however a live room with a nice sound will not be as important if you are recording saxophones or strings. To achieve best results and complete control, achieving separation of instruments into different rooms with good visibility is crucial, but inevitably the cost of the studio will increase if you wish every instrument to be separate from one other.

Budget

You must strike a balance between investing in an album recording to develop your career and with the return you are expected to achieve from sales. For example, for a debut album it would be unrealistic to book two days at a studio such as Angel studios – costing you near enough £2000 a day, and then sell only 150 copies. With these costs, as well as the outlay in mixing, paying musicians and the manufacture and promotion costs you would make a significant loss. However, you must best represent your music and the quality of the performance in the best way.

Location

It may be that the band you are recording with are all based in one city and so logical to book a studio in that city to avoid any additional travel or accommodation costs. However, do not disregard the option of taking the band to a studio where everybody can stay in the same place. It can focus the mind to concentrate on the recording and not deal with the daily commute you may find in London for example.

All these factors need to be considered – carefully balancing your thought process between your budget allowance for studios and your final result, and ultimately what you want to achieve from this recording – whether it is financial reward, investment into your career or artistic satisfaction.

2.8 COSTS OF RECORDING

Here is an example of common costs involved with recording an album:

Example costs of recording:

Hire of studio: £350 - £600 per day

Hire of engineer: £250 per day (the studio may provide an engineer but you may also like to work with someone you know or who has been recommended by a friend or musician).

Musician Fees: £100 - £200 per day – See Musicians Union for trade union rates

Mixing: £200 – 400 per day

Mastering: £200 – 400 per day

Additional costs:

- Travel
- Accommodation
- Hire of instruments (For example Fender Rhodes, drum kit if you're recording overseas)
- Food & Drink
- Contingency (10%)

Example costs of self-releasing:

- Artwork design
- Manufacture of CD
- MCPS (if recording other composer's music):
- Barcode
- Press Release
- Biography
- Photo-shoot
- Video shoot
- Tour Flyers
- Tour Posters
- Postage
- Stationary (envelopes, paper, ink etc.)

2.9 INCOME STREAMS

When I first set my label up, the one piece of advice I was continually told was to 'Do the Maths' - to work out exact costs of a release, your breakeven point and the number of units you will need to sell and at what price.

As a label you will generate income from the following ways:

- **CD sales**
- **Downloads**
- **PPL**

CD sales are still the dominant medium with downloads making between 12 and 20% of total revenue. Year on year, this figure is increasing and will become more important. With CD sales, your outlets include:

Physical shops (HMV, indie retailers) – There are now very few indie retailers left and you can probably count them on one hand but for the dedicated jazz fan, the indie can be their first choice, as the shopping experience may be more to their liking.

Mail order (Amazon) – Amazon is by far the dominant retailer and will be your primary focus in shifting stock.

Concerts – Based on previous experience you are likely to sell CDs to between 10 and 20% of the total audience at gigs. With this figure in mind, it helps you to think about the number of gigs you will need in your tour to support the release. If your target is selling 200 CDs at concerts, playing to about 100 people per gig, then taking into account 10% of the audience will buy a CD; it will take you about 20 gigs to reach your target. So it's possible to see why festivals are good - not only because you are playing to more people, developing a wider fan base but the amount of potential CD sales increase also as well as higher performance fees.

Artist website – Your own website will be a great tool for you to gain new fans, to not only let them know about forthcoming concerts but also to let them know about future releases. It is now very easy to set up your own store with various external sites such as Big Cartel, and even Ebay that are all set up to work easily with PayPal.

To complete your budget you need to estimate what you expect may sell, based on people's reaction to your music, the musicians involved, the buzz etc. With options to sell your music online, in shops, at gigs it is important to base your budget on certain price points. For example, if you are working with a distributor, they will likely pay you between £4.40 and £5.00 for every CD sold in the shops or online. However through your website and at gigs you are able to sell at £10. So for a debut record album you may expect to sell the following:

Shops - 150 @ £4.50 = £675

Gigs - 100 @ £10.00 = £1000.00

Website - 50 @ £10.00 = 500.00

TOTAL: £2175.00

Download income: £250.00 (based on 10% of CD sales)

TOTAL: £2425.00

From this figure you can now see the targets of what you need to sell from each outlet and also allows you to set a budget for your recording and additional label and marketing costs.

2.10 DISTRIBUTION

Distribution companies work in different ways. Whilst some work on a consignment basis and provide statements on a monthly basis, based on a price per CD that it was bought for buy the shop, other distributors may buy stock up front at a fixed price. Within Edition, most of our distributors work on consignment basis, while other companies pay us a fixed price or pay us a percentage of net profits. Whichever way, prices can vary quite considerably based on the strength of the market and we receive anywhere between £3.75 and 5.50 Euros per CD sold.

Despite worldwide distribution, it can sometimes be more beneficial, especially for new artists, to give greater focus and time to achieving sales in their own country via shops or through their own website and concerts. With increasing costs to send stock around the world compared to the number of actual sales it can seem financially unviable. So, whilst it's great having worldwide distribution, unless there's dramatic press coverage or touring, focussing sales where you are able to spend less and make more money can be far more advantageous. But, then of course, you're faced with the catch 22 of how to achieve more profile in different countries.

Note: Edition has recently launched a distribution service to cater for self-released artists. Email dave@editionrecords.com for info

2.11 PRICING STRUCTURE

Distributors will fix a dealer price (or PPD Published Price to Dealer) anywhere between £6.50 and £8.50 which is the price the shop sells to the distributor. The retailer will make the difference between the retail price and Dealer Price. The retail price will be decided by the retailer and neither the label nor the distributor will have control on that. The only way to influence the retailer, which is obviously vital when releasing a new artist for example, is to offer discounts to certain stores such as HMV or Amazon, or to fix the dealer price as low as possible but then the label will be minimising its price.

2.12 DESIGNING YOUR CD FRONT COVER

Here are some tips Edition has picked up over years from designing artwork:

- Make sure the artist name and title is clearly visible so it stands out on the physical shelf or as a 100 x 100 pixel thumbnail on amazon. Test it out by adding a thumbnail pic into a screen grab of an amazon or iTunes page and you'll see if the front cover has enough impact.
- Spend some time with the artwork as it will represent your image and music and so it's vital to get the right message across.
- If you don't have a huge budget for this, think creatively about how you could get some ideas to make it look professional - research other albums / labels you like and see what they do, ask fourth year design students looking to build portfolios to design for a very small fee.

2.13 MANUFACTURING YOUR CD

There are two ways to get your CD manufactured. Firstly, there is duplication and secondly replication. Replication is a professional process that first creates a glassmaster from the original master which is then replicated. Data cannot be added or changed in this case. Duplication, on the other hand, refers to burning data to a disk, as is done in home computing. Generally, to create a glassmaster is too costly for less than 500 units so anything manufacture above 500 units will be replicated.

The industry stand of delivering your master is as DDP (Disc Description Protocol). DDP files avoid any manipulation and will ensure accurate replication unlike an audio CDR and end up exactly as the artist intended. Delivery can also be made over the internet speeding up the production process.

2.14 WRITING AN ALBUM PRESS RELEASE

A good press release will not only provide the reviewer or journalist with the key information they require to write a review but will also be vital, especially for a debut album and new artist, in getting across your musical ambition and vision. The press release must be clearly presented on one sheet and should include the artist name, album title, catalogue number, barcode, musicians involved, any tour dates surrounding the release and most importantly the release date. Many journalists can receive a significant amount of CDs each week and will put them in piles based on when it will be released so a review can be submitted at the correct time, so it's imperative the release date is clearly displayed. It's important to keep the body of the text limited to three to four paragraphs and should focus on providing a little background information to the album, some context of the band's history, highlight key aspects of the album that make it stand out, but most importantly a well written press release will help generate excitement to persuade the reviewer to listen to the CD, which is vital when they are getting so many through the door each week.

You will find some press releases tend to read like a review where the music is compared to other bands, which in my mind, takes the focus away from the music being presented and defeats the object for which it is intended. Comparing your music to other bands and composers, on one hand may seem a logical way to quickly provide summary of your music and band but then that may have the opposite effect in not only putting a journalist or consumer off the album if they do not like that band, but also lessen the impact you and your vision makes as an individual artist. If you find it hard to write about your music, which so many musicians do, it worth spending £50 or so on professional copyist or journalist to do it for. Find a writer, whose style you like and more often than not they will be happy to write it for you.

For further information on writing press releases, have a look at our guide to 'Marketing Your Band'.

2.15 SETTING A RELEASE DATE:

Deciding on a release date will most likely be based on if/when there's a tour happening. Generally at Edition we have found releasing an album one month before a tour works well as it prolongs the press campaign and the awareness of the release. It is also worth bearing in mind what other releases are coming out at that time as word quickly spreads throughout the industry about what's coming out. You will find there are in fact only very limited months to release a CD. Very rarely would you release in July and August and releasing in December would be suicide. The best times to release tend to fall between February – June and September – mid November but be careful with April and May, as they tend to get very busy with big releases and so inevitably review space becomes short in these busy times.

2.16 E-FLYERS AND BANNERS:

Expanding the design of your CD artwork into e-banners and incorporating the brand into your website are great ways to develop audience perceptions to promote gigs, downloads, gig previews, special offers etc. Try to think about your music more than just selling a CD but selling a brand.

Planning is vital to achieve a successful release. Not only is it important to know your budget, but to be aware of needing to take the time to really think everything through. If you are reading this guide it is likely that you have ambitions in releasing an album. You may already have strong ideas about the music, instrumentation and even the musicians but take a moment to think other things through on a practical level. For example, can the musicians you have chosen, dedicate time to your project, not only in the studio but also playing live? Are they well known to a point where their availability is limited and therefore can't play the gigs? I have come across many times where an album is recorded with a certain line-up with musicians who are too busy to commit to live work and therefore impossible to truly represent the music in live performance. Having a special guest can be a great way to add some weight or profile to your album but be careful to not let their presence overshadow the music or you as a band leader, especially if they are a dominant voice in the band. Sometimes having a guest on one track can be more beneficial.

2.17 DIGITAL DOWNLOADS:

The download of digital albums and tracks has been a welcome service over the last few years and it has been growing steadily year on year. Not only does it provide an instantaneous platform for fans and users to buy your music when and wherever they want to, but it allows labels and musicians an opportunity to increase their revenue on an album release without contributing additional cost. Whilst the sales of downloads in jazz only account for between 10 and 20% of total revenue compared to sales of 55% of total revenue in Rock and Pop, they still play a significant role in an album campaign and should not be over looked. In fact, digital downloads and legitimate streaming should and will become a major part of your strategy in developing your audience and making your albums become financially successful.

There are a number of digital distributors that will distribute your digital content throughout the world but it's important, as always with anyone you work, to find the right one for you and your music. Recently the merger of the Orchard and IODA, two of the largest digital distributors now working under the Orchard brand, have now created one of the largest digital distributors. Whilst other smaller digital distributors may see this merger as a disadvantage to some smaller labels with a chance of getting lost within the mass of labels, I feel the larger the beast, the greater promotional power they have and in fact, Orchard have a label manager for each record label which aides each album release through the system. Orchard also has offices in many major cities throughout the world which adds huge benefit to achieving success on retailer homepages in particular countries.

As individual musicians self-releasing their own albums, you are again faced with the problem of how to get your album released through a distributor such as Orchard as very rarely will they take on a small label with only one release every one or two years. Firstly, it is worth approaching the Orchard or Finetunes, especially if your album has generated some buzz or if you are expecting significant amount of press. If that route fails then you have options of releasing through various collectives, such as Loop and FIRE if you are involved with those collectives. At Edition we have just launched a platform for self-releasing artists to release their albums through the Orchard which will guarantee their album will be available on all the major online retailers and streaming services such as iTunes, Emusic and digital and Amazon as well as many numerous not so well known stores.

Once all your content is set up and ready for release, here's some useful tips in making the most of your digital release:

- Ensure your website, and all your social media websites are linked correctly with the correct logos to the main stores. With Edition releases, we always focus on iTunes and Emusic, which are the most important for us. We also focus on promoting the digital album on Spotify (only on most of our releases as some artists do not agree with the business model or ethos of the website) but I will talk in more detail about the advantages and disadvantages of Spotify a little later.
- To achieve promotional banners on the iTunes store for example - ensure you tell your digital distributor about all the forthcoming press as far in advance as possible so their marketing rep can sell the album spot to the iTunes or Emusic manager who is in charge of the homepages.
- Make use of social media as much as possible by linking the album page, promoting people to share or retweet it. You will find a lot of customers who buy their albums online will then talk about their purchase on Twitter and Facebook so take advantage of that by retweeting or sharing that with your fan base.

3. MARKETING / PROMOTION

Before we start discussing ways to promote and market your album, it's worth thinking about the different types of customers who buy CDs and how that might affect your marketing strategy. After quite a bit of analysing and thinking, I have narrowed down music fans fall into the following categories:

1. Fans who need to be told what to buy, who will go straight to the reviews page of their favourite publication and will pick out two or three albums that have been recommended to them by their favourite reviewers. Sometimes these fans will go to concerts probably again recommend by a preview in a national paper or listings magazine and although they have their favourite stores to buy from maybe persuaded to buy a CD at the performance.
2. The hard-core music fans that will use every possible source to search out new interesting music, take recommendations from their friends, read bios of artists and follow their influences to check out other music they might enjoy. They will use every bit of disposal income in buying music in all formats and going to live concerts. These fans will also want your signature after the concert, check out extra stuff on your website and watch as many videos as possible on YouTube.
3. Fans who will only buy CDs if they fall into their lap, either because they hear something in a friend's house or because they hear something at a gig. These fans love their music but either don't have time or the inclination to buy CDs on a regular basis. Again, these fans may go to gigs and concerts if they were invited or something really sparked their interest but usually they are too busy in their own life to have time or spare cash to see concerts.
4. Fans that love the music but see music as something that they shouldn't have to pay for. Unfortunately, these fans are growing and are happy to share files with friends and will illegally download music.

Obviously the second fan above is your most valuable fan as they will want to share their latest discovery with all their friends. This is why it's so important to ensure your music can be heard in as many places as possible.

3.1 GETTING YOUR MUSIC PLAYED ON RADIO

Generating reviews and radio play, especially on national radio, will provide great awareness for your album. The key to achieving success in the media is research. While you might get one or two results from mass targeting, the important media will look over this and therefore miss out on opportunities. The more you research and then prioritise the more success you will have. Read different publications and newspapers and talk to other musicians about what are the important reviews and features that will drive the most sales and increase profile and awareness. Once those key journalists have been targeted then you can approach the other blog sites and online reviews which are less importantly individually but collectively still add considerably weight in your campaign. Think too about the lead in time especially when approaching Jazzwise, for example, for a feature. Many magazines plan well in advance so make your initial contact with plenty of time before release. Be clear about what you want and when you want it. Ideally you want the important reviews in the few days leading up to the release on the Monday, maybe some airplay on the day or the day before release. If you are able to co-ordinate this then this will help considerably in building a lot of buzz and awareness as fans will continually be seeing either the artist name, album title, photo and album cover in the press.

For further information on this subject download our 'Guide To Getting Your Music Played On The Radio'

3.2 SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media platforms such as Soundcloud, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and Tumblr are online networks that are becoming more and more vital in awareness and promotional campaigns of your album. With the closure of so many small independents, the browsing element to buying albums and recommendations from your local recording shop owner suggesting you should check the latest new jazz releases are long gone. Fans now have to go searching for their music rather than flicking through the rack until you stumble on something you like the look of so it's imperative that when someone does make the step of checking out some music, your music can be heard in enough places so they will be able to find it. Obvious places include YouTube and Soundcloud but make sure you carefully tag the videos and audio clips correctly. People will only see those videos and audio clips if they have either clicked on the link or if they are already on Facebook and are searching something that is tagged in your clip. Don't be scared about putting full length clips as these days people want to hear as much as possible before deciding to buy it.

What's great about the social sites such as YouTube and Soundcloud is the analytic data they provide to let you know who is listening to your music. Use this as best you can, follow people back and start interacting with them and you'll soon see them following you back and then you're half way there in developing another fan who will either buy your latest or future release. Also try to initiate comments and discussion either by asking a friend or fan to comment first prompting further conversation. Social networks are called social for a reason – engage with people.

Spend some time understanding the use of Facebook adverts; they can be hugely advantageous in your marketing campaign. Not only can they target your audience by location, ideal for promoting an album launch or tour but you can set your budget per day or per month depending on the balance you want between your budget and number of people you reach. For example if you want to promote your release in Norway, then you can set a advert campaign to go live at just the right time targeting key people while either giving them a link to buy directly, listen to your music or a chance for them to 'like' your Facebook page. Regularly evaluate the adverts to make the most out of the money you're spending. Facebook pages are kind of useless if they are not regularly used and can easily create the wrong impression and perception of a well-established artist if there are only between 50-100 likes. So if you are going to have a Facebook page, use it frequently, combine Facebook adverts and other useful apps to increase your 'likes' to a number you are entitled to dependent on your profile.

For further information on using social media to promote your music, download our 'Guide To Internet And Digital Music'

3.3 CONNECTING WITH YOUR FAN BASE

Your fan base is your best marketing tool you could hope for - so use it wisely. Take pride in your fans and look after them, give them what they need rather than what they want. If you develop your fan base well you will be able to use them to expand your audience. If they are music lovers, then presumably they have other friends who are also music lovers and if they are genuine fans of yours then they will be more than happy to help you spread the word. But they don't generally do it off their own instinct so it's up to you to prompt them without pushing them too much. Use your own instinct to find the balance between interacting with them and taking advantage and asking them to do too much. Remember you only need a handful of people to write reviews, tweet, and share links so pin point some of your most adoring and talkative fans to help you out. In return, simple techniques such as giving unreleased versions of tracks, live recordings and outtakes of your album away, sending your finished album to them a couple weeks before release can all make them feel special.

3.4 EPK's / PODCASTS

The use of videos introducing the album, or EPKs as they are becoming known as, a few months before release can provide a very useful tool to create some initial awareness. Combining interviews with footage of you playing with the album audio layered over top can give any potential customer an insight into what the album is all about, as well as being an invaluable tool to use when approaching new venues or promoters. This is your opportunity to promote who you are and what you are about so spend a little time thinking about what you want to get across but try to keep them a short and concise as possible. Search for Robert Mitchell's Cusp and Troyka's Moxxy EPKs for examples.

3.5 MAILING LISTS

There are a multitude of mailing list providers out there and some are lot better than other s but try to find one that you get along with and find the easiest to use. All provide much the same service but the main ones I have come across include:

- [Your Mailing List Provider – www.ymlp.com](http://www.ymlp.com)
- [Mail Chimp – www.mailchimp.com](http://www.mailchimp.com)
- [Fanbridge - www.fanbridge.com](http://www.fanbridge.com)

I think the key to any newsletter campaigns or a series of campaigns is the balance between timing, frequency, amount of information you provide. There's a fine balance between keeping your fans in touch with your latest news and overpowering them with emails to the point where they will delete your newsletter before reading it. Think about the timing of when you send it and when it is most likely going to be read and on what day of the week. We have always tried to avoid sending newsletters on Monday or Friday as people are either backlogged with catching up on work or emails or trying to finish certain jobs before the weekend. Midweek campaigns sent during mid-morning or mid-afternoon have worked best from past experience but take time to analyse the results from your newsletters to improve future campaigns.

Create fans and people within the industry categorised by location as much as possible so you can target your key audience when promoting a gig for example.

Try signing up to other artist mailing lists to see how they do it, taking good bits from each and over time you will have a developed your fan base.

Ensure your signup box is clearly displayed on your website and offer incentives such as a discount on a CD purchase or free download when they sign up. Again, value your fan and make them feel special and more and more you will see they will reciprocate the favour and help spread the word.

4. MUSIC PUBLISHING

4.1 WHAT IS MUSIC PUBLISHING?

Publishers exist to protect value and exploit music on behalf of composers. A publisher's role includes ensuring all royalties are paid, offering support in career strategy, developing opportunities in collaborations, exploitation of their composer's music, promotion and obtaining commissions for composers.

Each publisher will work in a different way depending on the type of music and composers they represent. For example, publishers of classical composers will focus on commission based work and printed music where as publishers that represent commercial artists such as songwriters and pop musicians, will focus on collaborations, synchronisation in film and TV and generating income from radio.

4.2 HOW IS INCOME GENERATED?

Income is generated any time music is exploited in radio, live, through the release of CDs, TV and film or any time music is performed, duplicated for public or commercial use. Royalties are then paid to royalty collection societies including MCPS and PRS who will pay the publishers and artists accordingly.

There are many different types of deals that publishers will offer, such as single song agreements, exclusive song-writer agreements, administration agreements and co-publishing agreements. All these agreements differ in royalty splits and ownership of the music and offer the composer different advantages. It's not out of place to say that publishing income from jazz music does not generate huge sums of money. Of course, there are exceptions where there are certain cross-over opportunities but for the majority of contemporary jazz music, you are only likely to see royalties from releasing albums, small amount of radio play and live work. It is therefore unlikely, that large publishers will offer Exclusive Publishing deals as the income generated will not provide enough incentive for them. However, an administration deal where by the composer self-publishes and licenses the works to a music publisher for an agreed term at an agreed royalty split is more probable. Under this agreement, the music publisher only administers and exploits the copyrights on behalf of the composer. This allows the composer to maintain control of their music and for a small percentage between 15 – 20%, is able to rely on a larger, more experienced publisher to collect the royalties on their behalf. It also not only provides valuable support but allows a network of sub-publishers throughout the world to collect on radio play, licensing of albums, and live performance from other countries something that the PRS and MCPS are not always able to do.

For a UK based musician, predominantly writing jazz based music, a publishing deal, on one hand, may seem unnecessary as you can still achieve certain royalty payments via PRS. However, as a long-term strategy it's important to firstly understand, and take control of your royalties due and having the support of a publisher may provide you with greater power in negotiating commission fees or chasing up unpaid royalties.

An administration deal with a publisher is only as good as what you make of it, as you are still responsible for the exploitation of the copyright.

4.3 COLLECTION SOCIETIES

PPL Phonographic Performance Limited

UK music licensing company PPL manages the royalties collection on behalf of performers and record label through issuing licenses of recorded music for broadcast on radio and TV. If you have performed on an album that has been played on radio for example, then you will be eligible for royalties.

www.ppluk.com

PRS – Performance Rights Society

PRS is a society of songwriters, composers and music publishers that aim to promote and protect the value of copyright. They work to collect income on behalf of their members from licenses they issue to organisations to play, perform or make available copyright music on behalf of their members.

You will be eligible for royalties from PRS if you have had your music played in any of the following:

- TV broadcasting – collecting money for your music played on terrestrial broadcasts.
- National radio
- Local, Digital and Internet radio
- Live concerts
- DJs
- Online
- Recorded background music
- Theatre and dramatics
- Cinemas
- Public venues

MCPS - Mechanical Copyright Protection Society

MCPS is an organisation that pays royalties to composers, songwriters and music publishers when a composition is manufactured into any format including CDs and downloads as well as products that use music as a part of their soundtrack, such as films and computer games.

Each time a record label releases an album, they must pay a license fee to the composer via MCPS and it is calculated on 8.5% of the dealer price times the number of units manufactured. For a record label to manufacture 1000 units, less a few promotional copies, they will pay a fee of between £350 and £400 to MCPS, who will in turn distribute that royalty to the composer. If you are self-releasing your own music, then of course you do not need to pay yourself but you must still let MCPS know this is the case.

MCPS and PRS are together branded 'PRS for Music' and further information on both can be found at:

www.prsformusic.com

5. TOURING / GIGGING

5.1 TOURING STRATEGY, DOING THE RESEARCH AND APPROACH VENUES

Tours and gigs are the perfect tool to develop your existing fan base, create new audiences and sell CDs as well as giving you opportunities to develop the music in live performance. There's no rule to say a tour must be back to back dates as sometimes it can be better to spread a series of dates over a few months to help keep a presence in the listings and create awareness of the album which the tour is promoting. However, if you are using in-demand musicians it may be better to pre-book periods well in advance of the tour to ensure you're getting the players you want for the live performances. Often you will find bands using different musicians from the record which can cause problems for promoters and labels as it is not a true representation of the CD.

Audiences build up certain perceptions about musicians and artists and so giving a little thought to your list of venues to approach for your tour will benefit hugely. As a band or solo artist, you will undoubtedly want to develop your career to playing in bigger venues to bigger audiences with bigger fees. To do this, you will need to think about what venues you play and how often you play them. For example, it would not be good idea to keep playing the same venues again and again to the same audiences but look towards play bigger venues, to different audiences.

It can be easy, especially in lean times, to take any gig that comes along, but with a clear strategy based over one to two years you will be able to control your profile development much easier.

Once you've decided on your touring strategy, your venue research is the next step. Every venue has their own audience and can differ a huge amount from another venue around the corner. For example your band maybe used to just playing jazz clubs, so maybe look towards playing at the local arts centre instead, as this may open up a new audience for you.

Many musicians in the UK tend to be their own booking agent, partly because there aren't many agents but also because the fees will not allow any reward for the agent. With so many clubs offering a percentage of door sales, a gig can sometimes only generate between £200 – £300, which between a quartet or quintet does not go very far or even cover expenses. Whilst it may seem daunting or demoralising through some venues lack of response, booking your own gigs with an organised approach is by far the best option. You will very quickly build up a good picture of the venues if you spend some time looking through the listings in JazzUK or Jazzwise and you will find a very high percentage of the contact details on the Jazz Services website. Then it's a question of dedicating some time to get busy on the email. The aim is to develop relationships and for some venues it may take a few months for the promoter to build enough rapport to get a gig. However, it's the initial email that is important. Remember, promoters tend to receive many emails a day from musicians asking for gigs, so try not to give them too much information. Be clear and defined about what you are looking for and provide clear details about your success with one or two quotes to give them a quick picture of what profile you have and what music you make. Avoid sending mp3s but instead send a link to your content on YouTube or Soundcloud.

5.2 AGENTS

A booking agent is responsible for booking and managing your live performance work in return for usually 15% of your gross fees. Many work in different ways and have their own methods of working and ideas in taking a band forward but in an age where live work is becoming a vital revenue stream, an agent may be imperative in the development of your performing career. However, finding the right agent may not be such an easy task. Firstly, you need to be in a certain position before you can warrant signing with an agent. No serious agent will take you on unless you can demand certain fees, pull good audiences, a track record of releases and press and also be able to demonstrate potential of growth to play bigger venues and achieve larger fees.

5.3 BUDGETS / FUNDING / SUPPORT

When applying for funding for a tour, whether it's from Jazz Services or the Arts Council you will need to demonstrate an understanding of the finances of your tour by presenting a budget. Budgets not only provide the necessary figures in deciding whether to fund you but also give you a clear understanding of what fees to ask for from promoters, how much money you will be able to pay musicians, how much you can afford to pay on promotion and travel arrangements.

There can be many costs associated with a tour and the main ones will include:

- Fuel
- Van / car hire
- Hire of instruments (hire of drums or bass for overseas artists)
- Accommodation
- Musician Fees
- Promotion (Flyers)
- Stationery (promo CDs, Envelopes, postage etc.)

On the following page, I have drawn up an example budget based on a six date tour through the UK for a quartet who are based in London as though it was an application for a Jazz Services Touring Application:

Example budget:

This budget is based on the following:

- 4 musicians
- 6 dates through the UK between 3rd and 7th Sept 2012

Expenditure

1st Performance - Bristol

Musician Fees - £ 480.00 (x 4 @ £120.00 each)

Hotels - £ 150.00 (x 2 twin rooms)

Travel - £75 (London – Bristol x 2 cars)

Total: £705.00

2nd Performance - Nantwich

Musician Fees - £ 480.00 (x 4 @ £120.00 each)

Hotels - £ 150.00 (x 2 twin rooms)

Travel - £40 (Bristol – Nantwich x 2 cars)

Total: £670.00

3rd Performance - Manchester

Musician Fees - £ 480.00 (x 4 @ £120.00 each)

Hotels - £ 150.00 (x 2 twin rooms)

Travel - £75 (Cardiff – Manchester x 2 cars)

Total: £705.00

4th Performance - London

Musician Fees - £ 480.00 (x 4 @ £120.00 each)

Hotels – No hotels needed

Travel - £75 (Manchester – London x 2 cars)

Total: £555.00

5th Performance - Brighton

Musician Fees - £ 480.00 (x 4 @ £120.00 each)

Hotels - £ 150.00 (x 2 twin rooms)

Travel - £60 (London – Brighton Return x 2 cars)

Total: £690.00:

6th Performance - Oxford

Musician Fees - £ 480.00 (x 4 @ £120.00 each)

Hotels – No hotels needed

Travel - £75 (Brighton – Oxford Return x 2 cars)

Total: £555.00

Promotion Costs: £120.00 (Flyers and posters)

Stationary: £30.00

Hire of 1 car (5 days): £300.00

Sub-Total: £4330.00

Contingency (10%): £433

TOTAL: £4763.00

Income

1st Performance - £600.00
2nd Performance - £400.00
3rd Performance - £500.00
4th Performance - £500.00
5th Performance - £450.00
6th Performance - £450.00

TOTAL: £2900.00

Jazz Services: £1863.00

Notes on budgets:

- Try to show how you are trying to save some costs. For example, book twin rooms at hotels to show some cost saving.
- Be realistic and as detailed as possible when putting down costs.
- Be clear at the top of the budget exactly what it is for - including number of dates, number of musicians and over what time period.
- Add an extra 10% into your budget for contingency just in case you incur extra costs you are not aware of.

If you intend to apply for funding make sure you are aware of the deadlines to work with the timing of your tour or release.

5.4 TOUR PROMOTION – PREVIEWS & REVIEWS

A tour is not purely about playing to the audiences you will be playing to at each gig. It's important to realise that your name or band name will appear in the listing magazines and venue brochures that will add considerable weight to an album campaign. It will also, depending on the size and prestige of the venue, help to create the right perceptions of you and your music from an audience perspective. So, even if 15 people turn up to one of your performances, don't forget the added gain of a tour promotion campaign.

It's in your favour, especially if you are getting a fee based on ticket sales to promote and market the tour and performances as much as possible. The more promotion you do on the tour, than the more that will also cross-over into promotion for your album too.

Allow plenty of time (at least three months) before the concert to start promoting the concert. This can be done through flyers, listings, previews, Facebook events, YouTube clips about the gigs et al. If you are new to a city and only have a limited fan base, think about doing a double bill with a local artist who can draw a crowd. You may get slightly less income but it may give you an opportunity to play to more and people, development your own fan base and sell more CDs.

Make the most from your tour by taking photos, videos and posting them over a period of time on your websites and social media. This will help prolong the awareness and continue the campaign.

6. MANAGEMENT

6.1 WHAT ROLE DOES A MANAGER TAKE?

The role of manager is an all-encompassing job and will be the most important person in your musical life. Together with an artist, they will plan, brainstorm new ideas, coordinate tours and travel arrangements, ensure biographies, websites and press releases are accurate and up-to-date, liaise with agents and labels on behalf of the artist and organise all other aspects to do with their career. They will have a wide understanding of the music business and large contact base with people in all areas of industry including record labels, publishing companies, booking agents, promoters, publicists, photographers, recording engineers and graphic designers etc.

Each manager will work in their own way with an artist and each relationship with their artists they work with will be very different and so for an artist & manager relationship to work, it must be based on a trust and passion to achieve the same goals. The artist needs to trust that the manager will do everything in their power to achieve the goals and the manager needs to trust the artists to continually deliver consistent quality in recording, performance and composition.

As a self-managed artist, you will need to be able to swap roles from being a manager to being a musician, able to solve problems that arise and put those behind you and become a musician to the best of your ability.

6.2 DO I NEED A MANAGER?

This is a question that only you will be able to answer. Occasionally you may feel inundated with practice, rehearsals, concerts, emails to answer, gigs to chase, tours to arrange and music to write or you may feel confused about your career direction and therefore feel like working with a manager is the obvious next step. If you firmly believe that a manager is a vital part to your career strategy, then it's a question of can you warrant giving up between 20 and 25 % of your income to someone who may or may not be able to add as much value, time and dedication as you can? Conversely, there will times when you have everything in managed well and relish the idea of being in complete control.

From a managers point of view, as with booking agents, they must be able to see great potential in you as an artist or a proven track record of consistent quality output not to mention a steady income stream which will ultimately contribute towards their own career. A good manager will put content in putting a considerable amount time in to an artist before any financial reward but management is a time consuming job and so an income stream needs within reach to make it worthwhile.

7. AFTERWORD

Since I started Edition in 2008, the new media technology available has already taken a giant leap forward. Myspace.com was everything and everyone was talking about it but as quickly as that slid down, Facebook and Twitter gained huge momentum and popularity and has now, alongside Google, YouTube and Soundcloud, become the primary platforms to make the model to self-releasing, promoting and managing yourself far easier to manage.

With the continual problems facing us, including declining cd sales, diminishing review space and difficulties in gigging to name a few, I believe it is more important than ever to maintain control of your music. Sure, once you've reached the right level to warrant labels, agents and management then you should embrace that to take your career further. However, until then handling your own business affairs will give you the potential to retain 100% of your earnings and in control of your own destiny.

This guide is aimed at inspiring young musicians at the start of their career to take the necessary steps and develop the underlying knowledge to gain confidence to take that control. There are no rules and relying on your instincts is not a bad idea. The industry is changing so fast that the models that worked 5 or 10 years ago may not work today and its time like this when you can afford to try new, fresh and innovative ideas out to achieve your goals. A young musician today needs to be driven, realistic, patient, and versatile able to switch roles at the drop of a hat and be as skilled in marketing and online promotion as they are a musician. I understand not everybody has all these characteristics which don't mean to say that without these qualities musicians won't be successful but with the available guidance and support around, many of the necessary skills and tasks can be achieved without too much trouble.

In the last 5 years we've seen the closure of many, many physical retailers, leaving HMV as the only high street shop, which as it is, doesn't stock vast sums of jazz CDs, the closure of distributors and the emergence of many, many online retailers. The focus has turned to Amazon as the dominant player in the market, which, despite its power in the size and power in the market, still does not provide the customers or businesses in the industry with all their needs. The next 5 years are incredibly exciting times and I feel very lucky to be working with so many developments in technology and business model. The internet and social media networks will play a more and more vital role in selling and promoting music and like it or not, streaming services such as Spotify will be unavoidable. Bandwidth is increasing and services will soon offer downloads of audio files greater than CD quality further pushing the physical product into decline.

The industry must turn their focus to not what the customer wants but what it needs, and interact with the fan base in ways that haven't been explored before, providing tools to bring back some of the spirit of browsing in indie retailers or your local indie shop dealer suggesting the latest release.

No one knows what position the CD will play in 5 or even 10 years time but what keeps me going is the fact that people love music and will forever be in people's lives. If we can all provide the fans with good, consistent quality driven music from the right infrastructure and models to support the musicians in making their living then there will always be a market.

Dave Stapleton
Edition Records