



MARKETING & PROMOTION

RESOURCES

Physical Marketing & Flyering Guide

BY BODY TYPE

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This resource explains how to build a community around your music through DIY marketing, merchandise, and storytelling, offering practical ideas to connect with audiences beyond digital platforms.

For many artists, building a community around your music doesn't only happen online. While social media is an important tool, there are many other creative and tangible ways to connect with audiences. Physical marketing, handmade merchandise, storytelling, and community engagement can all help create a deeper and more memorable connection with fans.

Approaching these elements in a DIY way can also be empowering. By using the skills you already have - and the talents of friends, collaborators, and your wider community - you can create something that feels unique to your band or project. Often, these grassroots approaches become some of the most meaningful and memorable parts of being an artist.

DIY design and merch

Making your own merch can be one of the most fun and rewarding parts of being in a band. You might start small, using the skills you or your friends have - like design, photography, illustration, or printing - to make shirts, posters, or other items.

Using the skills around you can also create long-term resources. For example, having a friend help set up a screen-printing frame could let you make t-shirts at home whenever you need them. Photographers in your circle can provide images you can use across merch, posters, and other promo.

Remember, anyone can make merch. It doesn't have to be professional or expensive - DIY merch often ends up being the most distinctive and memorable because it shows the personality of the band. Small items like badges, patches, stickers, or posters are perfect for fans who want to support you but don't want to buy a t-shirt.

There are lots of ways to get creative beyond traditional printing. Screen printing is popular, but you can also try sewing patches onto clothing, tie-dye, bleaching, block or lino printing, painting on fabric, using fabric markers, stencils, or even cyanotype printing. Playing with these methods can help keep costs low and give your merch its own unique vibe.

Making merch is all about balancing time and money. If you're short on time but have cash, working with a professional printer is fine and can support local businesses. If you have time to DIY, it creates a stronger connection between you and your fans. Merch you've personally worked on often becomes the most loved and memorable - there's something special about fans wearing something you helped make.

Zines

Zines are a classic DIY tool for connecting with your audience. You can include anything: photos from shows, collages, lyrics, tour stories, interviews, fan art, or experimental designs. There's no right or wrong way to do it - they can be stapled, folded, stitched, or one-off pieces.

Give them out at shows, sell them alongside merch, or ask local record stores and bookshops to stock a few copies. Zines let fans see and feel your world in a tangible way.

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Flyering

Even in a digital world, physical marketing works. Posters and flyers in cafes, bars, record stores, or local venues can make people notice your shows or releases - especially in smaller cities or communities.

Flyering also helps you build relationships with local spaces and businesses. Asking a shop to put up your poster can create connections that last. Plus, physical marketing gives fans something they can hold, see, and remember later - something online promotion can't always do.

Tips when making flyers or posters

- Consider size and format. Your printed design may also need to work online, so leave space around edges for cropping.
- Use at least 300 DPI for clear, professional prints.
- Double-check all info: date, time, venue, ticket links, artist names, promoter details. Mistakes happen, so double-checking is key.
- For inspiration, try collages, drawings, photography, or experimental layouts. Mix hand-made and digital elements. Look at graphic designers or archives for ideas - but make it your own.

Brand and storytelling

Getting comfortable with your brand takes time. Social media is key for showing who you are, but it can take trial and error to find an approach that feels natural. Testing and experimenting is part of the process.

Newsletters or platforms like Substack can be great for storytelling - sharing tour stories, creative insights, or behind-the-scenes moments. Fans love seeing this side of your work.

Building a strong brand comes from knowing your music and creating a visual world around it. Inspiration can come from art, photography, film, literature, and design, not just music. Working with photographers, designers, and other creatives whose style matches your vibe helps shape your identity.

As your career grows, your team - managers, publicists, booking agents - should align with your artistic vision and help tell your story in a way that feels authentic.

Selling merch

Pricing merch depends on costs, time, and your audience. A t-shirt could be \$30, or \$40 if it's handmade or extra special. Sliding scale pricing is also an option for fans on a budget

Payment options include cash, PayID, bank transfer, or apps like Square, which can turn your phone into a card reader and track sales. Display your prices clearly - handmade signs can add personality and make your merch table more inviting.

Keep a small merch kit ready: paper, pens, markers, tape, and a bit of cash for change. Setting up your table after a show is easier when you have everything you need.

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Ideas you can explore in the DIY music world

Merch & things you can hold in your hands

- Handmade t-shirts, badges, patches, stickers, posters
- Tie-dye, block printing, cyanotype, bleaching, painting, fabric markers, stencils
- Zines or mini-booklets with lyrics, photos, fan art, or behind-the-scenes content
- Limited edition or one-off items
- Collaborate with friends, local artists, or photographers

Connecting in your local community

- Flyering local cafes, bars, record stores, and community spaces
- Pop-up performances in galleries, rooftops, parks, or non-traditional venues
- House shows or secret gigs for dedicated fans
- Street performances or guerrilla-style promotion

Digital community

- Launch a fan newsletter or Substack
- Share behind-the-scenes content, rehearsal clips, or updates online
- Encourage fan-generated content (TikTok videos, covers, remixes)
- Host virtual listening parties or Q&A sessions

Collabs with other brands, bands and artists

- Partner with local makers, designers, or visual artists
- Work with photographers, filmmakers, or illustrators
- Collaborate with small businesses or venues for cross-promotion

Interactive ideas

- Host DIY workshops (merch, zines, art, songwriting)
- Create interactive experiences at shows (fan voting, shout-outs)
- Offer meet-and-greets or exclusive listening sessions
- Hide secret messages, art, or QR codes in merch or venues

Scrapbooking and fan sharing moments

- Take photos, videos, and notes of events, merch, and interactions
- Make a physical or digital scrapbook of tours and fan moments
- Encourage fans to document and share their experience

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Social media post-release checklist

Your list already covers many of the key release-day tasks, but there are a few important areas that are often included in a release-week checklist that are missing or worth adding. These usually fall into platform optimisation, audience engagement, press/partners, and content distribution.

Platform & profile updates

- Ensure link-in-bio tools continue to prioritise the new release
- Keep the release announcement pinned across social platforms
- Update your Spotify artist bio to reference the new release
- Update the YouTube channel homepage to feature the latest video or release
- Upload Spotify Clips if using them as part of your promotion
- Confirm lyrics are approved and visible on streaming platforms via Musixmatch
- Check that the track appears correctly on your Shazam artist profile

Content & video

- Upload additional content such as lyric videos, visualisers, acoustic versions, or alternate videos on YouTube
- Continue sharing short-form clips across TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts
- Share behind-the-scenes footage or studio content from the recording process
- Create new content angles using the same song to extend the campaign
- Encourage fans to create their own videos using the track

Engagement

- Respond to comments, direct messages, and fan tags across social media
- Repost fan reactions, covers, or user-generated content
- Encourage listeners to save the track on streaming platforms
- Encourage fans to add the track to their personal playlists
- Continue interacting with your audience so the release feels like an ongoing conversation

Playlists

- Check Spotify for Artists for editorial or algorithmic playlist placements
- Share playlist placements across your social media channels and tag the relevant platforms or curators
- Add the track to your own curated playlists
- Submit the track to independent playlist curators if not already done
- Highlight any notable playlist additions to help promote the release

Data & monitoring

- Monitor performance via Spotify for Artists, Apple Music for Artists, and YouTube Studio
- Track listener demographics, locations, and engagement patterns
- Monitor playlist adds, saves, and follower growth
- Capture screenshots of milestones such as first playlist placements, stream counts, or chart positions
- Use analytics insights to inform future promotion and content strategy

Community & fanbase

- Send a post-release email update to your mailing list thanking supporters
- Share the release in your fan communities, Discord servers, or online groups
- Continue sharing the release with fans who may have missed the initial announcement
- Highlight fan stories, reactions, and community engagement
- Consider hosting live streams, Q&A sessions, or acoustic performances to continue promoting the release



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