

USING PEER-TO-PEER TO LAUNCH A CAREER

How The G-Man Got Played, Got Signed,
Got a Publisher, & Got on iTunes. . .
All by Giving His Music Away For Free.

The G-Man is a musician who knows how to "work the Web," perhaps because he's also deeply involved in the worlds of advertising and marketing. Some of his marketing savvy was put to use in launching his music career.

DEFYING THE RIAA:

What did he do that was so extraordinary? Defying the wishes of the RIAA and the major record labels, he offered all the music on his first album for free.

In fact, he went even farther than that: he contacted thousands of DJs and remixers, established peer-to-peer file sharing relationships with them, then offered to send them individual tracks (bass, synth, vocals, drums, guitar, etc.) if they wanted to mix new versions of his songs.

The results have been spectacular, involving reviews, remixes, club play, radio play, a record deal, publishing and licensing agreements, and awards. All three of his albums have been nominated Electronica Album of the Year by the Los Angeles Music Awards, and he won for his "Grin Groove" album in 2002.

INDIE SIGNING & HIS OWN COMPANY:

He is signed to Delvian Records, all of his albums are on Apple's iTunes, his song catalog is administered by Janssongs.com, and he has opened his own company, G-Man Music & Radical Radio, where he creates songs, sonics, radio spots, and music for film, TV, and games.

Perhaps best of all, two of his songs have been remixed by Matt Forger, best-known as Michael Jackson's recording engineer on "Thriller," "Bad," "Dangerous," and four other albums, and who also worked with Paul McCartney, Bruce Springsteen, Van Halen, and many more. These tracks are a part of The G-Man's "The Platinum Age of the Remix," an album featured on StudioExpresso, home to more than 100 of the world's best music producers and engineers.

Additionally, The G-Man has become a creative director for NARIP (National Association of Record Industry Professionals), an associate writer for MusicDish.com, and a content supplier for Circle of Songs, L*A*M*P, BitchinEntertainment, and Venus Music.

RAVE REVIEWS:

Reviewers have compared his songs to such artists as Devo, David Bowie, Art of Noise,

Brian Eno, OMD, Gary Numan, Thomas Dolby, Spandau Ballet, and Frank Zappa. From mainstream media like the All Music Guide to respected Web sites and eZines, music by The G-Man is written about with zeal.

AIRPLAY:

The G-Man is also receiving airplay on college stations in many cities across the United States and Internet radio around the world. Most important from the business aspect, his songs are being licensed for use in radio and TV commercials.

HOW IT BEGAN:

"The 'give it away' approach may be a cool new way of starting a career," G-Man states. "And some people say this method puts me in the vanguard of changes that are overwhelming the music industry. Perhaps it's both," he says with a grin.

"I think that the music business as we know it is splintering into a million shards," he states, "and it is being built up into something new right before our eyes."

SIX YEAR OVERNIGHT SUCCESS:

Six years ago, Scott G was an advertising writer, radio commercial producer, and sometime music critic. But he wanted to make sounds, not just write about them, so he picked up a guitar and began learning to play.

In 2001, he started recording his first album, creating music that fuses today's dance grooves with pop melodies and then adds sly commentary. Some have called it dancebeat, some have called it Zappa-esque, but Scott calls it "grin groove music."

Using "Grin Groove" as his album title, The G-Man did several things that together represent the beginnings of a quantum shift in the way music is created, marketed and disseminated to listeners around the globe.

First, he put up a simple, graphically clean, "100% animation-free" Web site at <http://www.gmanmusic.com>. Next, he combed other Web sites for the e-mail addresses of media as well as 25,000 DJs, remixers, and those involved with raves, clubs, electronica, dance, and drum 'n' bass genres. "This took as much time as it did to record the songs, but it was worth it," he says.

KEEPING IT SIMPLE:

Then, two simple e-mail messages were created. He followed the ideas recommended by Indiespace's Pete Markiewicz, namely, put the basic idea in the Subject line, keep the message short, and do not include any graphics.

One e-mail message announced his new genre of music to the media. The other e-mail offered to send tracks for free to anyone who wished to remix his music -- and that is perhaps the most significant part of his approach, as you will see.

IT'S IN THE REMIX:

Remixers have been using his tracks all around the globe. "I have had five songs remixed in Russia by a sonic master called Random Distribution," The G-Man states, "and one of these tracks went to #1 over there. Meanwhile, an Australian DJ known as Zero Point Energy has done a remix that is now showing up on Web sites around the world. A jazz artist known as il moroso has begun remixing more of my songs and we have now agreed to collaborate on an album of acid jazz music."

Perhaps most interesting is the reaction from the European community. A consortium of remixers called The Allianz, led by DJ Insane, created remixes of every song on "Grin Groove." One of the DJ Insane tracks reached #5 on a European dance chart.

PART OF A PLAN:

All of this could be viewed as just a series of fortuitous accidents, but The G-Man doesn't think so. "I believe that the music world is breaking up and is at the same time transforming into something new, and you have to address the peer-to-peer file sharing in order to exist in this new world."

As seen in the presentations by Indiespace's Pete Markiewicz and Jeannie Novak in the Future Of Music seminars, "the structure of the music business is different now," Novak says, "and it involves several new methods of working. One is cooperation in combination with competition, or 'coopetition,'" a word Novak coined.

It also involves an attitude of total independence from traditional distribution, and a faith that the business end of your work will play 'catch-up' to your art. "You create and market and interchange and share and compete with fellow musicians," The G-Man says. "And only afterwards does the business world come in to license your work for commercialization."

Did he write out his business plan? "Absolutely. I used the methods outlined by John Stiernberg and his Succeeding in Music organization. Some said my ideas were crazy, and certainly the record company doesn't let me do this anymore, but the plan worked. I wouldn't have even been talking with Delvian Records if they hadn't heard about me from all the activity with my songs all around the world," he points out.

"Mostly, I love the fact that the business was totally being driven by the art," G-Man says. "Plus, it was and is the most fun I've ever had in the world. And besides, under what other set of circumstances could I be collaborating on music simultaneously with people in Australia, Moscow, Los Angeles, Big Bear Lake, and The Hague in Holland?"

Janis Amy (writer) may be contacted at: janisamy@cs.com

The G-Man: www.gmanmusic.com

NARIP: www.narip.com

Delvian Records: www.delvianrecords.com

Janssongs: www.janssongs.com

John Stiernberg: www.succeedinginmusic.com

Matt Forger: www.studioexpresso.com

Jeannie Novak & Pete Markiewicz: www.indiespace.com

Circle of Songs: www.circleofsongs.com

Venus Music: www.venusmusic.com

L*A*M*P: www.lamusicproductions.com

Bitchin Entertainment: www.bitchinentertainment.com

Interview with The G-Man: www.lamusicscene.com/articles/00120/index.php3

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<http://www.allmusic.com/cg/amg.dll?p=amg&uid=UIDSUB020404091324213128&sql=Bnpkxu3rgan6k>

Music Dish: www.musicdish.com

iTunes: www.apple.com/itunes

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