


live performance

by Rusty Hannan, Jef Hanlon and Terry O'Brien

Touring will be an important element in the careers of most artists, and therefore in those of most managers. Once the manager has decided that the time is right to tour, he must start to draw together a team of specialists in each area of expertise required to ensure that the tour runs smoothly.

There are four scales of touring, in terms of venue size:

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- A small club tour, promotion or personal appearance;
 - A small venue, club or college tour;
 - A theatre/concert-hall tour;
 - An arena tour.

Obviously, the arrangements will vary enormously, in terms of supporting personnel, equipment and the amount of planning necessary, according to the size of the tour.

key personnel

The first port of call is the artist's agent, whose role is discussed in more detail in the previous chapter. The agent will use his understanding of the venues and the types of music appropriate for those venues, as well as his expertise in judging the best price to ask for a performance in those venues. He will also assemble and hold dates in a viable schedule. It will then be the responsibility of the agent to contact and secure the services of the promoters in all territories. It's most likely that the agent will be involved no matter what the scale of the tour.

the promoter

The promoter will be responsible for providing the venue for each show, for advertising and marketing the sale of tickets, for supplying the artist's rider requirements, for ensuring the safety of both the public and the artist during the course of the gig and for conforming with licensing regulations. For small-club and small-venue tours, it's likely that a different promoter will be involved with each show. For a theatre/concert tour, things could be arranged so that one promoter catered for an entire national tour, or the tour could be split between several regional promoters. For an arena tour in the UK, one promoter will almost invariably promote all dates, with the possible exception of shows in Scotland and Ireland, which are sometimes given to promoters based in those countries.

the tour manager

The tour manager will be brought in as soon as the dates are confirmed. It'll be his responsibility to supervise the engagement of the crew, and he'll also start to look at the financing by getting quotes and budgeting for costs. He'll also advance the tour to ensure that the items specified in the rider to the contract and all other production requirements are available and will be provided, and that, if any of these are impossible to obtain, a suitable compromise can be found to enable the show to be

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performed. While on tour, he'll manage the tour crew as well as liaise with the local crew and technical personnel. Careful and realistic planning by all involved should keep costs to a minimum, but often tour support from the artist's record company will be needed in order to allow the tour to proceed, and the manager will need to negotiate the basis on which this money is given, how much the record company will contribute and the proportion of this sum which is recoupable. The tour manager is usually responsible for handling and collecting money on tour and settling the show with the promoter, which involves receiving payment under the terms of the contract along with paying any running expenses and collecting receipts for cash payments etc, organising and supervising travel arrangements and arranging accommodation.

If the tour is a small-club promotional tour, the function of the tour manager is fulfilled by the manager or, alternatively, by somebody who is also able to supervise sound mixing and basic lighting, and who can probably also drive the tour vehicle. This would usually mean that the tour party would comprise the artists and one other person.

On a small-venue tour - and depending on the complexity of the act's technical needs - the supporting tour personnel will usually consist of a tour manager and possibly someone who can supervise sound, lighting and backline, either of whom will probably double up as a driver.

On larger tours, in addition to dealing with the artist's needs and comfort, the tour manager will also be responsible for supervising guest lists, dealing with press and media enquiries or interviews, liaising with the tour sponsors (if they are present) and ensuring that any promotional materials (such as banners, etc) are displayed as promised under the sponsorship deal. He should also make sure that an accurate PRS return is completed and given to the promoter to ensure that the songwriters of the material performed during the tour receive their due income, which - in theatres, concert halls, arenas and stadia - is a percentage of the box-office takings. This can amount to a very substantial sum of money.

the sound engineer

The sound engineer will probably be the second man on the team after the tour manager. On the two smaller levels of touring, he'll provide the channel listings for the venues to make sure that they have the right mixing console and equipment, and he'll also operate the desk during the show. On the larger tours he'll draw up the specification for a sound system of a size and power suitable for those venues, and in liaison with the tour manager and production manager he'll submit this as the basis for obtaining a price quotation from a company which will provide the public-address system and the crew for the tour.

Unlike the front-of-house sound engineer, who mixes the audio for the general public, the monitor engineer mixes the on-stage sound for the performers, who all have individual audio requirements, including individual mixes through their on-stage monitors. The monitor engineer and mixing console will be positioned stage left in close proximity to the performers so that they can communicate easily throughout the performance. A dedicated monitor engineer is usually employed at the theatre/concert-hall level of touring, and is definitely required for performances in arenas and stadia.

the production manager

A production manager will only be employed for shows big enough to require a skilled person to direct the technical side, so his involvement is usually limited to theatre, concert-hall or arena shows. His function is first that of an overall crew boss, co-ordinating the activities of the sub-contracted PA, lighting rental, trucking and catering companies, and he'll work closely with the tour manager in establishing costs, scheduling, loading in, soundchecking and local crew-call times. He'll also deal with the technical advance of the venues in order to establish that the basic facilities - such as stage size, electrical supply, over-stage loading points, number of dressing rooms, kitchen and catering areas, parking spaces for the tour trucks and buses and extras such as forklift trucks and cherry-pickers - are all of sufficient size and quantity to satisfy the needs of the touring production. He'll also liaise with the musicians for the supply of

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their backline equipment requirements. All of these facilities and requirements generate a cost factor, and therefore constant communication with the tour manager and (if applicable) tour accountant is essential in order to keep these costs within the limitations of the budget.

The quantity of crew will depend on the type and size of the show. If the artist is performing in small night clubs and college bars, only one person may be needed fulfil the roles of sound engineer, driver and backline technician. However, if the artist is playing a major arena, a crew of over 50 people may be required.

the backline technicians

Backline refers to the equipment and instruments that are used by the musicians for the performance, and this includes guitars, keyboards, amplifiers and stands, etc. Backline technicians are responsible for all of the instruments, amplifiers, equipment and the stage set, and often comprise a guitar technician, drum technician and stagehand-cum-carpenter. It's their responsibility to supervise the unloading of the backline equipment from the truck and to set it up on stage; to make sure that the equipment is in perfect working order; to have instruments tuned; and to fit new strings and drumheads, if required. Usually, they'll also ensure that there are towels, water and set-lists on the stage, and will help the artist if strings break or equipment fails during the show. Additionally, they'll look after the maintenance, operation and erection of the stage set.

the musicians

Depending on the type of band, a leader or musical director may be required to arrange the score and find backing musicians for the tour. There are various agencies that provide session musicians for tours where the artist doesn't have regularly used musicians at his disposal, and at this point it's important to consider backline requirements. It's important to know the backline that the musicians are supplying before the tour, so that any extras can be hired, and it often needs to be ascertained who is supplying the instruments. A musician should come fully equipped with

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personal gear, unless he's required to play an unusual instrument. For example, a guitarist should come with a guitar and an amplifier, but it may be necessary to hire a mandolin if it appears on one song. It's also worth noting that strings, drum sticks and skins and gaffa tape are all classed as consumables, and are therefore considered to be tour costs.

the lighting director

On large shows, a lighting director will be appointed to put together a lighting plot, rigging plot and equipment list, on which the lighting budget will be based. He'll tailor the lighting - and possibly special effects, such as lasers or pyrotechnics - to enhance the performance and ensure that the show is as visually appealing as possible, and he'll also operate the lighting control board and cue spotlight operators during the show. This will require discussions with the artist at rehearsals to determine specific cues or effects, and as always the lighting director's specifications will be passed via the production and tour managers, who will oversee the costings and logistical requirements, such as truck space and local crew loaders required.

At small venues, lighting and an operator are usually provided if desired. If the budget is limited, it may be wise to spend cash on a sound engineer rather than on a lighting technician, as a lighting technician probably won't know the equipment as well as the local operator. However, if one is available, the artist's own lighting technician could either telephone or visit the venues in advance and ask for specific lighting equipment to be made available, or - if the budget allows - he could travel on the tour to supervise and cue the house operator, which will certainly improve the appearance of the show.

the accountant

The accountant will require the finalised budget, and if payments are to be dealt with through him it may be necessary to produce a payment schedule with purchase order numbers. The payment schedules will outline when payments are to be made to the various staff on the road, which tend to be staggered throughout the course of the tour. Payments out must be co-ordinated with payments in to make sure that cashflow

problems don't arise. The accountant will help overcome monetary problems, such as withholding tax, and will ensure that tax exemption forms - such as the E101 form necessary for touring in Europe - are completed. On smaller tours, the function of the accountant is often fulfilled by the artist's management, while on very large arena tours a dedicated tour accountant usually travels with the tour to deal with all financial matters as they arise.

With the team in place, there will be many areas of the tour which need to be planned and overseen in order to ensure that no problems occur, either before the tour begins or on the road.

other resources

the rider

The manager - along with the agent - needs to draft a rider to the standard contract that will inform the promoter of what he's obliged to provide at the venue, in terms of facilities, supplies and services, so that the artist can perform the show. Rehearsals must be booked, along with venues for performances. There are three types of rehearsal that are generally required - band/music rehearsals, dance choreography rehearsals and production rehearsals - and there are many facilities that can provide these. The first two are self explanatory, while production rehearsals will be required for extremely large shows and constitute a time allocated as a technical period for lighting directors, technicians and set carpenters to iron out any problems before the tour begins. The band will probably arrive on the penultimate day of production rehearsals for a practice show run-through with the crew. Ideally, production rehearsals will be at the venue in which the artist will perform the first show of the tour, for ease and cost-effectiveness. Or, alternatively, a venue of similar size will be used, so that all of the elements of the show can be run exactly as they would be for the public performances.

ground transportation

Transportation for the artist, crew and equipment will need to be booked and co-ordinated. If the artist is performing personal appearances at night clubs, and needs just a couple of singers and dancers, it makes sense to hire a people carrier, as these are roomy and ideal for getting around quickly. However, if the band are musicians and are carrying backline, the ideal vehicle for the touring party would be what's known as a *splitter van*. These are mostly converted self-drive vehicles which have been split or divided in some way in order to allow more room for the storage of equipment at the back and space for a lounge and basic living quarters at the front, including such essentials as a TV and video. When a tour increases in size, or if great distances are involved, it becomes necessary to have a number of sleeper coaches included in the entourage, equipped with bunks and lounges, and to allow both the crew and the artists to sleep while travelling overnight between venues.

flights

If necessary, flights and hotels will usually be booked with a specialist music travel company, who will hopefully understand the need to keep costs to a minimum but who will also understand the often very specific needs of artists and their touring parties. With local flights, it's important to check that all flightcases that are carrying equipment and stage costumes will fit into the holds of smaller aircraft before booking the flight, and the airline should be given advance notice of the weight and dimensions of the flightcases to be checked in over and above personal luggage.

trucking

If the tour is providing its own production at all shows, trucks will invariably be required. It's important to note that only companies that hire trucks for the music industry should be used, as they will provide air-ride trailers, which protect the expensive and delicate equipment being transported. It also means that the drivers will understand the importance of getting to the next show, whatever it takes. It's important to note that trucks can't travel at the same speed as buses, and this must be taken into account when working out logistics and distances.

It's also important to note that both PSV coaches and HGV trucks all carry a tachograph, which records the distances and hours driven by the drivers and the amount and length of the breaks they take. Vehicles governed by tachographs are subject to random checks by traffic police, and there are very strict laws governing the hours which the drivers of these vehicles can stay behind the wheel and the amount of rest periods they must take. If the distances and time available between shows is such that the drivers will infringe these regulations, a second driver must also be hired.

the stage set

essentials

The stage set will also be transported in the trucks. Not every band requires an elaborate set, but even a drum riser needs to be calculated into the budget. The set will be of the mobile variety made by a company specialising in tour sets rather than a fixed set of the kind used for television and theatre. A tour set must be easily and quickly dismantled, and must therefore be built from materials that are sturdy, light, compact, and which fold up so that they take up as little space as possible in the trucks. There's a lot to consider in this respect, and a good set carpenter is worth his weight in gold. Included within the set will be the drapes and backcloths used in the show, and sometimes hydraulic equipment to lift platforms or staircases.

costumes and props

If the artist wears stage clothes or costumes, an adapted flightcase is usually carried as a wardrobe in which to transport and store them. Sometimes, if clothes are a major part of the presentation, a full-time wardrobe person is employed to clean, maintain and be responsible for the stage garments. If any specific props are used, these are usually looked after and maintained by either the wardrobe person or the backline crew

special effects

Special effects, such as pyrotechnics, are usually referred to as simply "specials". They're often very expensive, and it will therefore be important to know if they are to be used at an early stage in the planning stages, so that they can be included in the budget. The use of pyrotechnics, lasers and strobes are governed by licensing laws, and normally advance notice of their use is required by the local authority health and safety inspectors and fire brigade. These officials will often attend the venue on the day of the show to check and approve the installation and operation of these effects and make sure that the public isn't in danger. They will have the power to prevent the effects from being used, if they think that they could be a danger to the audience, artists or crew, and should therefore be treated with respect and consulted in advance whenever possible. In order for pyrotechnics to be used in Europe, they'll need to be installed by a licensed technician who has an official permit.

video

On a tour, the term "video" refers to any projection and video used in a performance. Most artists will be unable to use this until they experience megastardom, not so much due to the cost (although it is expensive) but rather due to the size of the venue needed to accommodate it, although the fixed screens now installed in many larger venues means that video is increasingly used on major tours. The pictures projected for the video can be either pre-recorded and edited tape for effects, live pictures from cameras or a mixture of both.

catering

Feeding crew and artists on a major tour can be a huge undertaking, which is made more difficult if some members of the team have dietary requirements that only specialist tour caterers will understand and be equipped to accommodate. A catering company is hired on bigger tours, where the crew are unable to leave the venue and the band aren't able to move around easily in public. The caterers will travel on the crew buses, and their equipment will be transported on the

SPRING TOUR 1999

DATE: MONDAY 30TH MARCH	PLACE: PARIS
TRAVEL: ZENITH	PROD: 00 33 (0) 1 42 45 99 5
211 AVENUE JEAN JAURES	FAX/PROD: 00 33 (0) 1 42 45 99 5
75019	LOAD IN: 10.00AM (APPROX)
PARIS	S/C: 4.00PM
	DOORS: 6.00PM
TEL: 00 33 (0) 1 42 45 91 48	
FAX: 00 33 (0) 1 42 01 42 49	SUPPORT: 7.00PM
CAP: 6000	
	MAIN: 8.00PM

LOCAL PROMOTER: PARIS PROMOTIONS	CONTACT: PASCAL
PARIS	
	PROD: 00 33 (0) 1 44 92 45 45
TEL: 00 33 (0) 1 44 92 45 48	FAX: 00 33 (0) 1 46 06 38 79
FAX: 00 33 (0) 1 46 06 38 73	

AFTER-SHOW TRAVEL:

ALL BUSES O/N DRIVE PARIS-LONDON APPROX 300 MILES 10 HRS
 BAND ARRIVE 10.00AM, HAMMERSMITH APOLLO
 CREW ARRIVE MID-DAY, KINGS CROSS STATION

HOTEL: HILTON	HOTEL: NO HOTEL
106 RUE ST EMILLION	
PARIS	

TEL: 00 33 (0) 1 34 56 87	TEL:
FAX: 00 33 (0) 1 54 98 21	FAX:

ROOM SERVICE: 24HR	ROOM SERVICE:
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FACILITIES: SAUNA/DISCO/PUB	FACILITIES:
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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

NOTE: LAST DAY FOR HANDING IN PASSPORTS FOR VISA APPLICATIONS

An example of a typical tour checklist

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BAND		TOUR		DATE	
ITEM		PERIOD	QUOTE	TO DO	DONE
TOUR/CONTACTS					
	AGENT				
	PROMOTER				
	VENUE				
	TERRITORIES/RIDER				
	TOUR ACCOUNTANT				
PERSONNEL					
	MUSICAL DIRECTOR (MD)				
	CHOREOGRAPHER/DANCERS				
	TOUR MANAGER (TM)				
	PRODUCTION MANAGER (PM)				
	SOUND ENGINEER/FOH				
	LIGHTING DIRECTOR (LD)				
	BACKLINE TECHNICIANS/CREW				
	CATERING				
	SET CARPENTERS				
	DRIVERS/TRUCKS & BUSES				
STAGE REQUIREMENTS					
	SOUND EQUIPMENT				
	MONITORS/IN-EAR MONITORS				
	LIGHTING				
	SET/HYDRAULICS/DRAPES				
	VIDEO PROJECTION				
	SPECIAL FX/PYROS				
	STAGE PROPS/COSTUMES				
	BACKLINE INSTRUMENTS				
TRANSPORT/TRAVEL					
	HOTEL/QTY				
	BUSES				
	SPLITTER VAN				
	FLIGHTS				
	TRUCKS				
ADDITIONAL					
	REHEARSALS/MUSIC/DANCE				
	REHEARSALS/PRODUCTION				
	CATERING				
	ITINERARIES/PASSES				
	MERCHANDISING				
PROMOTION					
	RADIO/TV				
	POSTERS/FLYERS				
	MEET & GREET'S				
	SPONSORSHIP/BUY-DN FEE				
LEGAL					
	BUDGET/FLOAT/PER DIEMS				
	TOUR SUPPORT				
	PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE				
	PERFORMANCE INSURANCE				
	EMPLOYER'S/EQUIPMENT INSURANCE				

An example of a typical tour checklist

VENUE CHECKLIST

BAND		PERIOD	
VENUE		SHOW DATE	
ADDRESS		CAPACITY	
		LOAD-IN	
		DOORS	
TELEPHONE		SOUNDCHECK	
FAX		SUPPORT	
PRODUCTION TEL		MAIN	
PRODUCTION FAX		CURFEW	
CONTACT			
PROMOTER		TELEPHONE	
PROMOTER'S REP		FAX	
		MOBILE	
DRESSING ROOMS		PRODUCTION OFFICE	
ITEM		ITEM	
STAGE SIZE	W: D: H:		
CLEARANCE			
STAGE TYPE		PROSCENIUM ARCH	
PA WINGS		SIGHT LINES	
FOH POSITION		CRASH BARRIER	
LOAD-IN ACCESS		MASKING	
POWER LIGHTS		POWER SOUND	
FORK-LIFT		CHERRY-PICKER	
SET		RISERS/MARLEY	
PYROS/SMOKE		LICENCE/EY-LAWS	
DRY ICE/LASERS		SPECIAL EFFECTS	
LAND-LINE POWER		PARKING PERMITS	
FERRIES		TOLLS	
TOWELS		LAUNDRY/DRY CLEANING	
RUNNER		ELECTRICIAN	
FORK-LIFT DRIVER		RIGGER	
SECURITY		RED CROSS	
WARDROBE PERSON		WARDROBE CASES	
VISAS/WORK PERMITS		PASSPORT PHOTOS	
FIRE CURTAIN		SAFETY CERTIFICATE	
TICKETS SOLD		TICKET PRICE	
EXPENDITURE		INCOME	
WITHOLDING TAX		PRS	
BROADCAST FEE		AGENT'S/PROMOTER'S FEE	
GUARANTEE/ADVANCE		COLLECTION	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		TOTAL INCOME	
SHEET NUMBER:			

An example of a typical venue checklist

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production trucks, along with the lights and sound equipment. If the tour isn't large enough to justify the expense of hiring a tour catering company, the crew will usually be given a per diem (a small daily payment to cover expenses, including those meals not provided with the accommodation).

security

passes

Passes play an important part of a tour's security and will be used to prevent any unauthorised person from going backstage. The ultimate backstage pass is the laminate, which predictably consists of a laminated pass with a photo and which is supplied to tour personnel with a lanyard to wear around their necks. These will almost certainly allow access to all areas, including the onstage and backstage areas and the dressing rooms.

However, on some tours an escort pass is issued, which allows access to dressing rooms only and is given only to the tour manager, the security staff, any wardrobe personnel and the person responsible for dressing-room catering. This allows the artists an extra level of privacy and security.

Day passes - also known as "stickies" - will be given to visitors such as the press, the staff of the record company, local crew, the families of the artists or crew and any special guests. Depending on the access requirements of the visitor, the day pass may give access to all areas at all times, only certain areas or even backstage access after the show has finished. The colours of the day passes will change each day in an effort to prevent them from being re-used.

signage

On larger tours, it's common practice to use pre-printed backstage signs to indicate direction to the stage, dressing rooms, dining room,

production office and other areas in order to help people those people unfamiliar with the venue find their way quickly and efficiently around the backstage area.

itinerary

It's customary to produce an itinerary for every tour. This is a schedule for everyone, including the management personnel, the record company and touring personnel, and contains dates, venues, times and other useful contact information. This constitutes the touring bible, and it must never be misplaced, because all of the information contained within it is confidential.

insurance

It's of paramount importance that the risks involved in touring and performing shows are covered by insurance, and there are several specialist insurance brokers who deal with the touring industry and understand its idiosyncrasies. The insurance necessary to cover a tour can be covered by three categories:

- Public, products and employers liability cover, which covers liability for claims issued by the public or for those issued by people employed by the tour - a variety of insurance essential for absolutely all levels of touring activity;
- Equipment and personal possessions insurance, which should normally be taken out by individual musicians in respect of their instruments, although it's normal for rental companies to insist that the hirer takes out insurance to cover damage or theft to the equipment;
- Contingency insurance. This is insurance against cancellation, which can cover expenses incurred on the tour and, if required, it can assure payment of the artist's fees (including percentage payments), depending on the level of cover that is initially taken out.

paperwork

carnet

This is a document that lists the goods transported in the trucks, such as instruments, amplifiers, sound, lighting and stage equipment, and specifies their monetary value and their countries of origin. It's an essential document for tours which span a number of countries, and is usually issued by a chamber of commerce in the town or city in which the tour production originates. A bond is deposited with this chamber of commerce to cover the value of the equipment, which in effect signifies the intention of the people transporting it to use it on the tour, but also affirms that they will return it to its original point of departure and not sell or dispose of any of it in any countries along the way. The possession of a carnet simplifies the acquiring of customs clearances at the borders of countries, and in effect means that all that's required is a customs officer's stamp on the carnet on entry and departure from their country in order to verify that the items of equipment have been checked in and out, therefore reassuring the individual customs authority that the touring company harbours no intent to import the equipment on a permanent basis with a view to selling it to a resident of that country, and that the importation is purely temporary for the purposes of presenting the shows and will be followed by the equipment's immediate exportation on completion of the shows, and ultimately by return to its country of origin. If you're in possession of this document, it means that you'll be able to avoid the charging of import taxes or duties on equipment and instruments, and it's absolutely essential for an international tour.

post-production

On completion of the tour, it's the tour manager's responsibility to liaise with each member of the crew and to arrange that all of the items that have been carried on the tour are returned to their owners or stored in the artist's warehouse space, and especially to ensure that rental equipment is returned promptly and not left running up unnecessary rental charges. If a carnet is being used, the stamped copies - together

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with the rest of the paperwork - should be returned to the relevant authority from which they were issued, and the deposited bond will then be released. The tour manager should then work through the paperwork and check all of the invoices and budgeted bills. For those bills that haven't been budgeted, he should be able to explain to the artist and its management why such overages have occurred. The tour manager should be able to produce a complete set of show settlements which have been agreed with the promoters, and should ideally produce a summary of the number of people attending each show relative to the capacity of the venue, the relevant paperwork recording the guest lists and the number of complimentary tickets issued (whether or not these tickets were picked up), press items such as the names and contact details of those journalists who have either interviewed the artist or reviewed the show, and signed waiver forms submitted by the photographers who have taken pictures of the shows. He should also produce a set of accounts and receipts justifying all cash payments made by him during the tour.

Touring is a vital element of any artist's career. If a team of experienced and skilful professionals are employed, the complex business of planning and executing a tour will run smoothly, the shows will be visually appealing and they will provide the artists with the best possible conditions to reproduce their music for the audience, allowing them a chance to present themselves to their fans in a first-hand capacity, and - through a professionally and creatively presented live show - develop that all-important relationship with those fans that will help them achieve commercial success.

chapter 9

press and PR

by Bernard Doherty

The job of a band's publicist can appear to be among the easiest and most attractive in the music business, because there seems to be so much scope for mixing work and having a good time, and the job doesn't require special academic achievements. However, the ability to think on your feet is essential.

The publicist has regular access to artists, and therefore has ample opportunity to observe their work at close quarters. For some people, this may be an appealing bonus; but an awe-struck, star-gazing publicist who wants to hang with the band is more of an all-round liability than an asset! Although it's true that many PR people in the industry have the opportunity to work directly and closely with the bands that they represent, the job is particularly demanding in a number of ways, and also has a great deal of stress and tension attached to it.