



STEP ONE - CREATE PRE-RELEASE MASTER CHECKLIST AND SCHEDULE

Before you get into the marketing and sharing phase, you need to have a good idea of *how* you would like to promote your new music and *when* you want that promotion to take place within your release timeframe.

I always begin by writing down a detailed list of all the things I need to do, from creating instagram posts, creating a Whatsapp broadcast list, to putting my lyrics on Genius.

After you have your main, comprehensive checklist you can break it down into smaller sections and plot out some deadlines. This list and schedule will look different for everyone.

On the following page I have put together a mini sample checklist as an example of how you might frame it.

Pre - Release Day Tasks:

Main visual content:

- Personal photoshoot
- Video/ Visuals/ Lyric Video shoot
- Create release booklet (pdf) with lyrics, song and artist bios, credits, photos, logo and release aesthetic

Admin:

- Create social media posting schedule
- Create landing page for song
- Write press release and song bio
- Add lyrics to musixmatch (post release)
- Add lyrics to Genius
- Create spotify pre-save
- Submit to spotify playlisting
- Update website (create release countdown)
- Update linktree/ bio links
- Reach out to specific influential members in network (send them release booklet)

Direct contact media:

- Create mailing list
- Create broadcast list
- Create main 'release' template message

Social Media Marketing:

- Create 5 instagram posts to post before release
- Create specific video content for Tik Tok and instagram (pre and post release)
- Create central hashtags (5-10 tags)
- Set Premiere for music video drop on Youtube

Merch:

- Setup merchandise - limited t-shirts
- Set up shop and promotion of merchandise

SAMPLE CHECKLIST

(dw im overwhelmed too and this is just what I could think of on the fly!)

See how much there is to consider even on a basic level?

Once you begin to write out all the things you need to accomplish between now and the release it can almost snowball into an endless to-do list.

That's why it's great to get everything you can think of down in one place, and then break the checklist down into a **schedule of bite sized tasks** to spread the work out across the (hopefully) four or more weeks you have given yourself before the release.

STEP TWO: PREPARE MARKETING MATERIALS AND MARKETING STRATEGY-

In the list above I wrote some vague checklist items like 'Create 5 instagram posts' or 'Create social media strategy'.

These will look vastly different depending on your specific release, but here are a couple of things to consider as you try to plot out how you want to share the news of your release to the world.

Social media is a visual media



Before people ever head to the 'link-in-bio' they are first engaging with your music as a visual thing. The artwork, text and any visuals you create around it should be eye catching, interesting and act as a kind of visual appetiser to what the sonic and thematic attributes of the song are.

Tell a story, make sure it's yours

As an independent artist you are in control of your story and how it gets told. That's one of the great privileges of being an indie artist. Whether it be in your captions, visual media or even your hashtags, make sure that what you share within your marketing reflects YOU, not who you think you need to be. People listen to you because you are YOU.

Research



The internet is full of resources about marketing and how to effectively use all your networks and assets to your advantage. Regular research is important because technology keeps changing its trends and algorithms. We constantly have to stay ahead of the information and learn how to use it well.

Engage regardless

Not all of your posts, emails or messages leading up to a release need to be about the release itself. Be consistent. Engage with your audiences online, go live, do more in-person gigs, sell merchandise, talk to people in your music community. Don't put all your marketing eggs in one basket. Engagement happens beyond social media and outside the bounds of the thing you're marketing. People hate being sold to all the time.

Ask for help

This is my final piece of marketing advice because it is the bit I am terrible at. The *downside* of being an indie artist is that you have to do **everything** yourself. That workload can feel immense, and the payoff often quite small. If you have access to people within the music marketing or promotion space, ask for their help and advice, set up a coffee date. If you have the capacity to pay someone or bring someone on board to help with the social media, website, mailing list or even just taking to the 'streets' - ask for help.

Not everyone will say yes, but those that do can bring valuable insight and assistance to what is often a very lonely process.





STEP THREE - PLAN A RELEASE EVENT

One of my biggest regrets and sadnesses when I reflect on the process of releasing my debut album in late 2018, was that I never got to launch it. I had a listening party which was amazing, but I never got to perform my album top to bottom with the band.



A launch event can be:

- A live concert where you play the release(s)
- A listening party
- A combination of both a live intimate gig and a listening session

In any case, at a launch event you want to invite a **core group of fans into a physical space with the music**. This is a great opportunity to get people on board for the release and guarantee an early, excited listenership when the song drops. You will be able to connect the new music to a specific positive memory for your fans and friends, as well as draw them into the *story* of the music in greater depth.

A major reason I believe it's important to have any launch event, whether it includes 10 people or 100, is it gives *you* the opportunity to step back from the work and enjoy its birth into the world. It's definitely nerve wracking, but you created something and brought it to completion - that is something worth celebrating.

Artists are notoriously terrible at celebrating themselves and their achievements. A launch event is a great way to kill multiple birds with one stone; market the music, get fans on board, and also celebrate yourself, for just one evening.



STEP FOUR - FEED YOUR HEART



I'm gonna level with you, releasing music can sometimes be really, really challenging. On one hand there is tremendous excitement that exists around the music and waiting for the world to hear it, on the other hand there is a great deal of expectation put upon its future 'success'.

In the past I have made the mistake of putting so much effort into the pre-release, that by the time the song/project is out I am burned out, anxious and unable to continue to push it or share it with any real enthusiasm.

Throughout the process, from the moment you first step into the studio to the second you hit 'share' on release day, it's vital to continually **feed your spirit and heart.**

That can mean many things from consistently taking time out to focus on other creative projects or hobbies, to going on regular walks.

As an artist *who* you are and *what* you are often become intertwined. *Your job is you*, which makes all the decisions you make more emotional, more personal and in some ways more significant.

Your perception of success can impact your self esteem in a massive way. It is important to make your terms of 'success' *broad, generous and based in love.*

As a way to feed your heart as you prepare to share your music with the world, set some of your terms of success outside of how many streams, likes, comments, views, shares, reviews (etc) will the work will get. While metrics are cool and helpful, find some terms that are more than that, deeper than that.

You get to set the terms of what you consider success.
Maybe getting to create and share at all is success in and of itself.

IN THE NEXT NEWSLETTER WE WILL CONCLUDE
OUR 'HOW TO RELEASE YOUR MUSIC' SERIES WITH
PART III - WHAT TO DO POST RELEASE?