

## Australian Music Biz

[www.musicbiz.com.au](http://www.musicbiz.com.au)

August 2002

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Australian Music Biz manages the publicity and promotion of bands and their music CDs. Australian Music Biz has been operating since 2000 and developed out of Stephen Green's involvement in the music industry, first in music journalism and retail followed by experience in national publicity for a record company. Stephen is in the process of expanding his business and staff.

We talked to Stephen Green, owner, at his office in Chermside, Brisbane. The business is moving to new office in Fortitude Valley, an inner city suburb of Brisbane in the near future.

### **Who are your customers?**

Bands and record labels, mainly the independent record labels.

### **Do you have an established customer base?**

Not really. The majority of my work is for first time releases, but I find the repeat business rate is increasing.

### **Are you trying to attract new customers?**

Yes. Most business is from new customers but due to the nature of the business, I cannot seek out customers, I need to actively network in the industry to ensure that I am known. I pitch towards the larger independent labels and artists and make sure I am in their minds when they come to need a publicist.

### **Who are your competitors?**

There are not many competitors in the market niche I work in - only a few in Australia do this work at the level I pitch at. Because we know each other, we sometimes refer prospective customers to each other, depending upon our circumstances at the time.

### **How have you been successful?**

Due to my understanding and experience of all aspects of the field. I maintain extensive contacts in the industry and visit radio stations around Australia.

### **How do you use digital technology in your business?**

I make extensive use of a digital mobile telephone when travelling. I use a Palm Pilot for mobile contact management using Maximiser. When I dock the Palm Pilot to my desktop PC it automatically updates my contact database, which has about 2,500 entries. I use SMS messaging but it is mainly for private use.

I have one desktop computer running Microsoft Windows XP and Microsoft Office 2000. I use QuickBooks for all accounting, invoicing etc. I make extensive use of Maximiser as our contact management and database. I have been using FrontPage to produce the Web site.

I have recently connected to the Internet by ADSL broadband. I previously used a dial connection but it was too much of a problem sharing the telephone line between voice calls and Internet. I either had to put on a second telephone line or use ADSL through the existing line. ADSL was the cheaper option.

I make extensive use of e-mail with all my contacts. Three years ago, most communication was by telephone. Now e-mail has become acceptable throughout most of the music industry.

### **Do you use a regular e-mail newsletter?**

Yes. This is a very important aspect of this business and I send out an e-mail newsletter monthly to about 600 recipients.

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### **Banking Online?**

I use on-line banking for everything I can.

### **Have you ever had problems with viruses?**

Not since I set up this business.

### **What measures do you take?**

I use Norton Anti-Virus.

### **How often do you back up your files?**

I try to do a backup monthly and would like to increase the frequency to fortnightly.

### **Any other equipment?**

I do not have a fax but I use a scanner for capturing CD covers for the Web site.

### **Do you have a Web site?**

The Web site existed prior to the businesses as I used it to place my music review articles.

### **Do you have or are you connected to an Intranet?**

No.

### **Do you use an Extranet?**

No.

### **What is your Web site for?**

To generate business. It includes reviews of CDs and the media can download graphic images if required. However in practise, I usually e-mail pictures direct to the media when requested.

### **Is this a development of your existing business or a new venture?**

It has always been integral to the business.

### **Do you have an on-line audience?**

Yes. The media, prospective customers and the general public.

### **Do you host internally or externally?**

Externally.

### **Do you make/allow transactions on your site?**

No.

### **Do you collect information with forms/surveys?**

No. This option was included in the past but it did not receive enough commercial response, only responses from the general public.

### **How do you manage/update the content of your site?**

I do it myself.

### **How do you promote your site?**

It is in search engines but I have not gone out of my way to actively promote it. The Web site is included on a lot of industry links and I promote the site in my monthly e-mail newsletter.

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**How much does it cost to promote your site?**

It is a negligible cost.

**Do you ask customers how to improve your site?**

No.

**Do you have an existing customer database?**

Yes.

**Does your Web site capture new customer information?**

No.

**What is the best way to get people to come to your site?**

This is not an issue for me.

**What is the best way to get people to buy products and services?**

Doing well with other clients. Word of mouth is a powerful marketing tool.

**How does your site generate revenue?**

It doesn't really generate revenue.

**How many versions/upgrades?**

Five.

**Where did you go for advice?**

Friends and mentors within the industry.

**How did you know who to trust?**

I do not trust anyone. I have experienced ISP's going bust.

**Did you do the work yourself or use outside contractors?**

Until now I have done the work myself but I am contracting out the current upgrade of the Web site.

**How much did it cost you?**

The cost is minimal.

**What mistakes did you make that you wish you hadn't?**

Choosing a hosting company for the Web site that went broke after only one month.

**What advice would you give someone else?**

Don't get too hung up with the Internet etc. It is only relevant if it translates into money. A lot of Internet activity may not realise financial gains. For example, groups that get high demand for their MP3 files on-line often do not translate into cash sales. It is best to keep costs down. For example I use cheap hosting for our Web site.

**Do you know what technology is used in your company?**

Yes.

**Do you understand what it does?**

Yes.

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### **What are the business benefits you are hoping for?**

I am looking for a better look for the Web site. I believe we already have the best Web presence for this type of business in Australia. The better the site the greater the possibility of an edge on the competition. Hopefully the new site will generate more traffic. I intend to allow user reviews from the general public and expand the MP3 section. The MP3 availability may make the site more popular.

### **What are you planning to do next?**

The next major project is moving to an office space in Fortitude valley, which will mean upgrading our existing technology rather extensively.