

The failsafe NEW MODEL for a 21st Century music company...

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I reckon these are the key ingredients.

1) HITS. Not easy to find (I only reckon 1% of all tips are actual hits). But the essential ingredient. And please note I say HITS - not Artistes or Albums. Our 60's method of conning fans by selling big profit albums on the back of hits won't wash anymore in this download age. And don't go on about the need for talent. 90% of all the biggest hits are one off smashes. Who ever expected a career from Norman SPIRIT IN THE SKY Greenbaum or Arthur FIRE Brown or Pinkerton's Assorted Colours or, God forbid, The Piglets?

2) SALES. Two areas - downloads and physicals. Don't fall for the iTunes hype here... they may be this week's biggest but intelligent copyright owners can establish their own retail site at the drop of a hat. If the Beatles had owned a site, wouldn't every lover of the group have logged on to Beatles.com and bought their product from there? Also remember - with your own retail online site you can control price AND release date and availability yourself - at all times.

The second area - physicals - is currently vital, especially for albums which I suggest becomes "collections" and changes regularly with deleted and added tracks all the time; constantly updated. It is perfectly possible to cover all bases through an existing distributor but it might even be worth doing this yourself. If you buy a white van; deliver to the supermarkets yourself, on demand.

And for those who will say "but only EUK can distribute to Tesco's" and other similar arguments, my answer is "NOT FOR LONG".

Let me put it to you; if the next BEATLES emerge, would Tesco refuse to carry the CD's if they cannot get them through EUK? And if there's a massive demand, why bother with that middleman?

3) THE CHARTS. Except they are NOT key any more. We have to find another way of assessing and revealing popularity. The charts have become not only a distraction but a negative. Copyright owners get more impressed by a high chart position than by genuine sales. As do programmers.

4) EXPOSURE. Which brings me to my next point; if the existing radio stations and TV shows won't programme great music (thus killing their own popularity and ratings - see Top of the Pops) - then you must create your own, either individually or jointly.

Witness the digital-only stations doing so well. THE HITS gets nearly a million listeners. How long until these stations get bigger ratings than the established ones?

5) PRESS. Ditto. If the existing papers won't cover you (or do it in a negative way) - invent or create your own new papers.

6) TERRITORY. The new technology means the new "territory" is global. Think that way. No more "regional deals". They are out dated and out moded.

7) PUBLISHING. And other rights. You MUST own and control as many of the ancillary rights as possible. The old "sell albums" philosophy is dead so, to make decent profits, you have to OWN all rights (I suggest in partnership with the copyright owners; artistes, producers or whoever).

Might I strongly suggest that these seven paragraphs construct the perfect model for this new century (if humanity survives it, which I doubt)?