

Music Marketing Secrets

Bob Baker

www.TheBuzzFactor.com

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Outrageous Music Marketing Ideas

by Bob Baker

I'm not sure exactly what triggered it, but recently my mind started popping with off-the-wall ways to promote your music. So I jotted down some notes and am sharing them with you in this article.

I'll let you determine whether these are truly "outrageous" ideas. But one thing is for sure: They certainly aren't the traditional things that most musicians think about when they do "marketing."

Ready? Here we go ...

Outrageous Music Marketing Idea #1

Turn Yourself Into a Happy Meal

I definitely advocate that independent artists *not* try to emulate the same tactics as the major labels. However, there are times when you can take one of their ideas (or an idea from a related entertainment industry) and give it a small-scale spin.

You know how the major film studios promote their new animated features by tying into fast food chain kid meals, such as the McDonald's Happy Meal. Most likely, you won't be able to land a nationwide Happy Meal deal. But you might be able to do something cool with a local deli or restaurant.



I know a couple of radio disc jockeys in my town who have sandwiches or special meals named after them at certain eateries. Why couldn't you do that? Especially if you perform regularly at a particular coffee shop, bar or restaurant.

For example, if your band is called Sweet Potato Sunrise, approach a manager with the idea of offering a Sweet Potato Sunrise omelette, or a Sweet Potato Sunrise latte, or a Sweet Potato Sunrise daiquiri?

You get the idea. The special name would get you exposure at the establishment whenever it's open (hopefully, your item will be listed on the menu). Plus, you can use the unique promotional angle to get mentions in the local press.

Outrageous Music Marketing Idea #2

Become an Instant Cult Classic

The success of the quirky film *Napoleon Dynamite* has me thinking. The movie itself is still growing on me, but I'm fascinated by the buzz it has among people who really connect with it. Most of my friends who rave about it have seen it numerous times and claim that the more they see it, the more they appreciate and enjoy it.

What a nice position for a filmmaker to be in. Admittedly, a lot of people don't like the movie and its flat characters. But those who do appreciate the film like it a lot – and preach about it to their friends, memorize lines, encourage theatres to have midnight showings, etc.

How can you tap into that? It's hard to manufacture cult status, but here's an idea:

What if your music CD came with an accompanying trivia game? And what if the game tied directly into the theme, style and lyrics of your music?

The game instructions could be included in the CD sleeve or delivered separately to everyone who bought one. Or, to make a greater impact with the trivia game idea, you could package the CD in a DVD case or even a small retail box.

To make this work, you'd have to come up with a cool, interactive game idea and have an album filled with interesting, funny or insightful lyrics and music. If you can get people examining the nuances of your material and sharing notes with other people who are memorizing your stuff, you might get some powerful buzz going.

Hopefully, these "outrageous" ideas will get your wheels turning.

Recommended resources:

Guerrilla Music Marketing Handbook: 201 Self-Promotion Ideas for Songwriters, Musicians and Bands on a Budget

www.bob-baker.com/buzz/guerrilla-music-marketing-handbook/

The Five-Minute Music Marketer: 151 Easy Music Promotion Activities That Take 5 Minutes or Less

www.bob-baker.com/buzz/five-minute-music-marketer/

The Power of Personality

by Bob Baker

When you promote yourself via email or with the words you use on your website, you have a choice. You can be straight-forward and matter-of-fact (also known as bland and boring). Or you can communicate with pizzazz.

Case in point: My friend Gregg Hopkins plays in a band called The Melroys. He could have sent a run-of-the-mill email to promote a recent show, including the rudimentary club name, address, phone number, etc.

Instead, he sent this:



Git yerself down to the Broadway Oyster Bar tonight where The MELROYS will present our little Rock and Roll fandango. The food is delicious, the adult beverages are cool and refreshing, the music will be swinging, and you'll fit right in with the other beautiful people there. Showtime is 9-1. See ya there!

*Gregg Hopkins
TheMelroys.com*

P.S. Any person peeved by perpetual pestering such as this posting will be promptly purged from this list upon proper petition.

Ya gotta admit, this short message is a fun read – which leads one to assume that a Melroys live show will be a fun event. And that's smart marketing. (The only thing I would add is an address and phone number of the venue for those fans who might not know where it is.)

So don't be afraid to show your personality. In fact, go out of your way to do something fun or different or creative any time you communicate with the public about your music.

Got it? Good.

Use Hypnotic Descriptions

Here's another example from a longtime musical pal, Michael Schaerer. In this recent email, he does a great job of painting word pictures of the venues he plays and describing what it means to him:

We'll be at Felix's starting around 9:30 Saturday night ... if it's anything like last week was, it'll be a full-fledged rock concert ... and it'll sound better than most of them too! It's really like seeing your favorite band in your living room. So intimate and powerful at the same time.

Come early for a fine dinner, or eat late ... the kitchen is open 'till close, baby. You really need to come out to Felix's and see why it's so popular! Felix's rules. Period.

On Sunday, Amy Miller and I close out my work week at the Tin Can Tavern on the south side. We play 9:00 to 11:30 or so. We like playing together so much that we usually have to be told to quit! Great new songs, and Amy just sounds like an angel ... amazing. Please attend.

Last week was a great week for me. So many people came and enjoyed my music that I was overwhelmed. Thank you, really. It means everything to me.

Michael

This example is so powerful for many reasons. The way Michael describes the places he plays, you can't help but want to go and experience the vibe yourself. And you know the venue owners have got to love the ringing endorsements, too.

Finally, as Michael illustrates in his last sentence, always remember to thank your fans. They're the reason you're doing more than just playing music in an empty room. Without people to listen, enjoy and support you, your creative process would be a lot less satisfying. So be sure to regularly express your gratitude.

Your Comfy, Cozy Computer

The challenge when promoting yourself online is this: There's only so much human warmth you can get from the screen on a phone, tablet or computer. Anything you can do to make your online communication more warm and fuzzy will make you stand out and be more appreciated.

No one did this better than Derek Sivers when he ran CD Baby. If you've ever purchased music from cdbaby.com, you've probably received this shipping

confirmation email – one of the classic “power of personality” messages you’re likely to see:

Your CD has been gently taken from our CD Baby shelves with sterilized contamination-free gloves and placed onto a satin pillow.

A team of 50 employees inspected your CD and polished it to make sure it was in the best possible condition before mailing.

Our packing specialist from Japan lit a candle and a hush fell over the crowd as he put your CD into the finest gold-lined box that money can buy.

We all had a wonderful celebration afterwards and the whole party marched down the street to the post office where the entire town of Portland waved ‘Bon Voyage!’ to your package, on its way to you, in our private CD Baby jet on this day (date inserted here).

I hope you had a wonderful time shopping at CD Baby. We sure did. Your picture is on our wall as ‘Customer of the Year.’ We’re all exhausted but can’t wait for you to come back to CDBABY.COM!

Thank you once again,

*Derek Sivers, president, CD Baby
the little CD store with the best new independent music*

Now that’s powerful .. and effective! Think twice before sending your fans another email message. *And always remember the power of personality!*

Recommended resources:

The 9 Irrefutable Laws of Music Marketing

www.amazon.com/dp/B01B1VB7NA/

The Magnetic Profit Formula for Copywriting and Sales

www.udemy.com/magnetic-cash-flow-formula/?couponCode=Bob20

Guerrilla Music Marketing Online: 129 Free and Low-Cost Strategies to Promote & Sell Your Music on the Internet

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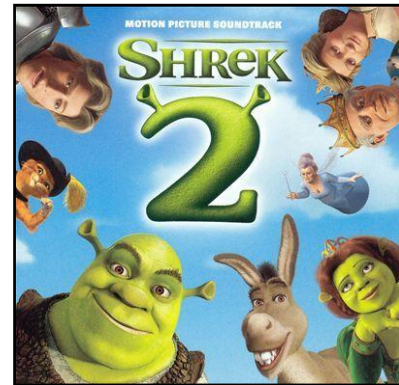
Marketing Lessons From an 8-Year-Old Girl

by Bob Baker

One morning several years ago, when my daughter was 8, I was driving her to school when she asked me to cue up a very familiar song on the CD player. If you have kids, you know that children often love repeated exposure to stuff they like. They'll contently watch a favorite movie over and over again, driving the adults in the house batty from the repetition.

Well, one of her favorite songs was "Accidentally in Love" by Counting Crows. I like to think she enjoyed it so much because I had played it at a show she attended. But the truth more likely had something to do with the *Shrek 2* soundtrack.

Anyway, that morning we were on our second spin of "So she said, 'What's the problem, baby' ..." when I finally asked her, "Why do you like this song so much?"



Her answer: "I don't know. It just puts me in a good mood."

The Light Bulb Goes Off!

Wow. That might sound like a simplistic answer, but when you think about it, isn't that at the core of enjoying any type of music, at any stage of life?

You enjoy your favorite music because it makes you feel good.

The key words there are *feel* and *good*. Generally speaking, music makes the person enjoying it feel good – or at least better about themselves than they might have before hearing it.

There are exceptions: Sometimes people listen to particular types of music when they are sad or angry or not feeling "good." In these instances, people use music to match their mood – to cradle and support them in whatever state they happen to be in. But, regardless of the mood, people always use music to "feel," whether it's good or otherwise.

But I contend that most of the time people turn to music to feel better about themselves – to, as my daughter says, put themselves in a good mood.

Feeling Great About Feeling Good

Music fans might say they love an act because of the vocalist's skills or the guitar player's chops or the groove laid down by the bass player. But those things are just the means that lead to the ultimate fan payoff: *feeling good*.

So ... How does your music make your fans feel? In what way do you elevate their mood to "good" – or, better yet, great?

The answers to those questions can be different for every artist. But asking them and pondering the answers will help you understand the true relationship you have with your fans.



Bottom line: Putting more people in a "good mood" will help your music career more than just about any marketing tactic you could ever conceive.

Recommended resources:

The Empowered Artist: A Call to Action for Musicians, Writers, Visual Artists, and Anyone Who Wants to Make a Difference With Their Creativity

www.bob-baker.com/buzz/empowered-artist-movement/

The Five-Minute Music Marketer: 151 Easy Music Promotion Activities That Take 5 Minutes or Less

www.bob-baker.com/buzz/five-minute-music-marketer/

Formulating Your Best Music Promotion Plan

by Bob Baker

A lot of people who subscribe to my Buzz Factor ezine, read my books, and attend my workshops tell me that once they shift into a brainstorming mode, the self-promotion ideas come fast and furious.

My first piece of advice regarding this fantastic state of mind is this:

Buy a notebook or journal and capture these thoughts by writing them down. Don't expect to remember everything later. That rarely works. Grab ideas while they're hot.

If you're driving when inspiration strikes, carefully pull over and scribble down your thoughts in your phone or on a gas receipt, fast food bag, or whatever is handy. If you're in a bar or restaurant, use a napkin. If you're in the shower ... well, be creative and find a way to record those great ideas.

So Many Ideas, So Little Time

Once you have a master list of earth-shattering, career-boosting concepts, things don't get any easier. Now you probably feel as if you have so many options, you don't know where to start. Most music people get so flustered at this point, they do nothing. Or they do a little bit of everything all at once and spread themselves too thin, with nothing to show for all their hard work.

Well, I believe in keeping things simple. Don't overwhelm yourself. For starters, before you jump into any new grand schemes, there are two basic things you should do every week, if not every day, no matter what else you may be working on:

1) Write, record and perform great music. This is no secret. The most creative promotion ideas in the world will do nothing to help mediocre music. So work on your music-making craft constantly. All it takes is one killer song to light a fire that will sustain an entire career.

2) The second thing you should do almost every day is connect with and attract more fans. Don't get sidetracked with technicalities and industry connections and stuff that doesn't matter. Keep a constant focus on fans.

Creating Your Music Plan

Now, what about those specific big ideas you have for getting exposure, selling CDs, etc.? Get out a calendar that covers the next 12 months, and start writing down your top ideas and the times of the year they would work best.

Think this through and move things around on the calendar until you've got one or two great ideas listed for each month. Doing this will give you a promotional roadmap so you know the best ways to spend your time and energy every month. Your efforts will be more focused this way and more likely to generate results.

Don't just wing it and leave things to chance. This is your career and livelihood at stake here. Set priorities. Create an action plan. You can always tweak and alter the plan as you go. But having one in the first place gives you a starting point and a direction ... and a reason to get busy and start promoting your music now.



So formulate a plan – your ideal plan – then ... *get out there and promote yourself!*

Recommended resources:

Guerrilla Music Marketing Handbook: 201 Self-Promotion Ideas for Songwriters, Musicians and Bands on a Budget

www.bob-baker.com/buzz/guerrilla-music-marketing-handbook/

The 9 Irrefutable Laws of Music Marketing

www.amazon.com/dp/B01B1VB7NA/

19 Cash Flow Strategies for Songwriters, Musicians and Bands

www.bob-baker.com/buzz/cash-flow-money-strategies-musicians-bands/

Who Do You Sound Like? (And Why It's Important)

by Bob Baker

Admit it. Most musicians hate to compare themselves to other artists. Does this describe you? If you feel you are a unique, one-of-a-kind creative being, I wholeheartedly agree with you. But if you think you shouldn't tarnish your musical identity with comparisons to other artists, I ask you to reconsider.

Why? It has everything to do with this crazy little hunk of matter called the human brain.

According to the Berkeley Lab, "Humans retrieve information best when it can be linked to other related information." In other words, without a familiar reference point, people have a tough time filing away and remembering new sights, sounds, smells, etc.

Tapping Into 'The System'

In an article by Allen Barker, he writes, "Memory is a dynamic process. It arises from reminders and cues." The process that helps the brain sort out new stimulus is called "associative memory."

Barker continues, "An associative memory is a memory system that takes an input 'key' and produces the 'closest' stored memory that matches that key. If the memory had stored a picture of a chair, for example, and were presented with a 'key' of half a chair, it would fill in the remaining half of the chair."



If you think this is all impractical mumbo jumbo, check out the work being done by Pandora. It's Music Genome Project (www.pandora.com/about/mgp) is a system that analyzes music using "a set of attributes that capture not only the musical identity of a song, but also many significant qualities that are relevant to understanding the musical preferences of consumers who browse the material. Each song is analyzed along 400 distinct musical attributes to create a complete musical analysis."

Sounds deep, but in essence, the Pandora research works much like Amazon's "customers who bought X also purchased Y" recommendations.

Making the Mental Music Connection

Convinced yet? Music fans need clues. People who enjoy your music also enjoy other artists. And many of those artists are more familiar to the masses than you are right now. So tap into the mental links that already exist in the minds of fans who support other similar-sounding artists.

Recommended resources:

Branding Yourself Online: 10 Steps to Creating a Potent Personal Brand Identity on the Internet

www.fulltimeauthor.com/branding-yourself-online-bob-baker/

Unleash the Artist Within: Four Weeks to Transforming Your Creative Talents into More Recognition, More Profit and More Fun

www.bob-baker.com/buzz/unleash-the-artist-within/

Expand Your Definition of a Live Performance

by Bob Baker

Let me ask you a simple question ...

What has to happen for a person to be converted into being a fan of your music? There are a number of possible answers, but at the most basic level, one thing has to happen: The person must hear your music.

And there are only so many ways someone can hear it: on the radio or on television, streaming over the Internet, in a dance club or a retail store, from a friend on a home or car stereo or ... during a live performance.

Let's focus on that last one, because even with all of the advancements in technology, live performance continues to be one of the best ways to connect with fans, sell albums, and prosper as an artist.



Hopefully, your marketing plans include a heaping helping of live shows. But what type of live shows do you do? The problem is, many musicians get stuck in live performance ruts and fail to think outside the box.

For instance, most rock bands flock like lemmings to nightclubs. Most acoustic singer-songwriters obsess over coffee shops and folk venues. That's fine, but they end the thought process there – and then complain that there aren't enough gig slots for all of the acts who want to play.

The solution: Redefine your live performance goals. And ask yourself the right questions. If you only ask, "How can I book more shows at clubs?" you'll rarely look outside that possibility.

But if you ask, "How can I reach more of my ideal fans through live performances?" then your list of potential venues is suddenly wide open.

Where can you play to get in front of more potential fans?

If nightclubs is one answer, great – continue to pursue that. But what about community festivals, neighborhood block parties, grand openings, rallies, auto shows, craft fairs, the finishing line of a city marathon, a public beach on a sunny day ... anywhere that large groups of people gather is fair game.

Sure, not every option will have the logistics for a sound system, a stage, etc. But any glimmer of an idea along these lines is worth looking into. And I guarantee you, the number of other acts competing for a spot at one of these offbeat events will be much less than the number you find at the traditional live music venues.

So ... expand your definition of a live performance, ask yourself empowering questions, and open your mind to the many new ways you have to reach fans through live performances.

Recommended resources:

The Five-Minute Music Marketer: 151 Easy Music Promotion Activities That Take 5 Minutes or Less

www.bob-baker.com/buzz/five-minute-music-marketer/

Guerrilla Music Marketing Handbook: 201 Self-Promotion Ideas for Songwriters, Musicians and Bands on a Budget

www.bob-baker.com/buzz/guerrilla-music-marketing-handbook/

The 9 Irrefutable Laws of Music Marketing

www.amazon.com/dp/B01B1VB7NA/

The Ultimate Music Business Conspiracy Theory

by Bob Baker

Whether it's the second gunman on the grassy knoll, the alien mystery at Roswell or what really is hidden within the high-security confines of Area 51... conspiracy theories abound. Many of us are amused by the speculation, while hardcore buffs examine every nuance looking for clues to support their version of the story.

If you'll notice, all of these conspiracy theories involve some type of dastardly deed or cover-up. Someone is out to brainwash us or hide the facts from the public. After all, "the truth is out there," according to X-Files scripture.

I never seem to hear people suspecting, for instance, a conspiracy by furniture salesman to stuff money into the nooks and crannies of the couches they sell. Yet I always find change under the cushions when I clean. Hmm... maybe they're secretly... Oh, never mind.



There's another kind of conspiracy conjurer. You know the type. The artist, musician or writer who believes the deck has been stacked against him or that nobody will ever give her a break. "This town is just not artist-friendly," he/she proclaims. "This sucks. Why bother?"

To listen to these people, you'd think the radio stations, theatre groups, art galleries (or whatever venue applies) were all part of a sick joke, trying to obliterate creative growth. And just like the bigger conspiracy buffs, they find clues and plenty of ammo to support their claims.

"See, that guy never returned my call," they announce. "I can't buy a job in this town." Anything even remotely inconvenient that happens to them lends credence to the devious master plot.

Here's a fun little game that I challenge you to play. It's called the Inverse Conspiracy Game.

For one entire day, I encourage you to go through the day believing wholeheartedly that there is a conspiracy involving you. Only with this Inverse Conspiracy, the whole world and everyone in it are involved in a conspiracy to help you succeed.

If you're familiar with the recent Jim Carey movie *The Truman Show*, you know what I mean. In the film, everything that happens to the main character is a preplanned scene – only he has no idea it's fabricated.

So for one day, imagine that everyone is pitching in on a secret mission to help you. There's a positive reason behind everything that happens to you. Even seemingly negative events are put into action in order to propel you toward a reward that's just around the corner. And it's your job to break the code and figure out exactly how the world intends for you to use what happens to your advantage.

True, this isn't your father's conspiracy theory. It will take some brain work to reorient your mental perspective – especially to keep it up for an entire day. But just think how this shift in attitude might alter your progress.

You'll be forced to view everything in a far more constructive light. And when bad things do happen, it will be your mission to find the hidden opportunity (instead of more reasons to stop trying to reach your creative goals).

Give this inverse conspiracy theory a try. You can always go back to looking for evil schemes and cover-ups. In the meantime, you just might discover an alien on a grassy knoll waiting to help you succeed.

Recommended resources:

30 Ways to Become an Empowered Artist course

www.udemy.com/30-ways-empowered-artist/?couponCode=BOB15

The Empowered Artist: A Call to Action for Musicians, Writers, Visual Artists, and Anyone Who Wants to Make a Difference With Their Creativity

www.bob-baker.com/buzz/empowered-artist-movement/

The DIY Career Manifesto: The Unconventional Guide to Turning Your Talents and Know-How Into a Profitable Business

www.fulltimeauthor.com/diy-career-manifesto/

About the author

Bob Baker is an author, speaker, musician, and former music magazine editor dedicated to showing musicians of all kinds how to get exposure, connect with fans, sell more music, and increase their incomes through their artistic passions.

He is the author of the highly acclaimed *Guerrilla Music Marketing Handbook*, which appeared in the major motion picture *The School of Rock*, starring Jack Black and Miranda Cosgrove. See screenshots of that scene [here](#):



www.flickr.com/photos/bob-baker/sets/72157594313058738/

Bob also created the “Music Marketing 101” course, which ran for five years at Berklee Online, the continuing education division of Berklee College of Music in Boston.

CD Baby called him “The Godfather of Independent Music Marketing.”

According to the *Salt Lake Tribune*, “Bob Baker is one of the most widely recognized authorities on music marketing. A prolific writer, Baker is regarded as one of the industry’s leaders in helping musicians leverage online web and marketing strategies to boost their careers.”

He has appeared in the media on NPR’s “Morning Edition” and “Marketplace” and in such publications as *Electronic Musician*, *Music Connection*, *The Guardian* in the U.K., *Canadian Musician*, *Publishers Weekly*, *VIBE* magazine, E! Online, and even *The Onion*!

Since 1995 Bob has published “The Buzz Factor” ezine, one of the first music tips email newsletters in existence. He was one of the early proponents of musicians taking their careers into their own hands and not relying on major record labels or industry gatekeepers to save them.

Visit www.TheBuzzFactor.com for more details.

Other Books, Courses, Audiobooks, and Links

Guerrilla Music Marketing Handbook: 201 Self-Promotion Ideas for Songwriters, Musicians and Bands on a Budget

www.bob-baker.com/buzz/guerrilla-music-marketing-handbook/

The Five-Minute Music Marketer: 151 Easy Music Promotion Activities That Take 5 Minutes or Less

www.bob-baker.com/buzz/five-minute-music-marketer/

The 9 Irrefutable Laws of Music Marketing

www.amazon.com/dp/B01B1VB7NA/

The Empowered Artist: A Call to Action for Musicians, Writers, Visual Artists, and Anyone Who Wants to Make a Difference With Their Creativity

www.bob-baker.com/buzz/empowered-artist-movement/

Guerrilla Music Marketing Online: 129 Free and Low-Cost Strategies to Promote & Sell Your Music on the Internet

www.bob-baker.com/buzz/guerrilla-music-marketing-online/

Guerrilla Music Marketing, Encore Edition: 201 More Self-Promotion Ideas, Tips & Tactics for Do-It-Yourself Artists

www.bob-baker.com/buzz/encore-music.html

19 Cash Flow Strategies for Songwriters, Musicians and Bands

www.bob-baker.com/buzz/cash-flow-money-strategies-musicians-bands/

The DIY Career Manifesto: The Unconventional Guide to Turning Your Talents and Know-How Into a Profitable Business

www.fulltimeauthor.com/diy-career-manifesto/

Branding Yourself Online: 10 Steps to Creating a Potent Personal Brand Identity on the Internet

www.fulltimeauthor.com/branding-yourself-online-bob-baker/

Unleash the Artist Within: Four Weeks to Transforming Your Creative Talents into More Recognition, More Profit and More Fun

www.bob-baker.com/buzz/unleash-the-artist-within/

See all of Bob's books on Amazon.com

www.bob-baker.com/books-on-amazon.html

See all of Bob's courses on Udemy

www.bob-baker.com/buzz/online-music-courses/

www.udemy.com/u/bobbaker/

55 Ways to Promote & Sell Your Book on the Internet

www.fulltimeauthor.com/55-ways-promote-sell-book-internet/

The Guerrilla Guide to Book Marketing: Laying the Foundation for Indie Author Success

www.fulltimeauthor.com/guerrilla-guide-to-book-marketing/

Book Marketing Online: The Guerrilla Guide to Building Your Author Platform

www.fulltimeauthor.com/book-marketing-online-author-platform/

Mega Book Publicity: 5 Steps to Getting Free Media Exposure for Your Books

www.fulltimeauthor.com/book-publicity-media-exposure/

For more of Bob's music marketing tips and tools, visit

www.TheBuzzFactor.com

You'll also find Bob on ...

www.Twitter.com/MrBuzzFactor

www.Facebook.com/BobBakerFanPage

www.YouTube.com/MrBuzzFactor

www.Linkedin.com/in/buzzfactor

www.Instagram.com/mrbuzzfactor

Want to publish (or promote) your own book?

www.FullTimeAuthor.com

Want to hear some of Bob's original music?

www.SoulMassageMusic.com

Finally, to see some of Bob's artwork (yes, he's a visual artist too)

www.PopRockArtStudio.com

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It is not the purpose of this book to cover the full range of information that is otherwise available on this topic, but instead to complement, amplify, and supplement other texts. You are urged to read all available material and tailor the information to your individual needs.

Every effort has been made to make this book as accurate as possible. However, there may be mistakes, and with all the rapid changes online in particular, some details may be inaccurate by the time you read this. Therefore, this text should be used only as a general guide and not as the ultimate source of information on the topic.

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