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# Bob Baker's *The Buzz Factor*

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Free Music Marketing Tips from TheBuzzFactor.com

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## Second Time's a Charm — The Magic of Follow-Up

So ... Do you follow through on your marketing efforts? Before you give me a knee-jerk "Yes" answer, really think about it. Honestly.

When you send a press kit, leave a voice mail message or send an e-mail to a media person, do you contact that person again if you don't get a response within a few days? What about a booking agent, club owner or program director?

Do you equate the silence you get after a single attempt to reach someone as a big fat "No" -- and then curse the world because no one seems to give a rat's buttocks about you?

Don't stress, just pick up the phone or fire off an e-mail ... again. You may be surprised by the progress you make.

Case in point: I recently came up with an idea to get press exposure for independent music by taking advantage of the popularity of *American Idol*. I decided to use a controversial angle and wrote a press release with the headline "What's Wrong with *American Idol*?"

So I sent e-mails pitching this topic to a few local St. Louis media people. The immediate response to my well-thought-out plans: zilch. Not one replied.

Sure, I was hoping the idea was so clever and timely that people would flock to interview me ... but it didn't happen. I could have sulked and given up. Instead, I sent follow-up e-mails to all of them.

Within a few hours, the first reply came from a radio talk show host. "Sorry, but I'm gonna pass for now." Disappointing, but at least I got a response.

Later that day, a second reply came from a radio news show producer. He was also sorry, but in a different way: "Sorry I didn't reply sooner. I like this idea a lot. Can you do a five-minute phone interview this Sunday?" Now I was getting somewhere.

Then I really hit the follow-up jackpot. After a TV reporter for the CBS affiliate here read my second e-mail more closely, he loved the idea. I appeared on his weekend news show during prime time ... and a few days later was a guest on his new morning radio show to talk about *American Idol* and my message of artist empowerment.

All this because I took the time to follow up. And this was only the beginning of my little media campaign.

The thing is, most indie music promoters don't connect a second or third time with people they try to reach. To self-defeating promoters, a lack of response must mean a lack of interest — that the artist or story idea isn't worthy. But that isn't always the case.

People are busy. They may be interested in your proposal but get sidetracked and forget about you. Not to worry. A friendly reminder note can be just the thing to reawaken their intentions to get back to you. Or it can be the trigger that inspires them to more seriously consider your idea and make a decision on it.

The difference between success and failure can often be measured in mere inches.

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Following up is just one way you can set yourself apart and make people wonder how you got so lucky to enjoy all the exposure that seems to naturally come your way.

*"We sold three stacks of CDs in 10 minutes! So we made three more piles and sold them in 10 minutes too. Before we knew it, there was a small crowd around the table. Just the thought of three CDs for \$30 sounded too good to pass up."*

Bob Baker is the author of *Guerrilla Music Marketing Handbook, Unleash the Artist Within and Branding Yourself Online*. He also publishes *The Buzz Factor*, a web site and e-zine that deliver marketing tips and self-promotion ideas to music people of all kinds.

Get your FREE subscription to Bob's e-zine at [TheBuzzFactor.com](http://TheBuzzFactor.com)

Now get out there and promote yourself!  
*Then follow up and do it again!*

## Boost Your CD Sales Without Lowering Your Price

Here's a great tip from Mike Barry, an indie musician in New Zealand who plays in the three-piece rock band Fourth Member ([www.fourthmember.com](http://www.fourthmember.com)).

"We were playing a festival recently and had our CDs at the merchandise table along with two other bands," Mike writes, "but none of us were selling any." All three bands had their CDs on sale for \$10 each. "Since none of us was selling any, I made three piles of CDs and made a sign that read 'Festival Special! 3 CDs for \$30.'"

The result? "We sold all three piles in 10 minutes! So we made three more piles and sold them in 10 minutes too. Before we knew it, there was a small crowd around the table. Just the thought of three CDs for \$30 sounded too good to pass up. But what's funny is, that is how much it would have cost if the fans bought one off each of us to start with. Amazing!"

It is amazing how the human mind works. Mike's story reminds me of a lesson I learned at one of my first jobs when I was a teenager. It was a retail gig at a discount store. I remember a manager one time bragging about how he took some trinket that sold for 39 cents each and sold out of them by displaying them with a sign that announced "2 for a dollar." Yes, the store sold more of them at a higher price. Why? Because the manager

created a perception of value. Think about that ... and use this knowledge to sell more of your CDs and merchandise.

## Contact Sheet

You want names and numbers? Here's a list of contacts I know personally and feel I can recommend to my friends:

Legal help from an entertainment attorney  
**Danica Mathes**

<http://www.entertainerlaw.com>  
[d1m@bks-law.com](mailto:d1m@bks-law.com)  
(314) 863-0800

Artist management and consulting

**Kari Estrin**

<http://www.kariestrin.com>  
[kari@kariestrin.com](mailto:kari@kariestrin.com)  
(615) 262-0883

Vocal lessons in the Los Angeles area

**Steven Memel**

<http://www.stevenmemel.com>  
[steven@stevenmemel.com](mailto:steven@stevenmemel.com)  
(818) 789-0474

Web design and site hosting

**Corey Schaaf and Derek Bemis**

<http://www.cdkweb.com>  
[cjs@cdkweb.com](mailto:cjs@cdkweb.com)  
(314) 583-4202

Radio promotion

**Bryan Farrish**

<http://www.radio-media.com>  
[airplay@radio-media.com](mailto:airplay@radio-media.com)  
(818) 905-8038

Other recommended resources:

**Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts**

Multiple state listings  
<http://www.vlaa.org/resources.asp>

**CD Baby**

The #1 indie music sales site  
<http://www.cdbaby.net>