



VIDEO MAKER



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Why consider making a music promo video?

Back when I was a lad an unsigned band couldn't have dreamed of making a promo video without record company backing. The road to success started with the recording of the all important demo. Once you'd recorded that it was simply a case of running off a couple of hundred copies and sending demo tapes (or CD's if you were a posh kid) off to every record company under the sun with a nice accompanying letter with your bands bio, of course the A & R men put the tapes straight in the bin, used the CD's as beer mats, coasters or Frisbees and wiped their arses on your cover letters - they were far too busy lighting cigars with £50 notes, snorting their own body weight in marching powder and hanging out with signed bands to worry about the poor unsigned oiks. Occasionally when their paymasters noticed they hadn't signed anyone for about three years they'd randomly pick a band with the right hair cut and give them a £10 million 5 album deal and go back to devouring the Devil's dandruff.



Then in the late 20th century came along a dire threat to the A & R men's charmed existence - **the internet**. Someone somewhere had the bright idea that instead of going through the ball-ache and expense of producing bucket loads

of demos and sending them out to record companies, secure in the knowledge that all your hard work was going to be used as an ash tray, you could upload your tracks to the internet and simply send people links to your work. It was all a bit clumsy at first but before long it all got rather well organised with the likes of People Sound and a little later with Myspace. Suddenly, unsigned bands had a potential world wide audience, some of them even managed to bypass the dreaded A & R men altogether and market and sell their music online. Before long tales of Myspace signings (Lilly Allen & The Arctic Monkeys spring immediately to mind) spread like wild fire. Soon every single gig you went to concluded with the front man proclaiming "double u double u double u dot my space forward slash (name of their band)" at the end. So now we have the problem that every single band in the universe is on Myspace and so has their music on line which would be great apart from the fact that

MySpace and indeed the net in general has become absolutely saturated with so much music that its very difficult to get noticed in the white noise of a million other bands vying for attention, but more importantly, something is fundamentally changing about the way the internet is being used.

It started about two and a half years ago with YouTube and has evolved more recently with the launch of the BBC i player, which could be viewed as a significant step towards the internet eventually replacing conventional TV, but for now at least it has stepped up the internet's role as a vehicle for streaming video on a massive scale. A few short years ago how cool did it seem to listen to music over the net? Now it's not enough to simply listen to music online, the hoards of kids sitting glued to their PC right now want and expect something to watch - video on the net is king. The power of the viral video is massive with the potential of literally millions of people world wide seeing your work. Despite the internet user's demand for on line video it seems though that few independent and unsigned artists have been very off the mark to embrace its potential, maybe because its not as natural a progression as simply putting their music on the net.

One of the reasons that hoards of unsigned artists aren't rushing to produce their own videos is that professional video production is perceived as being very expensive. It certainly used to be, but with the latest generation of digital cameras and editing software, very polished professional affordable video production is at last a reality.

Light Engine Films is one of a new breed of production companies that are bridging the gap

between the high end production houses and grass roots film makers - bringing the same tools and expertise to those for whom it has been previously out of reach.

The number one rule when planning a budget promo video is keep it simple - a simple, good idea well executed is a hundred times more potent than a complex idea poorly done. Many bands have risen from obscurity thanks to a cookie and innovative video that has rivaled on the net. Light Engine Films has the expertise to bring your ideas to life and the creativity to help you build ideas for exciting videos that give you a real chance of getting noticed both on the web and on TV.

Dan Hart



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