

# **BAND TIPS: RADIO** by Jenny Huston



## **Do you accept Demos?**

A Demo is just that. A demonstration of what you can do, not a finished product. (NB **If you have a finished independent release, send it to the relevant shows and radio stations**). The idea was that a Record label heard raw talent and wanted to sign you and pay to record it with a producer and have it mixed and mastered professionally. They are not usually a finished product and therefore not usually suitable for National radio. The main failing of 'demos' is that they are not mastered and the levels can be off. Most radio station processors have compression so singles need a good mix to prevent the song sounding flat. Many established acts send in radio edits or radio mixes. They are different to the single or album track that you buy - usually much shorter so the song starts immediately and are clean of swear words.

## Do your Research

Have you checked the shows playlist (if they have one) or listened to the programme? Does your music fit in?

Do not ask if you can send a CD, just send it. Most DJ's will not respond to an email asking 'can I send you a CD' or 'let me know if you want a CD and we will send you one'. YOU want them to have it, so take the chance and send it. They are highly unlikely to solicit your material as they already have more than they can listen too and to some people soliciting material implies obligation.

Asking a DJ to check out your band on online or asking 'have you listened to our new track' on Soundcloud/MySpace/Bandcamp is a bit pointless UNLESS a DJ can download your song. Hold off on emailing a DJ until you have something they can actually play if they like it and ideally, you are ready to release it to the public.

Do NOT send music as an attachment. Send a download link. We do not want to receive numerous MP3 attachments or WAV files. Many people have limited storage space on their email/webmail and will have to delete your email. Downloads sites have become the industry standard followed by the finished CD in the post when they are ready.

## **What address do I send CDs too?**

If you are emailing a DJ from 2fm then you send post to them at RTE 2fm. The same applies for Radio Kerry. The address is available on the website, Internet and the phone book. Look for it yourself. Do you really want the first time a DJ hears your name or has direct contact with you to be a silly/SERIOUSLY lazy question? It is not worth the risk. They may only remember you for that, rather than hearing your music with fresh unbiased ears.

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### **Defensive follow-on question 'But maybe they prefer to have CDs sent to their house?'**

Do you really think a radio presenter is going to tell a complete stranger where they live? Security and the police advise against it.

### **Can you give us some feedback/advice on our demo/sing/EP?**

It is important to point out that it is NOT the job of a DJ to give feedback on music (if they do so it is out of the kindness of their heart). It IS the job of A&R men and record labels to give feedback IF they have solicited your material. Do not ask for feedback unless you are prepared for disappointment. The volume of music sent to National radio presenters is staggering. There would not be enough hours in the day to listen to everything and to give feedback. Airplay is very obvious feedback.

**Advice:** There are numerous industry bodies set up to do this – contact them. First Music Contact 'is a free information and advice resource for the popular music sector in Ireland. Funded by the Arts Council, FMC delivers a programme of useful activities for bands and musicians throughout their careers.'  
<http://www.firstmusiccontact.com/> also IMRO, IASCA, RAAP, MCPS etc.

### **What should I include in my press pack?**

We don't need or want 'press packs'. They are a left over from the 80's. We want a well-labeled CD. That means the name of the Band and the songs on the CD AND the sleeve. A White address label affixed to the CD sleeve with your information is the industry standard. Include the release date, your website, facebook/bandcamp/myspace address and have a sticker with any relevant information on it: Where you are from, when you are playing (tour dates), who you have supported/toured with and dates when the CD or download will be available etc. Give the presenter something to say about you and/or a reason for them to listen to it.

Do try and make the CD sleeve as professional as possible. If you have spent time or money on the music then give it a well-designed sleeve (people do judge a book by its cover). Do not send photographs or DVDs or spend money on expensive folders or envelopes or send pages of paper. They get recycled immediately. Radio cannot do anything with a printed photograph! You should be glad to know that we don't care if you are beautiful or totally plain. We only care what the music sounds like.

### **Interviews and Sessions**

Interviews can be a very hard sell. They can be dull and they are time consuming. It involves scheduling, preparation and editing for the presenter/producers. If you are looking to be interviewed make sure you have answered these questions BEFORE you approach radio. Why do you want to be interviewed? Do

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you have anything to say other than 'we have a new single coming out? Are you good talkers? Can you be more entertaining and engaging than your single itself? Honestly?

Begging to be interviewed is usually a waste of time unless it is a show that makes a point of regular interviews and is ALREADY playing your music. In most cases playing the song is far better PR for a band than an interview. Interviews can be very boring so many shows will not air them unless they are from someone very well known or extremely famous. A friendly intro to your song in a session is the best bet. 'Hi were ----- and this is our new single that is coming out next week that we recorded in/with -----, we hope you like it...' or something to that effect.

2fm sessions: Sessions requests and submissions should be sent to Ian Wilson in RTE 2fm. Sessions are aired on Dan Hegarty's show ([first.last@rte.ie](mailto:first.last@rte.ie))

Do approach your local station. Local radio and community radio usually have dedicated Irish shows and are often more than delighted to have bands in for chats and acoustic sessions.

### **Text and email campaigns**

Do NOT get your friends to bombard a DJ or a station with requests for your new single or EP that you have just sent out. It does not imply demand, it implies unprofessional. It often causes the opposite of the desired result.

### **Thank you is free**

Manners go a long way. Don't email DJs calling them 'bud' 'dude' 'lady' 'doll' or 'hon'. Be polite. Using your common sense and being aware of people's show times and jobs will help you in your path to airplay (i.e. don't ask a DJ who is on air Monday through Thursday if they could play your single on Saturday night). You want them to spend 4 minutes listening to your track so take 30 seconds and find out when their show is on. Show some respect and be appreciative of people's time and support. Again, Thank you is free.

I hope that these answers to FAQ will help you to save some time, money and mistakes and get your music to the right ears! Good luck with it all

Very best wishes,  
Jenny Huston

<http://2fm.rte.ie/jenny/>