

HERE'S WHAT MUSIC PUBLISHERS WANT MORE THAN A HIT SONG

MAY 15, 2017 BRENT BAXTER

Yes, music publishers want a hit song. But that's not all they want. And it's not even what they want the most. What is it they REALLY want? Well, let's just say they're on a goose chase...

Of course, publishers want to find hit songs. Albums aren't selling, so album cuts aren't bringing in enough money to keep a publisher afloat. They need songs on the radio. So hit songs ARE important. Without them, the publisher will die a slow death.

Hit songs are golden eggs, and publishers are excited to find one. However, I don't know of any hit songs that have been found by a publisher, signed to a single-song contract, pitched, cut and then run up the charts. Yeah, that's probably happened... but I can't name any. So what publishers love even more than finding hit songs are finding hit SONGWRITERS.

Hit songs may be golden eggs, but hit songwriters are the geese that lay golden eggs. Publishers' long-term success will come by finding and signing hit songwriters. They want songwriters who consistently write commercial, cut-able songs and have a hit songwriter's work ethic and mindset (or they look for writers who have the work ethic and mindset, and are on the verge of having the songs- and might have the songs with some polishing and development by the publisher).

You wanna be the goose. You want the publisher to see you as someone who can lay that golden egg again and again- not just as someone lucky enough to stumble upon a golden egg. (Or you want the publisher to see you as a baby goose- one who hasn't started laying eggs yet, but can start popping them out with some time and maturity). The goose has a career. The guy with one golden egg has a cool story to tell his buddies at work on Monday.

The goose doesn't lay one golden egg and stop. It gets to work on the next egg, then the next. The goose is a pro who keeps on keeping on- no matter what. So when you meet with a publisher, don't be afraid to show them your eggs. (Okay, that sounded weird.) But always keep the long game in mind. Conduct yourself professionally. Be ready with an answer to, "what else ya got?" Don't be a one-egg wonder.

Brent Baxter is a hit songwriter with cuts by Alan Jackson, Randy Travis, Lady Antebellum, Joe Nichols, Gord Bamford, Ruthie Collins, Ray Stevens, and more. He's written a top 5 hit in the US and a #1 in Canada... so far.

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