

Writing a vision statement by Bobby Borg (September 2017)

Your vision statement is the first step in the marketing process: when you know where you want to go, it's easier to map out the directions to get there.

The first step in the marketing process is writing a vision statement. It's essentially looking deep down inside and asking yourself, "Where do I want to be seven years from now?"

I'm not saying to imagine the kind of cars you want to drive or the kind of house you want to have on the French Riviera. What I'm asking is "What, specifically, is this all about?" What is reading this blog post (and watching the video below) about? What is getting up every morning to practice about? Where do you want your career in music to lead you?

When I was 12 years old, I was very sure I wanted to be a professional musician. In my mind, I imagined being a drummer in a rock band, signed to Atlantic Records, touring around the world and playing to large audiences, releasing records, and selling merch. The brand I wanted to impart onto my target audience was one where the audience felt my band's songs and lyrics spoke to their day-to-day problems and made them feel better about their lives.

All of that came true. Part of the reason why is that when you know where you want to go, it's easier to map out the directions to get there.

When creating a vision statement, the first thing you want to ask is, "What kind of company are you?" Are you a band? Are you a solo artist? Are you a DJ? Composer? Songwriter? Are you starting a recording company? You might say you want to be all of these things, which is great, but when you're writing a marketing plan, you want to be focused, so I want you to focus on one of these things.

Number two is, "What is your genre?" Answering this is difficult for a lot of artists. Are you rock? Pop? Rap? Jazz? Are you new age or world music? It's very important that you understand what you are doing and ultimately to whom you are trying to appeal. Don't worry about pigeonholing yourself – just answer, generally speaking, what genre are you inhabiting?

The next thing you need to do is define your revenue generators. The reason this is important is, any investor is going to want to know, "How are you going to generate income?" In the music industry, that's pretty simple. It'll be recordings, in a variety of configurations; merchandising; and live performance revenue. It can include licensing and song placement. Then it can be things you use to expand your product line and things you innovate.

Then it's time to define your brand and what it is you want your audience to see and experience about you. Are you about world peace? Political justice? Define the message in your music, something people can grab onto and feel part of your tribe and that you stand for something; and that by being on your team, they stand for something too.

Finally, you want to take all of these things and put them into a vision paragraph, and you want to be able to express that vision concisely and persuasively to whoever asks.

Say you're at a convention and you're in an elevator, and somebody says, "Hi, what do you do?" You should be able to answer them in the time it takes to reach their floor. This is known as an elevator pitch.

Check out the "Music Marketing for the DIY Musician: Creating & Executing a Plan of Attack on a Low Budget" video series - get the complete 2 1/2 hour workshop and companion book at www.groove3.com.

The contents of this post are © 2017 by Bobby Borg. Bobby is the author of Music Marketing For The DIY Musician, Business Basics For Musicians, and The Five Star Music Makeover (all published by Hal Leonard Books). Get these books at any fine online store in both physical or digital format. Contact Bobby at www.bobbyborg.com.

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