

How to become an “IndieHitmaker” with Bram Bessoff

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Bram Bessoff’s music industry experience started in 1995 as the drummer for **Soup**, a regional touring act from Atlanta, Georgia. After its disbandment, Bram started **SoundArt Management** to help other independent artists make the jump from indie to signed. SoundArt also focused on tour management heading the Virgin College Mega Tour for four years in a row, until he met Atlanta indie rockers State of Man with whom he soon partnered to form **Indiehitmaker**.

Words: Rachel George

The IMC: How did you get into music?

BB: It’s funny; my mother said I kicked to the beat of the music at a rock concert she attended when she was pregnant with me. I started playing the drums at a young age with my brother. I played through high school and onto college at Syracuse University. I studied advertising but I knew I wanted to

start a band. I met the neighbor upstairs and there started our band, Soup.

The IMC: What kind of music did you perform?

BB: Pop rock Indie. We released three studio albums and one double live album. We toured up for seven years up the east coast and throughout the Midwest. The band split up in 2002 after our last album didn't create much of a buzz. It's hard to keep an engine like that running without moving up the ladder of success.

We help unsigned artists sell their music profitably, increase their fan base and report their sales to the Billboard Charts, enabling artists to place on those charts.

The IMC: Where is your focus on music today?

BB: After Soup, I worked for a few tech companies and eventually started SoundArt Management, providing independent artists with guidance to find success and gain fans through live performance. My passion is live music production. It's important to convert audience members into true fans. An artist's relevance is equated to their audience development.



The IMC: So tell us about Indiehitmaker

BB: Indiehitmaker is a company I created with my partners State of Man in 2007. We help unsigned artists sell their music profitably, increase their fan base and report their sales to the Billboard Charts, enabling artists to place on those charts. Indiehitmaker is now one of the first companies to actually put unsigned artists on the billboard charts. If you own your direct pipeline to your audience, you can release music, be successful and profitable.

So many artists release music through iTunes, SoundCloud and other media outlets and receive little to no profit.

The IMC: What areas do you feel some artists are lacking in and why they are not as successful?

BB: In order to be a successful artist you have to understand, you are a business. You are an entrepreneur, your music is your product. Getting a record deal is not necessarily the best thing for an artist. Getting shelving is the worst thing that can happen to an artist other than getting dropped. Most artists don't have the negotiation skills to get the rights to their masters. They make music that the label may not want to release. We give them guidance and advice on how to do these things.

The IMC: What's your take on releasing music independently via online platforms?

BB: So many artists release music through iTunes, SoundCloud and other media outlets and receive little to no profit. You're putting your heart, soul (and money) into your music and releasing it on SoundCloud or ReverbNation, receiving little to no profit. We are saving artists nearly 30% by skipping over those outsources and allowing artist to release it themselves.

How great of an artist you will be depends on how great your music is and how much of a live performer you are.

The IMC: What is your goal for the artists you work with?

BB: I want to help artists have successful releases and make them count. Any artist can be successful as long they can answer three questions: Who am I as an artist? Who is my audience? What does my audience want to listen to? Shakila and MC Lars are two artists we helped place on the Billboard Charts for weeks as unsigned artists. Shakila held the #1 spot on Billboard World Albums for her EP Treasure for over three weeks. MC Lars hit multiple Billboard charts for his latest album The Zombie Dinosaur LP during release week.



The IMC: How can artists determine their talent?

BB: How great of an artist you will be depends on how great your music is and how much of a live performer you are. We tell artists to work with us on your own terms and become a success. Ultimately, It's your success, and anyone can have it, but why give yours away?

The IMC: How do you see the music industry changing in the future?

BB: EDM music is the "new" disco. It's changing people's lives, from the lyrics to the performances, we are recreating a legacy.

Learn more about Bram Bessofo and IndieHitmaker here: www.indiehitmaker.com