

GoPro Music Helps Keep It Live

by Paul Sharpe, Director, AFM Freelance Services Division

Concert organizers and booking agents know how critical choosing the right mix of live entertainment can be to the overall success of their festival or special event. Whether it's choosing a headliner, support acts, or a single strolling minstrel to keep the crowds entertained, their purchasing decisions are extremely important ones.

Just as many other services are now being researched and purchased via the Internet, many live musicians and entertainers have taken to the web to get their marketing message out to the masses. Likewise, several online booking services have appeared on the Internet that feature large numbers of entertainers on a single site. These innovations now make it possible for the general public to access resources once available only to professionals. One of the latest and fastest-growing sites of this kind is GoPro Music, www.gpromusic.com.

Launched by the Federation in August 2004, GoPro Music currently showcases more than 1,350 online artist/group listings, representing every possible musical style and budget range. The site currently enjoys a monthly average of 100,000 page views as a result of approximately 5,000 unique visitors. With a total AFM membership of nearly 100,000, the site promises to offer event organizers an increasingly wide range of diverse entertainment choices as more AFM musicians register with the service.

Each GoPro Music listing features an artist description/bio, up to five promo pictures, group website, e-mail contact links, as well as up to four sound files of the group's performance. Listings may be updated on a regular basis to reflect performance schedules and the latest information on the artists/groups. The site also offers extensive search functions to assist organizers in finding just the right type of live entertainment. Using an online service may greatly reduce the time and effort associated with this essential element of event planning.

For organizers that prefer to retain the value-added services of a qualified booking agent to assist them with their entertainment needs, GoPro Music also provides a convenient online directory of more than 200 AFM licensed and approved booking agents. These professional agencies are specialists in the live entertainment fields and will be pleased to offer their expertise and the diverse talents of Federation members to event planners. They are fully capable of coordinating and supplying an event's complete entertainment needs.

An additional resource unique to GoPro Music is particularly helpful: a searchable online directory of more than 250 AFM locals provides potential bookers direct access to professionals with detailed knowledge of the AFM member talent in their area. Many locals also offer in-house booking and/or referral services. An increasing number of these locals are now using data supplied by GoPro Music as the basis for their in-house efforts. An excellent example of this

technique may be viewed on Local 47's website. Go to www.promusic47.org and click on "Referral Service."

Regardless of how agents or planners arrive at their entertainment decisions, they can avoid pitfalls by seeking professional advice and always entering into a written AFM agreement with the artist/group or their authorized representatives. These agreements clearly define all necessary details of the engagement to ensure that any possible conflict will be fairly and properly addressed.

GoPro Music continues to provide a simple and convenient way for all live music consumers to locate and book the Federation's exceptionally diverse and talented musicians. As a member in good standing, you are entitled to an unlimited number of free listings on the GoPro site. Please help us to make GoPro Music the most visited and successful Internet destination for booking live music by doing the following:

(1) Register and place your listing(s) on GoPro at the following address: www.afm.org/private/gopro. You will require a valid afm.org user name and password to access this page. Be sure to carefully read the Artist Site Guide at http://www.afm.org/private/gopro/artist_help.php. NOTE: As previously mentioned, locals may also place listings on GoPro to help promote their in-house online booking/referral efforts. The Federation offers no-cost technical assistance to locals wishing to incorporate GoPro data into their websites.

(2) Place a public AFM GoPro link (www.gopromusic.com) on your group's website and ask your local to include a GoPro link on their website as well.

(3) Encourage all potential consumers of live music to use the AFM

--for more information, contact Paul Sharpe at psharpe@afm.org, or by calling 1-800-463-6333.

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