

How to Start A MUSIC BOOKING Agency 101

You have an insatiable passion for music, so how can you channel that enthusiasm into a career? Build your own music booking agency to be on the front lines of the music industry.

FIRST, KEY

by the Numbers:

\$42K - \$76K the total pay range for U.S. music booking agents

10-15% the standard commission for a music booking agent

3,996 the approximate number of booking agents employed in the U.S.

Takeaways:

- Music booking agents can make a good salary, especially with commissions
- There are a lot of booking agents out there, but not all are dedicated to the music industry
- The best music booking agencies will stay on top of the industry, be forward-thinking and master the art of negotiation



"Success in this field requires a deep understanding of the music industry, excellent negotiation skills, and the ability to foresee and capitalize on trends." - Grammy Go



What Does a Music Booking Agency Do?

- Negotiate artist fees and contracts
- Promote artists to venues
- Secure and schedule work for artists
- Oversee live show logistics
- Network with a wide range of industry professionals

"Booking agents play a vital role in building the careers of artists by connecting them with their live audiences and ensuring they get appropriate financial remuneration for their performances." - MusicCareers

WHERE TO START

When starting a booking agency, you may go at it alone or decide to hire booking agents to help carry the load. Either way, you'll need to understand the following:

- Know your market and audience and focus on your strengths
- Discover underserved areas
- Determine which artists you want to represent
- Decide how much you will charge your clients
- Create an LLC
- Check state requirements
- Invest in a music management platform



How to Find Artists

Starting off takes persistence, excellent communication skills and a willingness to see potential. Once you build a strong reputation, word of mouth becomes your best friend.

- Become a social media pro
- Be where your desired artists are---online and live events
- Get to know up-and-coming artists
- Establish relationships with promoters and venues
- Don't forget old-school methods like newspaper listings, flyers and open mic intros
- Market your agency using professionally created materials and website

5 Tips to Avoid Mistakes When Starting a Booking Agency

1. Streamline communications and scheduling using music management software
2. Create clean contracts
3. Keep an updated list of preferred venues and build relationships with them
4. Don't discount smaller gigs and discover hidden opportunities
5. Leverage automation and AI any chance you get

Sources:

Glassdoor
Music Gateway
Zippia
Musiccareers