



How Do I Get Distribution?

The biggest independent distributors are Pinnacle & Vital, with companies like Cargo, Shellshock, Southern Records (SRD), Plastichead and quite a few others just behind them. There are many "specialist genre" distributors too. It may be worth looking in directories (Showcase, Music Week Directory, Whitebook) to see what distributors similar labels use. If you cannot get access to these directories you can make an appointment to go to our Cardiff or Wrexham office and have a look through our copies. Once you've identified which ones would be good for you (and this will require some research on your part) you should then find out who the "Head of Labels" / "Head of Label Management" is. They should be able to direct you to the label manager most appropriate for your kind of music.

The label manager is the person at the distributor who looks after you; they are responsible for collating as much info about each of your releases as possible and disseminating the same to the sales teams and retailers alike. In the first instance, they will want to know that the label is going to have marketing plans and budgets in place to help them sell the record into the shops. They will probably want to see some samples of current releases, CDRs of upcoming releases, sales notes ("one sheets") and a release schedule (there is a good article on this here) for the next 6 months to a year. In terms of sending CDs, don't send too many at first - firstly because it can be a lot to take in (just send the best stuff, 3 CDs or so) and secondly, if they aren't into what you do, you've wasted a pile of good stock!

There are also many possibilities beyond the UK. One way to network with possible distributors from other territories is to go to trade fairs such as Midem (www.midem.com) and Popkomm (www.popkomm.de) with your catalogue and to speak to them. If you want any more info on using distributors outside of the UK, feel free to contact an Information Officer.

One other important means of distribution is the internet. It's relatively easy to set up a site from which people can buy CDs and pay by Pay Pal or something similar immediately. Don't forget that you still have to make sure people know the site is there in the first place - directories, webrings and forums can help with this, more about this here. Again, if you want more info on eCommerce, feel free to contact an Information Officer .