



Promo Kits

Introduction

A promo kit is a concise yet comprehensive package that showcases your artistic accomplishments. This handout will walk you through the different components of a promo kit with samples to guide your work. You will encounter several terms—often used interchangeably—that refer to an artist promo kit. There are four common formats, each with subtle differences:

1. *Promo kit*: a package of promotional material that artists assemble to send to concert presenters, club managers, and festival curators to book performances.
2. *Press kit*: is almost identical in format, but includes a press release with information about an upcoming performance or album release, with the goal of attracting coverage.
3. *Electronic Press Kit (EPK)*: is an electronic version of your promo kit that lives on your website, in the form of a PDF download or a unique subpage. The material included in your EPK will be used by presenters and collaborators to promote your upcoming engagements or by members of the press to supplement their coverage.
4. *One Sheet*: is a condensed version of your promo kit, formatted to fit on one page. A one sheet should include basic information, a press quote, photo and links for more information.

Basic Contents of the Promo Kit

- **Biography.** Written in the third person, this is a prose version of your most impressive credentials: where and with whom you have studied, performance experience of distinction, and competitions, scholarships, or awards you have won. (See our handout “Tips on Bio Writing” for step-by-step assistance.)
- **Repertoire List** of solo and/or chamber works. List works alphabetically by the composer’s last name, with complete and correct titles. Only include complete works you have performed or studied (no single movements). Singers may want to have a category called “Roles Studied,” organized by major headings such as Art Songs, Oratorio, Opera, etc. Instrumentalists should not include orchestral works, but you may use separate sheets for solo repertoire and chamber music. Composers should list original works and arrangements (with credit to the original composer).
- **Publicity Photos** of you or your ensemble. Invest in a good photographer—ask your colleagues for recommendations and create a folder with press photos that appeal to you for inspiration. Be sure to check whether your photographer requires a photo credit, and if so, make sure to include it in all of your materials.
- **Recordings.** Include both excerpts of pieces that start immediately with the most effective part of the piece, as well as full compositions that showcase the scope of your performance or composition. In either case, label them very clearly including your name, piece or album title, composer, date and place of performance. Make sure they are available for download, and/or easy streaming online (check across multiple browsers to make sure it runs smoothly on Internet Explorer, Firefox, Chrome, Safari, etc). If you need to send a physical CD, don’t forget to include

your name and contact information both on the CD case, and the CD itself. It's very likely that the two will get separated, and the last thing you want is a nameless CD with great music and no way to identify the artist.

- **Press** you have received. Include any reviews, articles, and published interviews. If they are long, choose the best parts, scan them, and arrange them in an easy to read manner. You can create a one-sheet with the most impressive quotes, or create a "paste-up" of an entire article (include the logo/masthead of the publication and lay-out the text of the article below). Whatever format you select, be sure to include the name of the publication, author of the piece, and the date it was published.
- **Other relevant materials.** Include anything else that you think could convince the booker, festival, or conductor to include you in their roster of musicians. Some examples include programs from past concerts, a list of past concerts, appearances on TV and radio, as well as prospective programs for possible shows, clinics, master classes, residencies, etc.

Electronic Press Kits

Your website will likely have all the components of a promo kit, dispersed over several menus and/or pages. Even though it may feel duplicative, it's advisable to have a separate page for your electronic press kit or a link for an EPK download. Presenters or collaborators will appreciate the ability to quickly access all the information they need in one clearly labeled place. Below are a few examples of effective EPKs:

- [AB Duo](#)
- [The Breaking Winds](#)
- [The Escher Quartet](#)
- [TORQ Percussion Ensemble](#)
- [The Borromeo Quartet](#)
- [The Raya Brass Band](#)
- [Moon Hooch](#)

Promo Kit vs. Press Kit

A press kit has almost all the same content as a promo kit, but its goal is to attract press coverage for an upcoming performance or new album release. A press kit should include:

- Press release or radio announcement (see "Publicity for Musicians" for tips on how to write these)
- Bio
- High resolution photo for print or online publication
- Page of press quotes or paste-ups
- Recording
- Past concert programs or list of appearances

One Sheet

In some cases, it is useful to send a one sheet instead of a full promo or press kit. For example, if you are a wedding band looking for new clients, it may be best to send a one-sheet along with sample recordings. The couple won't need an extensive list of your performance credentials and press—they will want to see basic information about the range of music you play, photos and testimonials from happy clients. A one sheet is much more succinct than the full kit—it includes your logo and contact information, a tag line, a very short bio, your best photo, a press quote, album graphics and track listing (if promoting a new release). All of that is formatted to fit on one sheet, as the title suggests. The idea is to give the reader a good sense of your music at a glance.

Sample Repertoire List

JAMES KNABE, TRUMPETER

1 Main St. | Our Fair City, MA 02115 | 617-555-1212 | jknabe@email.com

Trumpet and Piano Repertoire

Damase, J.M.	Hymne
Enesco	Legend
Hindemith, P.	Sonata
Honegger, A.	Intrada
Kennan, K.	Sonata
Peeters, F.	Sonata

Trumpet and Organ Repertoire

Damase, J.M.	Trois Pieces Sans Paroles
De La Lande, M.R.	Suite
Hovhanness, A.	Prayer of Saint Gregory
Pinkham, D.	Psalms
Sampson, D.	The Mysteries Remain

Trumpet and Soprano Repertoire

Aldrovandini	De Torrente
Bach, J.S.	Cantata 51
Bassani, G.B.	Quel Che Dice
Conrad, L.	The Chariot
	The Path
Handel, G.F.	Eternal Source of Light Divine
	Let the Bright Seraphim (Samson)
	Revenge
	The Trumpet's Loud Clango

Sample Bio

MSC

Miki Sophia-Cloud, Violinist

1/2 Favorite Avenue, Great Town, MA 02116 | 617-555-1212 | sophia@email.com

Always on an adventure, violinist Miki-Sophia Cloud indulges her musical wanderlust with an itinerary that is constantly challenging, varied, and fresh. As a soloist, she has appeared at the Kennedy Center and Boston Symphony Hall, the Salzburg Mozarteum, and on National Public Radio. Recent performances include Barber's Violin Concerto under Maestro Peter Oundjian, Berio duets with Ani and Ida Kavafian at Lincoln Center, Bach's Concerto for Two Violins with Curtis Macomber, and a debut at the 2009 Bang on a Can Marathon in New York City. Always a passionate chamber musician, Miki was recently appointed the new violinist for the North Country Chamber Players, the first appointment of the group's "new generation" of members. Her drive to support talented young composers has led Miki to give frequent premieres and performances of new works, several of which have been written for her. Outside the purely classical realm, she also performs with the free jazz/art rock nonet "Your Bad Self" and is known to shed some bluegrass fiddle from time to time.

A graduate of Harvard College, where she earned a double degree in English Literature and Music, Miki was awarded the George Peabody Gardner fellowship upon graduation, which granted her the opportunity to study at the University for Music and Performing Arts in Vienna with Philharmonic Concertmaster Rainer Küchl. Miki completed her master's studies with Ani Kavafian at the Yale School of Music, where she won first prize in the Concerto Competition and served as a concertmaster of the Yale Philharmonia. She is currently a doctoral candidate under Miriam Fried at the New England Conservatory of Music. The lone crier residing in Cambridge, Miki happily tinkers in the kitchen whenever at home, feeding her gracious husband and friends all of her experiments

Sample One Sheet

NIR NAAMAN

“Every once in a while, an album comes along that’s so fresh, genuinely unaffected and totally lacking in pretense that its appeal is both instant and enduring. *Independence*, the debut session as a leader by Israel-born saxophonist Nir Naaman, is such an outing.”

Mark Holston – Jazziz Magazine

“Naaman, one of several fine transplanted Israeli jazz players who are currently enlivening the scene, is a no-nonsense saxophonist who displays his firm musicality and robust tone on his debut album, *Independence*.” –

The New Yorker

“For Saxophonist Nir Naaman, Jazz is a mansion with many rooms, and he sounds at home in all of them. His CD *Independence*, is a mature debut, with an assured tone all his own.” – **Tim Wilkins, WBGO Radar**

“The evolution of improvisational music takes a giant leap forward with *Independence* from Nir Naaman! Stellar!” – **Brent Black, Bop-N-Jazz**



Learn more and download *Independence* at www.nirnaaman.com

About

Praised for his “robust tone” (New Yorker) and “fresh” compositional style (Jazziz Magazine), Nir Naaman is a multifaceted Israeli Jazz saxophonist, composer and educator in New York. His debut album *Independence* (October 2014) was met with wide critical acclaim, described as “mature” (WBGO Radar), “enduring” and a “rare gem” (Jazziz Magazine). Nir has collaborated with leading artists in the US and abroad, including George Cables, Marcus Printup, Terri-Lyne Carrington and the late Eddie Marshall. A veteran of the Jazz scene in Israel, Nir has also appeared in noted festivals in Europe, Japan, and the U.S., including Ravinia and the international jazz festivals of Oviedo, Krakow, and Kobe. Nir has participated in high-profile residency programs such as Betty Carter Jazz Ahead at the Kennedy Center for the Arts and Ravinia’s Steans Music Institute. Nir holds a Bachelor of Music from Berklee College of Music, a Master of Music in Jazz Studies from SUNY Purchase and is currently pursuing his Doctorate in Jazz Performance at New England Conservatory.

Sample Press Paste-Up

music ▸ music news

The Clown Of The Orchestra Takes Its Revenge

by LAUREN SILVERMAN

September 04, 2011 12:00 PM



Listen Now

All Things Considered



5 min 50 sec

+ Playlist
+ Download
= Transcript



You might think you haven't heard the bassoon outside a concert hall before, but you have: The woodwind instrument features prominently in the theme music of *Leave It To Beaver*, represents the grandfather character in *Peter and the Wolf*, and scores Mickey Mouse's misadventure with the dancing broomsticks in *Fantasia*. Notice a trend there?

'Uh oh — things are going comically awry!' That's the way I think it is most often used in television and movies," says Eileen Reynolds, who has played the bassoon since elementary school. "When I started playing it, I started getting these really strange comments from people. My dad said it looked like a plumber had gotten drunk, because there's all this tubing and keys."

The bassoon is one of the most difficult instruments in the orchestra to play, but people just don't take it seriously. That's not surprising when you get a glimpse of the thing: It's a double-reed instrument that looks like someone turned a bong into a saxophone. The reeds are connected to the instrument by a metal mouthpiece.

"And then it's attached to almost 8 feet of wooden tubing that's been fashioned with a bend in the bottom of it, so it's folded in half and the top part sticks up," Mark Eubanks says. "It looks like a bedpost." Eubanks teaches bassoon at Lewis & Clark College. He says that, to understand how the instrument became the butt of jokes, one must look back to its birth in the 17th century.

"Bassoon playing was very bad in those days, because they had bad instruments," he says. "The wood warped. ... There probably weren't that many good bassoon players, so it probably took on the role as this quirky, nasty-sounding thing." The muffled, dark-sounding bassoon of the baroque era was so hard to play in tune that composers didn't write solos for it. But a century later, with better reeds and more keys, they began to take notice of its comic potential. Reynolds says Haydn's Symphony No. 93 and Beethoven's Sixth were some of the earliest to feature the bassoon as buffoon.

In this century, we've heard the bassoon in dopey pet-food commercials, in movie soundtracks and on sitcoms such as *Curb Your Enthusiasm* — where music supervisors often pick out the strangest bassoon sounds to make odd moments seem even more awkward. Eubanks says he is tired of the bassoon being typecast as the Rodney Dangerfield of instruments. "Why can't a bassoon play Irish music?" he asks. "Why can't a bassoon do any kind of ensemble — jazz, rock, whatever?"

So Eubanks jams out with a group of other "oonists" — that's bassoonists, contrabassoonists, tenaroonists, and so on — who call themselves the Bassoon Brothers. (One of them is a sister.) Based in Oregon, the group has released three albums with some less traditional bassoon songs — including Jimi Hendrix's "Purple Haze," featuring a bassoon with a pickup and an amp. Ben Wendel is another musician giving the bassoon a makeover. When he's not playing the sax, he's jazzing it up on the bassoon.

"There are very few bassoonists out there that deal in the world of jazz or improvising. We're the Illuminati of the jazz world or something," Wendel says, chuckling. "There's sort of a beauty of the limitations of that instrument: the fact that I actually can't do all the things I can do on the saxophone. I can't go 150 miles per hour."

The bassoon has also broken into the world of pop. Last year, a quartet of classically trained bassoonists, who call themselves The Breaking Winds, donned wigs and costumes to perform a Lady Gaga medley — the video of which quickly went viral. Even hip-hop isn't immune: In January, Kanye West bragged on Twitter about putting bassoon on a track.

Modern-day bassoonists aren't trying to change the sound of the instrument. They just want you to know that, while the bassoon can be bouncy and silly, it can also be jazzy, romantic and altogether serious.

###

necmusic.edu/em | em@necmusic.edu