



Label vs Independent.

A common question we receive from artists is “Will signing to a record label benefit my brand / music?” The truth is we can answer that question in a variety of different ways. Depending on the circumstances and the vision of the artist, the answer is almost always going to be different. In a perfect world for ‘some’ artists, signing to the label of their dreams allows them access to resources that would otherwise not be offered to them in an independent setting, as well as being the perfect fit in the development of their project. For the vast majority of up and comers, the rise of the internet and the ever growing power of social media have given artists something they have now more than ever - CONTROL.

Creative and quantitative control as an independent artist is vital when developing a brand. Having control over the frequency of singles you release, your release time frames, the process of reviewing and perfecting your music through a trusted circle, creating contextual content to flow on social media to build your project / narrative and even the access to distribution services, publicity, marketing etc. are all things you can do on your own. All it takes is a little research on your lunch break at work. Most of what is listed above is free, cheap or allows you to start thinking about music budget ie. where to spend money (another vital lesson that needs to be learnt as an indie artist). Another perk of staying independent is that you control / own 100% of your music.

“I tell young musicians, anything other than releasing music on your own is really delaying the inevitable. The sooner a musician can wrap his head around the idea that we have to practice our instrument as much as we pay attention to the business side, the more successful everyone is going to be.”

JP- Glaster from Clutch

Having all of the above reasons to both understand and action at the instant of a google search, then begs the question ‘why would I ever need a label?’ Again, the answer to that can only come from truly understanding your brand and the realistic vision of where your project sits in the industry and where you want to grow. Are you in a situation where a label can help you in an area of your release that you have previously struggled with? You might be in a tough financial position where you cannot afford to outsource on a service such as publicity. Or are you signing to a label as a tactical advantage to gain access to resources in a territory you are unfamiliar with? At the end of the day signing to a label needs to make sense to the development of a brand and stand in line with your goals.

Locking your music into a deal to help the perception of your brand or to alleviate your personal insecurities about your music / brand is a shore fire way to become unhappy about your project

in the long run. Think before you sign on that line that you are doing it for reasons that will benefit your brand. One post on your social media explaining that you have signed to x label means nothing in the grand scheme of things, as your fan base shouldn't care what way you release music, they just want you to release in the first place.