

Managers Talk About Artists

GUESTS: Bobby Bentleigh
Sally Anderson
Gregg Marsh
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Sally: [inaudible]... I think often venues are to blame too because bands are looking for stronger supports...often some recommendations which are good...it's definitely doing whatever you can and listening to what other people recommend.

Fionna: How do you deal with partners and relatives who think they're part of the band who can't keep their opinions to themselves...?

Gregg: What breaks up bands? Egos, partners and money! I...when Slammer Girl...

Bobby: ...it's that phrase which you use and that is the band is a family...and that's the way it should be treated and I've come across it many times and I think the best way of going in is to take the person aside and go, you have to give the band space and whether you take them for a coffee or you try and speak to every person they're associated with, their son, daughter, boyfriend, girlfriend in the band and just say listen, this is not right, you guys need to have your space, you need to be able after your gigs to be able to talk about it amongst yourselves. In the studio to be able to talk about what is going on without someone else coming in.

I...point out, you don't walk into a bank and stand beside...and say, give them two tens instead of a twenty and that's what you have to do with the band. Back off, give them advice as individuals but don't do it in front of the rest of the band.

Sally: I though that if you gave them little tasks to do they might leave you alone after a while. But I don't know if there's any...

Comment: I always feel sorry for the front of house guy whose got to turn up the guitarist in the mix when the girlfriend says and the drummer....

Fionna: How did you get your artists a record deal?

Steve: I was the A&R guy.

Gregg: Just hard work I think: a lot of knock backs and hard work. I don't think there was any secret. Persistence I think without bothering people.

Sally: Some of my artists came with record deals in some instances. ...of them it was lots of playing and sending out demos and doing our own releases and building up a momentum like that to gain some attention. And then eventually that did happen, we did get a record deal. Other record deals

have come by, probably by the longer you work in the music industry the more contacts you have and then I suppose it's just reputation if some of the bands you already work with have got deals then often the record company will often listen quicker to your product as well, but I think there's lots of different ways.

Bobby: In the case of the Spunk Pack, a bit like Steve, I joined a record company, signed the band, quite the record company, managed the band, sued the record company, won in court, put the company into liquidation and got the company off the liquidator on behalf of the band so the Spunk Pack got the record company. That's a fairly tedious process...that's one way of doing it.

A lot of it too has to do with knowing the individuals at the record company that you can go to, whether it's an independent record company or whether it's a multinational record company, is finding the individual that you can get to and usually it's the A&R person but it might be someone in promotions; find a fan, and work on them and get them to come out and get them to bring other people. It's essentially a people business so you can say you want to be with this company or that company but unless you've got the hit...song the companies are all be going to be fighting after it's really very much a store of the individuals you try to get. Again it's networking, if you have been to forums like this, not so much giving them records just talking to them and trying to make sure they remember your face so when you give them a call maybe they'll answer that.

Steve: The Bif Band are trying to get a deal in the UK and I'm not the A&R guy there so...that's really much as case of knowing basically nobody and being right at the start. Basically we haven't got a deal yet but we're very close and that's come about from a few people that I knew who knew the person who knew the person and I wasn't too proud to beg.

You might only ask for only one favour but it's a pretty big one, stating I'm asking for a favour, I've got no leads here can you help me and once I got a lead or a knew the A&R person was expecting something, or maybe not expecting something, but they'd see The Bif Band written on a parcel...I spent a lot of time constructing what I thought was the perfect email for each company and that took into account where they were, who they signed, what artists, why they needed us on their roster...and so on and so forth and it still wasn't a really good strike rate but we made progress on that and that I mean, and it's nothing other people won't tell you, but that experience comes from being an A&R guy or when I was doing A&R which was only briefly.

The paragraph (?) thing I probably know whether I'm going to pursue it or not...30 seconds or two minutes from the tape and it's what you can pack into that first impression that I think is really important.

Fionna: The band have just completed the artwork for the CD, t-shirts or posters and they've been printed and the lead singer decides that having his face on the t-shirt or poster is really not cool. What do you do?

Sally: I don't know what I'd do...I think it would depend on if it was in a way whoever agreed with it in the first place, I mean they obviously did so I would maybe try if I liked the artwork myself, if I thought it was good then try and make them change their mind. Otherwise I'd probably consider changing it.

Gregg: Firstly they have to approve the artwork, but let's just say they have approved the artwork and the singer has changed his mind I guess then I'd have to decide if I was going to sell those as a collector's item or whether I'd let him change his mind. It depends on what sort of act...unless he's a good looking singer...

Bobby: Look again, as exactly has been said, if the artwork has been approved or the idea of doing this design has been approved and communicated and then the lead signer...tells them its not cool, I...do that. I think the first thing I'd do is call a band meeting, 'cos it's not my money that's paid for it, it's the band's money and then bring this up with the rest of the band and say, look we just spent \$2,500 on t-shirts and posters getting done and they're about to be burnt, what do you reckon. Chances are they'll get used and then you go, next time make up your minds before we go to through all of this stuff. We'll take it on board, no...it won't happen again, this time. I mean it's not your decision. The singer in this case can say I don't want to, but it really has to be a band decision and I think that they can work it out. Unless the singer is the all powerful member of the band, but you still have to come to the fact that it's their money it's now being torn up so maybe you say to the singer, you contribute to the cost of it and see how we go from their.

Steve: I reckon that's right, exactly.

Fionna: What do you as a manager do you commission and what do you not. Do percentages vary for certain things?

Gregg: Nothing varies.

Sally: My commissions do vary sometimes. I think that it's also too because I manage the bands at different spots in their careers, so I do find that if I've got a band that's going to go to Sydney and they're not going to make any money going to Sydney and it's a promo trip then I won't take commission on the fee. I mean I certainly would make sure my costs are covered and that's it. Pretty much it's 20% commission...it does vary from artist to artist depending on their career.

Gregg: I'll add there that I have had situations where I have not taken a commission but I have put in a loan...where I've gone back to collect it at a later date.

Sally: But there are things I don't take a commission on. The recording advance, tour support, videos or any kind of money that is coming to the band that they're not effectively making money from.

Steve: No the percentages don't vary. We've got a partnership which means everything splits (?). All the profits are splits (?) all the costs are splits (?). For the first three years we were definitely were losing money and it was my money being lost and I just kept a tab and I was happy to lose that. And it wasn't even like it was an investment and one day it's going to pay off, it was just like here's a tour, let's do it 'cos it will be fun. And it was...I was advise that you keep a better note than a mental note and payday has come...because it's your money otherwise you're a patron of the manager. These days it's a partnership so it's equal profit and loss.

Bobby: I agree totally with what Sally said, there's a lot of things I won't commission: tour support, videos, recording costs, but if a record company happens to give you \$40,000 for a recording and you

spend \$30,000 on it and there's \$10,000 left over, that ten gets commissioned. Management artist relations and contracts and commissions has to be a living thing, it has to be changeable.

The circumstances change: you start off and go it's 20% of live work less agency commission less support, because every place you play at has production. And then we go out at a bigger level and we have to take production or maybe if we're going to do a radio or TV campaign around a tour in certain areas, those are costs we didn't have before so maybe I'm going to commission based on that. If things aren't going well I'd see that if there's a commission that's not payable because there's not enough money, then it's written off. It doesn't become a debt because the band haven't made it. If the band go out and blow it then it certainly calls for conversation but generally if there's not enough money to pay the commission then it doesn't happen. The bottom line for me is that I commission everything because everything that you do in the music careers you bring worth to it and I think that a lot of us as managers don't take that into account enough, that we bring value to the relationship and you should be compensated for it because it's a percentage of what the artist....

Fionna: How do you work out what to charge and tell your agent to charge for your artist's (?) performances and appearances and what do you do for free?

Steve: It depends entirely on what's...never really done corporate shows but I imagine if there was a sort of private show I'd ask for full fee, whatever that might be. If Mercury Rev were touring and they've only got \$500 a show then you take the \$500 a show, not that that was the case with Mercury Rev...whatever's on offer is what's going to get you a show.

You might say this is out fee and they might say no, well you don't really have a leg to stand on unless you're a big part of the drawer. Uni shows we tend to ask full fee and most of the...basically we promote most of our shows so we just take the door. I think those where we actually get a fee now would really be in the minority.

Gregg: I started as an agent so that helps a little bit. I guess you have to work out what you're worth. You have to be aware of some of the tricks the agents play you have to be aware of. I work out what we're worth and you have to push the agents to make sure he gets that figure. We do a lot of shows for free which we do directly ourselves, we do a lot of shows directly ourselves. Corporate shows I charge them what I normally would charge and I get more....

Bobby: Generally if you use a rule that there's three reasons to get a show. One is money...doing it because it's really good profile, a prestige show, or just because it's going to be one hell of a lot of fun and if it's all free that's a Godhead.

So you might do a charity show because you want to and it's good profile or you might be invited to do a show are fashion week where no one is going to be listening because they're all looking at one another and you're going, hey you may think this is good fore us but we want a lot of money for it because no one is going to notice us.

How you set your level you look at everyone else that is playing there of an equal draw, what money you're going to charge, whether you want to use money as an incentive by charging less to try and get

more people. You obviously look at your budget and see what your profit and loss is as that's going to help you determine what your ticket price is.

As for festivals, what do you go out and charge? Again, talking amongst other members of the manager's forum is going to be a big help but other than that you find out and say this is how much I want and they say see you later; that's a good gauge.

Sally: I can't add much more there but these days I don't think there's a lot of places offering a guarantees in live venues so the door is probably the most common and then you're just charging what the audience can bear or what they're used to paying I think. I suppose things like festivals or things like support shows I suppose you just have to weigh up what you fee, they just usually offer, and I suppose you have to weigh up whether you want to do the show are you just going to do it for money or is it going to be really good promotion or exposure...are you only going to get to play to a whole bunch of extra people that you wouldn't necessarily play to so I think that's a benefit.

Each show should be assessed on its merits and there are...those charity events which I think if the band's into then it's a great...to support a cause they believe in.

Fionna: The popularity of your artist or band is beginning to drop and there are less and less people coming to gigs. Do you do more shows and appearances, media and promotion or do you step back and take a break?

Bobby: Step back and take a break and sometimes it's five steps further to get back there. You have to look at why, I mean really sit down and work out why there are fewer people. Is it a general malaise, have you been playing an awful lot, has your record not worked, bad reviews, are the places you're going to probably a really good indicator is if the places you're going to have 100 people when you get there and 5 when you finish then you definitely have to step back and say what are we doing and what are we doing wrong.

So I think you have to look at the circumstances to see, maybe we've been around too long, maybe we've been doing too many shows, maybe we're not publicising enough. Just really work out what the reason is and then take action accordingly.

Steve: I'd certainly steer clear of promoting heavier and doing shows. If you're just starting out keep doing more shows because you're not going to lose that much if you know what I mean? 150 one week, 100 the next week, 50 the next week I wouldn't take a break I'd try somewhere else maybe and even on a larger scale I'd pull back a bit but even then look at places you haven't gone, whether it's regionals or somewhere you haven't been in a while, just try somewhere different. Change the name!

Gregg: I have to agree with that.

Sally: I agree with all of that, particularly with what Steve was saying. You really just have to assess why people aren't showing up or the crowd is becoming less. Also things too like residencies, if you are doing those things I think you need to reinvent them or have a break sometimes too and that sometimes will work. I think that it will depend on the circumstances.

Fionna: Would you have your publishing with the same company that is your record company?

Gregg: ...I think in general I'd prefer to have a different publisher so I'd rather do that. I tend to hang onto publishing for a long time before...a publisher if I've got faith in the act...

Steve: I think horses for courses. I'm sure someone is going to say, actually I went to one of these and Frank Sellout spoke and came up with some reasons for doing publishing and one of them was that if someone's going to offer you so much money that you laugh at them and they double it then you definitely do it or if you really need it then you do it and I can't remember the third one, it was something else.

The Bif Band are unpublished; we've survived this long without publishing and I've got a pretty startling example of why I say horses for courses. In order to get a British deal we can only go one album outside the GBN Record family so no one is going to pump their money into promoting The Bif Band in the UK for one album. But there's a label that's also a publisher and we do a short term deal for album and publishing for them to throw some money at it then they're a stakeholder and they get a greater return.

But as a general rule if the publisher and record company, if it was a major publisher and major record company, if you were starting out I'd steer clear.

Bobby: I'd definitely go the steer clear route. A number of reasons: if it's a smaller independent company that says hey we've got to have your publisher because we need that margin then I think you really have to look at see if the record company is really the right entity for you. If they need the publishing then maybe the recording arm isn't so strong. Look at the back end as well. If it's the same person signing the cheque ultimately for the recording and the publishing and the recording drops you after the first album and the publishing has three albums, what are they going to do, run out and try and find you another deal? Because the first thing another record company is going to say is hey you're with their publishing and they dropped you why are you trying to bring it to us now?

There's one other thing too with a major company that wants your publishing. With a record deal most of the record companies won't give you consent on third party usages, they won't give you consent on sync rights, they won't give you any digital consent rights, that's company policy. They own it they'll do what they want.

Question: So they can put it on an ad?

Bobby: Put it on an ad, in a film or a compilation record, use it for a car commercial or give it to Sanity to download for free because Sanity is going to do a major promotion for all of their product. So you have no right to stop that.

When you sign a publishing deal most publishers will give you the right to consent to any third party usages. You have to give your consent to ads, you have to give your consent to compilations, have to give your consent for use of this song in films and will possibly, in my experience always, give digital download rights. Consent not to be unreasonably withheld; you go no it's not right.

What that's given me in a couple of cases is when the record company is going to power along and say we're going to put this in this ad and you go, well you can do that you've got the right to do that but you're not going to get the song so you can't do it. Because any one of those usages, people have to get both copyright permissions, the recording and the song and if you control the publishing side you can at least force the record company to talk about what they're doing because you're not going to release the song. If the publishing's with the same entity you're going to lose that right quickly because the publishers not going to fight against the record side because they've got the same boss, whether that boss is in Melbourne, Sydney, London or New York and it really does empower you if you've got different entities.

Sally: I probably agree that I think that ideally it is better to have different recording and publishing companies however there are instances where the money is right...take it. There are things like accounting being able to if the publishing and records are different companies you are able to cross check a lot clearer and there are some safety things like that. And I think what Bobby was saying control is really good and also I think different companies then, probably more of a multinational company I think your contacts is probably bigger as well which I think is better.

Fionna: We have another little hypothetical here.

Gregg: That's a really good point that Sally raises. I've had situations in America with Slammer Girl where the record company tell you one thing and I've used the publisher to get another opinion and that was really handy just to have...publishers I think tend to be your friend in the marketplace while record companies aren't. Publishers are often there for life and can be really good to have, to know them...

Fionna: Another hypothetical. One of the members in the band writes all the songs and there's never been any discussion about the songwriting...a single is now getting airplay and is earning money. The writer feels it's theirs but the band think they have contributed. It may break up the band. How would you resolve it?

Sally: I suppose it's really difficult when it gets to that point once the song is out there and it's kind of happening and that situation should be avoided at all costs and songwriting should be worked out before the song is actually written not...out there getting airplay and it's becoming successful. That's a really difficult one.

Gregg: I think often the band member that didn't write the song has a valid case and I think there's some great formulas, if the main songwriters agree, some great formulas where you share part of the royalty with the other band members and as a manager taking commission you're talking from a totally neutral position.

I've had this conversation many times with artists, it doesn't make any difference to my income whatsoever. I'm going to get it off Billy, I'm going to get it off whoever, but I think it's great to be able to, if you can in this day and age, reward some of those other musicians because it certainly can cause problems later on. David Letterman wants you on TV in New York and the drummer says, fuck you, I'm getting out of bed and leaving my girlfriend to go to David Letterman, you're the one making all the money. So I think there are some formulas that can be put in place, just to...the band.

Steve: It's a really incredibly tricky area and I'd advise anyone looking into that really thoroughly and make all the band members really aware of all the options before you agree on something because apart from the fact they have a right to know it can cause terrible problems later on.

A couple of the things I'd add to that: I'd certainly agree with Gregg and Sally, in the case of formulas one handy device is if there is a chief songwriter and if there's other musicians in the band who play their part, or perhaps didn't necessarily create a part other than play their bass or drums, didn't actually perhaps bring the some as a whole to the band and then the band played it, I'd leave them off the registration with APRA because if they've got part of the registration and then leave the band or the band breaks up and if someone wants to cover it or it gets used for a commercial it gets incredibly messy re ownership of the song.

What I have found works really well is if the chief songwriter registers the song with APRA or the publishing records and then a formula is struck something along the lines of a percentage while you're in the band, or while you're a touring member you'll have a percentage of the royalties and that can be a really...it's so hard we haven't done it, put it that way. The band in Augies case have a very socialist attitude to those monies. They go in a fund and they go out according to be people's needs, to buy and 8 track, or rent and everything is kept tabs on the songwriter is registered with APRA as the one songwriter.

Bobby: I think that situation with the songwriter is the single biggest reason why bands break up. My experience, it's your job as manager, not so much to impose upon them but to say to the band before there's any money being earned, everything that's available to them and say to them if it's big here's what's going to happen, here's what people are going to make and go through the different income streams on songwriting: mechanical, performance, live, sync. Make sure they understand it and then there's ways of dividing all of those, as everyone has said.

I remember a situation where a band came to me and there were two main songwriters and they literally had arms around one another and went we write the songs 50/50 and that's the way it's going to be and just for the hell of it I said, that's great, so you write music and words 50/50 and they went yep. When there's a book of poetry written and they're going to use all of your words in it you're going to split that 50/50 and the body language went like this...no, no I wrote the words. Or someone says there's going to be an instrumental album and it's really quite funny.

So just point out every source of income, lyrics, music, whether it's the music on it's own can be very lucrative and you really have to inform them, it's your job as a manager found out everything and go through it with them and make sure they write it down what the split's going to be because it's only a problem when the money comes in or when they split and they have to divide it.

Fionna: **You're artist has just played a great gig to a full house but the venue owner refuses to pay because you went 10 minutes over time. What do you do?**

Gregg: I don't know if that would still happen these days. I remember in the old days, Chris... I think, of The Gap Band, took their cash register and threw it in the back of the hire car and drove down the

road and rang them from a public phone box and said, I've got your cash register, I'll come back and work this out with you, he found...

I think those things you negotiate. I can't understand why a publican would take your money for playing 10 minutes overtime unless there's a noise restriction and you're told in advance. You have to deal with those things as they come up.

Sally: I'd totally agree with Gregg, you have to deal with those things as they come up.

Bobby: It would be unusual if you went over time, it's usually if you played under time or in the circumstance of one band I managed who played too bloody loud that they will complain. If you, you just have to look at it I guess. If you've pulled a good crowd and you have a valuable entity you're in a strong position to go, look we'll never play here and again and we'll tell everyone what you've done to us. That's a pretty strong position because if they say, right wrack off, you've just...going back. So again just negotiate it through and if the person is a total jerk, where do you go, you have to deal with that on an everyday basis but usually you work out some type of payment and it's a hard one but the volume thing is the problem.

Steve: We usually get in trouble for playing too quiet. I shouldn't say we. I don't think playing over time would be so much of a concern these days although there's certainly one venue in Sydney where you have to be very careful about it and there are penalties and they're set out in advance and you're aware of them so if you go over time you go over time.

I definitely would negotiate something and as a fall back and should do the power in numbers thing, tell the agency, other managers, you know, try and use a bit of power to get them to change their attitude.

Augie did get in trouble once for playing too short at a skate bowl gig that they were not too suited too and after four songs decided that was it and just walked off and that was the end of the show and they certainly were not going to pay us the full amount. So some excellent negotiations one behalf of me went well so there.

Fionna: Okay, this is a question that's often asked. Do I need to be an accountant or should the band have their own accountant.

Gregg: Easy, the band should definitely have their own accountant.

Steve: Oh yeah.

Bobby: A band starting off can't afford their own accountant and you as a manager should have the business skills to go out and do basic bookkeeping, not accounting, bookkeeping. One of the few good things about BAS, the only decent...about BAS is it requires you to do up statements for the business on a quarterly basis.

I think if you have and you should have that separate bank account for the band and every penny goes into it, nothing goes anywhere else, every penny goes into the bank account for the band, and you

take money out to pay the bills including commission from that account. It's a fairly straight forward journal situation, you should be able to do it.

As things progress, there's merchandising, there's other things coming in, you should then get your accountant to come and sit with the band, I think that the person, in my situation just about with every artist I manage uses accountants that I use mainly because they then get to know how the business is going, they can plan, and when it's tax time they are totally free and able to take their books on an individual basis in some cases or as the band to another accountant. As long as there's that openness I don't think they need to have separate ones.

Sally: I agree the band should have their own accountants, I think that at certain levels you're going to end up, well I know I do, doing some degree of bookkeeping which I don't particularly like but I think it's better that I do it than the band does it.

One thing I think that is really important though is to keep the band up to date with the flow of money in and out so they actually know what is going on and I think there is a difference between bookkeeping and accounting but they should have their own accountant.

Gregg: Just on one thing about the accountant. When Slammer Girl first, when we first started working together I insisted that they have their own accountant and they went away and spoke to people and they came up with this very entrepreneurial accountant which I went and met and they said isn't he fantastic and I said, well if he's the guy you want to use great but I have my reservations, and anyway they lasted about three months with the guy and he'd set up some very strange entities and anyway they ended up fine but with the iron fisted bookkeeper in my keeper in my office controlling the day to day stuff.

Steve: It's important with the band help you do the books too by not leaving receipts lying all over the place and all that sort of stuff. I think band members have a responsibility as well, some of them don't always do.

Fionna: **This is another hypothetical. One of your artist's mum is a solicitor, another artist's dad is an accountant and you're entering into a management deal with the band and they want to continue using these people. What do you do?**

Steve: I've been there and I'm not there any more and I think that answers the question. I'd be found out I think in that circumstance. I think it's a very unusual business and professionals that don't deal in it need to spent a lot of time studying the ins and outs and I'm not talking about things that are untoward, I'm talking about peculiarities, and I would suspect that there would be problems occurring there and there would be problems occurring with people's parents getting very involved with business.

Having said that it would depend on the personalities and that could be wonderful, you might have very supportive professionals helping you out and that would be great. But I'd worry about that.

Bobby: I'd certainly agree with Steve, it could be a very good thing. You have a talk with them and if they're going to support you but you need to establish from the word go who's managing the band

and you're managing them and their advice is certainly taken and nothing you're going to do is going to stop them advising their son or daughter, so you might as well come to grips with that so you might as well have them come through you than through the artist so that you know what the heck's going on.

If it comes to a point where you disagree with them and they continue and you can't convince them of you're point of view, it's time to move on.

Gregg: I have trouble with that in that, what if band member A whose father is the lawyer leaves or gets kicked out of the band, there is a conflict of interest there. I like to keep things very separate and hence I have my own accountant, they artist has their own accountant, lawyers the same thing.

I have a situation with the Young Melody Band where every member had their own account. We had five different accountants but it worked really well. I had an accountant I used for all their accounts and their main business areas but they had their own separate accountants and it worked very well. everyone felt very comfortable about their relationship. They were in a position where they could afford to do that but I think you've got to be independent If it was a solo performer, maybe.

Sally: I think it seems like that maybe a difficult thing to step into but yeah it would depend on the personalities and probably professionalism. I think communication would be important and that mutual respect for each other and what they do and I suppose the definitions of each other's roles but I'd be fairly careful before going down that track.

Fionna: I really actually would like to ask you guys if you've got any questions you'd like to ask.

Question: A question to all of you, what makes you take a new artist on?

Steve: In one case I sat in a rehearsal room after the band contacted me several times and I sat there and listen to them run through their set, or would be set because they hadn't played at that stage and I just found them woeful and that was enough.

These days it would take a miracle, to be perfectly franc. For me one's enough and it's a massive commitment depending on the person and I'd be really careful about it now and that's not because it hasn't worked out fabulously but it's such a huge commitment.

I would think now more about whether I liked them or not.

Bobby: In my personal circumstances I said about two years ago that I would definitely not take on any more artists and I was actually going to ween my way out of management and then there was a circumstance where one of my producer clients produced a young artist and said you've got to manage here and I said no, no I'm getting out you're supposed to be my friend, don't do this. And then the record company called and said we'd really like you to manage the artist and I said no, and then her mum called and then said could we at least come and talk to you about who we could go to and I said that you can do any day of the week and maybe I can help find you a manager.

And truly within 48 hours of that I was out at a MMF function and was talking with a young manager and she just blew me away. She was not cynical, say a wall and recognised it was a wall and found a way over it, through it, under it. (I) loved what she was doing with the young band she was working with and she asked if she could come to the office and just sit around and mentor her for a couple of days and it struck me as a perfect opportunity that she had the passion and she was also young and this artist was a young girl, so we went into co-management and it's been an extraordinary experience. The single is just coming out and it's doing so well and so that is the sort of thing, lateral thinking sorting out what do I want to do, what do I want to take on.

There's no way I at the age I am could've managed a 20 year old girl. I would never know her dreams, her fantasies, the ambitions her problems you know. I could deal with the business but I could never be able to deal with her on a personal basis so taking on a young manager who can do that it's worked out to be just a great three way team.

Gregg: I think first off I really love the material and I've really got to love the people. Unfortunately I can only manage people I know I can have a great relationship with and I can only manage people if I really love what they are doing. I resent often some of these guys who can just manage bands; I just can't do it, it tears me apart.

I'm in the middle of a record now and it's back to four hours sleep at night, it's...my wife went to be at 9 o'clock on Sunday night and I said I'll just do a little bit of work in the office and my office is not at home anymore...and I was up at 2 o'clock on Sunday morning you know. But I have to be really passionate about it.

Sally: For me, all the artists I've taken on it's been about the music and just as importantly about the people as well. I think it's important to have a great relationship with them. It's a lot of work and there's a lot of communication that needs to happen. Also at the moment I think you have to be careful of what you take on too. You only have so many resources and you have to make sure you can look after the band that you're working with at the moment or have the people to look after them. Definitely music and the people's what's important.

Question: You get an international, say with Steve, you sign with whoever in the UK, would you consider handing over management and would you structure it and arrange it.

Steve: Definitely and it would entirely depend on the deal and the scale taken on in that territory. If you were next cab of the rank after Britney Spears or Madonna I'd be way out of my league and I'd be the weak link I think and I'd definitely look for big experienced co-management.

If it was more of a case that the label we signed to was as niche or a boutique label and would only devote a certain amount of marketing to it and well, that's what's going to happen with us. It's not tiny but it's not a massive one so in that case we'll employ a press officer, who's an independent publicist and I'll do it from here with help and advice from friends because relocating there and taking it on for X months at a time in our experience hopefully its one or two a year or something like that.

So at this level I'm going to do it myself.

Bobby: Very much a Steve of horses or courses. If it's a live band and you find an agent in the territory and you're going fine this is going to emanate from the live work then maybe I wouldn't do it. I mean I've never taken on co-management but I've always dealt with bands...from the live area.

As Steve said, if it's an independent company there who will help you and take on some of the work because they believe in you, that's an absolute Godhead.

Very few, and you're going to find, will have the same passion for your artist as you do and if you find one as a number of people have then you're blessed because the band will benefit.

Gregg: I've seen it backfire a lot with particularly Australian managers taking on partners in America, I've seen that backfire a number of times. I think you've got to be open minded about it and if you think someone can really bring something to the table then I'd consider it but you've got to be really sure, like Bobby says, that they've got the same passion. I'd consider it but it would take a good person though to do it.

Sally: I actually work with co-managers in the UK and it's been great. I think it's really important with the Avalanches over there in the UK because those people have been on the ground. They've got to deal with the record company on a day-to-day basis, which has helped; they're definitely passionate about the band and they have a great relationship with the band and we all work together as a team, which has worked out extremely well. And they also have a really strong and good relationship with the record company in the UK and that helped and everyone worked together on lots of stuff, but I think it does depend on the level of the release as well if it is going to be a benefit to have co-management and I wouldn't think it would be worthwhile to have co-management if they weren't going to be passionate about the band anyway.

Bobby: Again, Sally is a fairly unique manager in that the faith she has in the artist and the faith they have back with the manager in the UK and that's stunning to see and if it can work that's great.

If you don't have that total faith then certainly what I'd recommend if you're going to do a co-management deal, the co-management deal is with you and not the band. so what you are doing is sharing your percentage with the overseas person. So that they're working for the band as you are; you're the band's employee. They work through you and not directly with the band in contractual terms; obviously they have to work with the band in other areas, but it should be with you because they augment what you do in that territory.

Question: First off it's about record deals and all that. I used to be in band called Blah Blah, remember them, and we got interest from a couple of record companies through airplay, which is Triple J basically. So first part of the question is, you're managing this young band and...airplay, how do you do that? The problem with the music industry...when middle men in the record label and radio station say they're not in the right format...a new act to try and circumvent that.

Bobby: That's a forum in itself and without trying to get away from it, getting airplay and the different means, whether it's locally or overseas, if you have something you have recorded obviously to get the airplay so you have other partners in it, unless it's an independently released on, as I say, it's a whole forum in itself, but it's finding a radio station, finding partners that you have, buying independent

promotion if it's in the US, if you've got a spare minimum US\$250,000 which is what it takes to get airplay, minimum just to get started in the United States. Here thankfully it doesn't take that much, we're blessed in having station like Triple J, Triple R, PBS, stations like that. It depends on the medium and sorry to be so vague on it.

Gregg: Just on your point though when you talked about one radio station not playing it because you were a certain genre of music of they perceived you to be something, you can really, and you now have this in Australia with NOVA coming to town, you can start to target yourself to a particular station. You can go, I am going to get that station and if you get that station you'll get a domino effect from there. So sometimes you go for the hardest one, or one that is going to give you a leg up, one that is perceived as being cool in the market, so get them on board, so there are a few games you can play.

Question: You're thoughts on the trend overseas for management companies to...individual managers?

Bobby: It's one of the most insidious things coming into our industry. Those major management companies are also the biggest promoters, they own the biggest venues, and they also are getting into owning, like ClearChannel, of owning the majority of the radio stations.

Question: ClearChannel Entertainment is involved with Austereo here and perhaps...Rumba's are rumoured this year.

Bobby: It's a real danger. Having more festivals is great, having more opportunities for bands to play...I might just address the MANAGA thing.

BOBBY TALKED ABOUT THE HISTORY OF THE MANAGA SITUATION VIS-À-VIS THE MMF. LOTS OF CLAPS...!

Question: I'm curious about...Triple J...you have your single ready and you're approaching various radio stations, let's use Triple J as an example, do you get the promo team from the record label to go in with the single or do you yourself go into Arnold Frolovs?

Gregg: I use everything I possibly can and I'm regularly ticked off by the record company for going direct and I regularly do and I've told them I will continue to and if you've got an opportunity, you've got a contact, you use it.

Steve: Sometimes the advantage is not going in; if you know the person hates managers going in if your record company guy has a good repour...

Sally: Yeah I'd just agree with both of them.

Bobby: I have a really hard time going into radio stations. Some people are really good at going in and dealing with that I must admit because if I go in and say, this is really great, and they say, you're kidding, my reaction is such that no band will ever get airplay so it's much better to let the professionals go in.

Question: If you're an independent band that's fine if you have a record company, but what if you don't?

Bobby: Independent publicist. There's different levels of stations too that are approachable and I mean, Florian Webster is wrapped to get things as long as they're highlighted and sent in and explained on a direct basis from independent artists or independent labels or from the independent publicist. It's the same way, Arnold is probably a little more open to someone coming in and doing lunch, there's different levels... A lot of the, Triple R, you definitely go in yourself, a lot of the stations you may have a publicist you in and if you've got someone in the band you're in or are managing, that you know he will relate to then send that person too and say, hey, I'd like to come in and leave this with you and then get a publicist to follow it up the next day. You'll not get in to see Brian Ford at Fox you know, fact is you won't, but the independent publicist will at least be able to get in and get it on their desk.

Gregg: Also the community stations...you can also do that for Rumba as well so that's very exciting that a radio station is saying we'll look at bands that are not signed. So it's 3CR and PBS but you've also got big stations looking at independent bands. You only need one to get some attention.