



# the ministry guide.

2011 music edition.

produced by  
**aldanzo**

# the ministry guide.

The 2011 Music Ministry Guide.

Produced for NACAMA Marketing.

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# Introduction

2010 feels like the year! It just has that feeling that something big is going to happen for Christian acappella music that will forever change the course of the entire industry. This industry, some would call it niche in form, has definitely come a long way from the days of badly recorded cassette tapes and poorly managed groups. Sure, there are still poorly managed groups out there, and there are certainly more than a few albums that aren't worth the cost of the packaging, but overall, things are looking a lot better. There are more groups than ever that are seeking out skilled producers for their projects, more artists are taking a direct approach to developing their ministries, and avenues like acaradio, cocgospel, and cocbn allow more music to be heard than ever. So, where do we go from here. Well, here is where strategic planning has to occur. This is the exact point where one particular artist can take the reigns, with all of the resources available to them, and make a seismic impact. With the idea of everything being organic and viral these days, all it really takes is the ability to put quality out there and see it return back a success.

## The Guide

The idea for this guide comes primarily from a curiosity concerning Christian Acappella Music. As a lifelong fan of the art form, I'd seen various artists throughout the years that I felt could be making a bigger impact if only they were able to have an actual plan to follow. The next step was me mapping out various plans that you'll find within the report, some that are nonsensical from a logistical, others that are very much set in the realm of reality, and all being born of theory rather than of practice. I personally have

not tried to execute any of the strategies in the booklet, but then, I'm not an artist. What I am, however, is a guy who has seen who proper planning and execution can take a group farther than they would ever dream of going.

Management takes a front seat in the Marketing report. In fact, it's called the Marketing Report rather than the management report because I see the two as synonymous in today's day & age. Managers are very much the marketers of groups these days, in a time where resources are continuously scarce, but ideas and ideals are in abundance. More and more we see the creativity of Christian Acappella Music artists as they continue to raise the bar and push the envelope as to what can be accomplished as an Acappella artist. Gone, hopefully, are the days of recording low quality audio and pushing it out to the buyer for premium prices.

The booklet, at least in the first edition, deals with only the congregations classified as predominately black. There are two reasons this is so. First of all, I needed a sample group that was large enough to test my strategies, as well as a group confined enough that an artist could conceivably plan an actual strategy with just the guide. Secondly, and perhaps less politically correct in nature, I've decided to write from the standpoint of which I am most aware. As I began to think of the groups I've seen over the years and the areas from which they come, I could visualize the congregations and the locales surrounding. No other set group afforded me that luxury. Perhaps though, this guide will serve as inspiration for someone else who will decide to present a varying point of entry within their own guide. Until then....

Lastly, This guide is meant to serve as a springboard to perhaps begin a renaissance in Christian Acappella Music. Of late there has been an increased awareness of, as well as an interest in, the art form through outlets like COCBN, AcaRadio, COCGospel, and others who carry the torch every day on behalf of Christian Acappella Music.

# Build your Ministry RIGHT NOW!!

## Track Your Sales

This is probably going to be the easiest of all the things to do this year, but it is also the most essential to your particular ministry. Sales tracking is important to ministry management because, when done correctly, it can provide a snapshot of the ministry at any given point. Tracking can be as simple as writing on a sheet of the paper the following:

1. Date
2. Location
3. Name of Product (in the case of multiple products)
4. Number of Products sold.
5. Price of Products
6. Net Profit

Now, the key to keeping good records is to take the data as it is collected and input it into a spreadsheet that can keep track of various sets of information. The Type of information collected will determine the scope of the research you can do in the future.

## Build an Identification System

One of the great things about your music ministry is individuality. I've personally gone to concerts where two groups can sing the same song but sound totally different. Individuality is what makes your ministry what it is, and there is nothing more important to the cause of being seen as an individual than to have an identity system.

For the local group, an identity system is essential as its components are basically the first things that people will see when looking at your brand. A standard identity sys-

tem consists of a coordinated letterhead, envelope and business card. In expanding upon this idea, you could go ahead and develop a logo to really bring home the nature of your brand.

## Develop an Internet Presence

Now, there was a time not too long ago when having a web presence meant just having a website. These days, with the emergence of social networking sites, it is not that necessary to have a top-level domain site of your own [i.e. **nacama.com**], instead, there are a number of options available so that you can have a genuine presence on the internet. Sites like **myspace**® and **facebook**™ are perfectly alright when used properly, but, with a little more research, you can find plenty of niche sites that offer ample space to host photos and other things. The Key is to put together an internet strategy for your group beforehand and don't be quick to just post a profile on every site you see. A simple plan to follow to get started is this:

- ◆ **E-Mail Address** - This can be as simple as **yourgroupname@host.com**, or for a little money, **management@yourgroupname.com**. The second can be achieved by purchasing a domain name and utilizing free services like **google apps** to host your dedicated mail. The Best thing about having your own domain name is that every member of the group can have their own personal email address pointing to **yourgroupname.com**. **Gmail.com** is probably the best for groups to use. They're free and offer basically limitless space to save your email.
- ◆ **Personal Website** - Blogs are really big these days, and actually, for groups, this is probably the best way to go. You can keep fans informed by posting photos from concerts as well as info on future concert dates, and ticket information. With a little help, you can also setup a shop to sell your products online directly from your site.

Perhaps the best thing about a blog is that most are free to host and simple to maintain. Sites like **wordpress.com** and **blogspot.com** offer free websites and for a little extra, you can have the blog point to yourgroupname.com. For those who are a little more advanced, there's **wordpress.org** and **joomla** that offer DIY solutions for groups that want to produce their own site. Whatever you choose, look at what best fits in to your overall strategy.

- ◆ **Photo Sharing** - These days, it's not good enough to just be heard, people want to see the action also. You can host all of your photos online for fans too see and comment on at various site. **Flickr** is a site that offers the ability to group photos and connect with other users. They offer a free service that allows you to post up to 200 photos, or a premium service for \$24.99 annually that allows for unlimited uploads and also the posting of short videos. Other sites for sharing photos include:
  - ◆ **SmugMug** - fee-based photo sharing site [**smugmug.com**]
  - ◆ **Flickr** - Offers free and Premium photo sharing solutions [**flickr.com**]
  - ◆ **Snapfish** - offers free image hosting and sharing [**snapfish.com**]
- ◆ **Video Hosting** - Pretty much everyone knows of Youtube™, the site that allows for posting and sharing videos, but there are many others out there that are infinitely better.
  - ◆ **Youtube** - Offers video hosting and broadcasting. Strong emphasis on video channels. [youtube.com]
  - ◆ **Vimeo** - Offers hosting of HD quality videos. [vimeo.com]

## Start A Fan Club

This Is the Year to start a fan club for all your fans. Now, it's fairly easy to dismiss the idea of having a fan club if you only think in terms of young pop star fan societies. But, the reality is that a 'fan' club is an intriguing marketing opportunity that will allow you to engage fans on a more intimate basis. Another thing to consider is that this doesn't have to be a paid fan club, no, you're simply trying to stay connected and relevant in the mind of those who follow you.

One good place to get started is at the community portal site, **ning.com**. At ning.com, you can start your very own social network, allowing members of your particular network to have their very own profile page that ties directly into your network. The good thing is that this will allow you to disseminate information across a more broad cross-section of followers.

Now, you're probably asking how this is different from just having a website. Well, while a website is a great promotional tool, they tend to be static in nature, that is to say, they don't tend to be updated as often as maybe even a conventional blog would. This creates a problem in that sites that don't generate content as often are generally unable to continue to draw fans back in after the initial visit. A social networking site, on the other hand, has the built-in feature of allowing interactivity through the creation of fans individual profiles. So, while your content may not change for a few days or weeks, or even months, the fans investment into the network will continue to bring them back to the site. Add to this the ability to host the network at a top-level domain, say, club-mygroup.com, or some other neat name, and you have the continuous stream of people who, every time they visit your site pay to you the name recognition that you've built. That's equity!

## Plan A Tour

The Last thing you should be doing this year is planning to go on tour. Touring is a time honored tradition that dates back to, well... I have no idea, and yet still, touring is something that every group should aspire to do at some point.

Now, planning a tour involves a number of factors, not the least of which is building a budget for your excursion. A lot of your planning will deal with the aspects that you can control;

### **Initial costs**

- ◆ Housing Expense
- ◆ Food Expense
- ◆ Travel Expenses - Including Gas and vehicle rental if necessary.
- ◆ Outlay for Promotional Materials - Written in the previous section was the idea of producing your own promotional materials.

# the ministry guide.

model a - revenue

## Model A - The Numbers Game

I was going through the forums at AcaNetwork and a topic piqued my interest. There was/is a discussion centering around whether there could ever be a millionaire artist originating in the church of Christ. Well, my first thought was of course, what about **Brandy**? Okay, seriously, my thought was, there is always that possibility, and then, my immediate thought led me to research [that's just what we do here].

Well, first a quick lesson in Marketing:

The first thing you're taught in business school, or even high school marketing classes for that matter is the Marketing Mix; Product, Price, Place & Promotion. Now, for the purposes of this article, we're going to just assume that all things are equal here, that being, the artist is of magnificent quality, that the overall market can bare another music artist, and that there is indeed an audience for said artist.

I previously brought up the idea of the Marketing Mix because there is an inherent lacking in one area that would prohibit the millionaire artist idea; Place. Place, that is, the proper distribution channels necessary to accommodate demand for the product being offered. Once a clear barrier for any artist outside of the industry model, now not so much. But, once again, for the purposes of this posting, I'll assume that this could be worked out.

**So, you want to be a millionaire Christian acappella music artist?** Well, let's play with some semantic ideals first. Let's assume:

1. **This entire journey is going to take place as a mechanism for one album** - We're not counting cumulative success, nor are we looking at the basis of longevity.
2. **The Million Dollars is Gross** - I think it gets confusing when we start looking at the US Tax Code, or if we look at post expense net capital functions.
3. **We're looking at a single artist** - Groups are great, but a little research will uncover the fact that in gospel music the biggest acts are solo artists who generally hire local nightly talent while touring.

There are so many that assume that the road to a million dollars is going to come by selling a million albums. **Not Gonna Happen.** The reality is that the road to building a million is going to begin with an immaculately planned strategic ground game, meaning, there is going to have to be, somewhere in your organization, an immensely talented marketing strategist working in the background along with a world-class support team.

## Album Sales

More realistic is thinking plan first. There are fifty states in the continental United states, but we're only going to work with 40 of them. Any 40, you pick. Now, in each state we're going to concentrate on selling 1000 albums which is going to give us a total sold of 40,000 albums sold. Now, if we look at the going rate in the church of Christ of \$15.00, the, let's look at the numbers:

**40,000 albums sold x \$15.00 = \$600,000.00**

Well, we're already 60% of the way there. This is all assuming that you hit your maximum amount sold in every state. In every state you would have had to have sold 1000 cd's.

**\$1,000,000 - \$600,000= \$400,000 remaining**

## Gate Revenue

Now, this is where the real work begins. Remember, we're looking to build this million with this one album campaign, so, we need to create supplemental income around the album. The most likely route is the touring route. The idea here is to be proactive and plan the concerts yourself, controlling the gate and setting your own revenue model.

For this model, we'll suppose that, of the 1000 in each state who purchased the album, around 56% end up attending the concert.

**1000 x 55.56% = 555 attendees**

Now, it doesn't matter how the 555 get broken down, be it 2, 3, or 100 concerts in each state, but, the price must be set at a constant \$15.00 rate. At this rate we'll be looking at a gate of \$8,325 in each state.

**555 attendees x \$15.00 admission= \$8325.00**

Quantify this in the 40 states and it adds up rather quickly.

**\$8325.00 (gate) x 40 states = \$330,000**

Now, if we've been good stewards and haven't been dipping into the cookie jar, you should have a substantial amount of income from album sales and touring

**\$600,000 (album sales) + \$330,000 (touring)= \$933,000.00**

## gross

Okay, so now we're at \$933,000 with a somewhat modest base (by general standards) of 40,000 fans. Let's see where we're at on the road to millionairedom [new word!]

$$\mathbf{\$1,000,000.00 - \$933,000.00 = \$67,000.00}$$

### Merchandise

With \$67,000.00 left to accumulate on the road to millionaire status, merchandise is the most viable route and also the one least sought after in the real market of Christian acappella music. Sure, every artist puts out the \$15 cd, and everyone goes out on the road, but, how many actually have extension items [souvenirs] ready for distribution? Looking back at our concert formula with 555 attendees in each state, we need only 66 of those to purchase a souvenir t-shirt at the ever modest rate of \$15.00 each.

$$\mathbf{\$15.00 \text{ T-shirt cost} \times 66 \text{ purchasers} = \$990.00}$$

We can expect to generate \$990.00 in each state we tour in, but remember, we're quantifying this by the 40 states we tour in.

$$\mathbf{\$990.00 \text{ shirt revenue} \times 40 = \$39,600.00}$$

After we add these numbers up, we are now even closer to achieving our stated goal.

$$\mathbf{\$933,000.00 \text{ gross} + \$39,600 \text{ added revenue} = \$972,600.00}$$

And then we subtract....

$$\mathbf{\$1,000,000.00 - \$972,600.00 = \$27,400}$$

\$27,400! This is where it gets kind of interesting. Why? simply put, if we were to reverse things and follow the current standard of pressing a thousand albums and selling them

at the standard rate of \$15, and if we did a concert say, every other weekend, covering costs and taking home a tad less than \$500 for each show, then this is the number we'd be looking at come years end, and in truth, this is more realistic than the million dollar number, but, since we're here to build a model, let's look at the last component.

With 27k and change left to generate, we look to the time tested tradition of the poster. I mean, when I was a kid I had nothing but Four Christian Stars posters in room, but then again, I got them for free and i generally drew on the back of them. But, for most people, the Poster is a great way to commemorate the experience

At the current industry rate, we're going to say that 18% of all concert attendees will purchase a poster, or about 100 in each state. If we set the price at a very marginally sound \$6.00, then we can expect about \$600 at each location. Once again, we're looking to quantify here, so..

**100 sold x \$6.00= \$600.00 x 40 (states)= \$24,000**

Current tally

**\$972,600.00 current gross + \$24,000= \$996,600.00**

And Furthermore, The remaining amount.//

**\$1,000,000 - \$996,600.00= \$3,400.00**

### **Money left on the table**

Well, we end with \$3,400.00 needing to be accumulated. Why haven't I build a function to gain this money? I think we should leave a little amount that would most likely be gained through appearance fees or some other function not seen here. One would

have to suggest that if you came this close to \$1 million dollars in a year, that you would probably end up finding a bevy of ways to accumulate other revenues, be it through the sale of ringtones, of through licensing or publishing, or most likely through extended album sales.

## **Conclusion**

So, what have we learned throughout this whole thing? Well, the question of whether it can happen is an astounding yes. The more realistic question is whether it would happen given the fact that it hasn't been done. The more appropriate question, even still, is whether there will be an artist who will take the time and effort to actually attempt to build a grassroots effort that would bring any legitimate amount of success?

# Worksheet 1

## Million Dollar Revenue Model - 12 month

Quantity	Price	Total	Explanation
		\$1,000,000.00	Million Dollar Year
40000	\$15.00	\$600,000.00	Album Sales
		\$400,000.00	Amount to Recover
40000	40	1000	<== Rounded to 1000 Albums Sold In Each State
1000	40	40000	<== Albums Sold
		\$15.00	<== Price of Albums
		\$600,000.00	<== Total From Albums
555	15	\$8,325.00	<== Concert Tickets In Each State, where tickets are \$15.00 each
		40	<== Quantified In Each State
		\$333,000.00	<== Total from Album Sales
		\$933,000.00	<== Gross from Albums and Touring
56%			<== Basis For Albums, 55% of Buyers purchasing tickets to concert
		\$67,000.00	<== Amount to be made
66	\$15.00	\$990.00	<== T-Shirts sold along with Albums, where t-shirts are \$15.00 each
		40	<== Quantified for 40 states
		\$39,600.00	<== Gross from Merchandising
		\$27,400.00	<== Total still to be made
12%			<== Guessed Basis for T-Shirt Sales
100	\$6.00	\$600.00	<== Posters Sold at Concerts, where posters are \$6.00 each
		40	<== Quantified for 40 states
		\$24,000.00	<== Gross from Posters
18%			<== Lower end poster sales Guess
		\$3,400.00	<== Almost there, 1 Million is nearly here

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model b - strategic planning

# Strategic Planning

While Model A dealt systematically with simply presenting the product to the public, it is necessary to look at another strategy. In model A, all we did was simply present the product to the public and let everything else figure through to success. However, in a real-world situation, there are many other factors which would need to be considered in creating the environment where we would walk away in 12 months with 1 million dollars (or, 996,600 according to our final tally), these include:

- ◆ All marketing efforts, including
  - ◆ those to advertise the release of the album,
  - ◆ the promoting of the concerts,
  - ◆ the financing of the miscellaneous products (posters, t-shirts, etc.),
- ◆ as well as,
  - ◆ the cost of production of the album,
  - ◆ the distribution of it,
  - ◆ And, the subsequent delivery of products

Now, for the purpose of our first model, all of these factors were left unaccounted for, or, more specifically, were assumed to be lumped into the 'all things even' category. But, this provides a problem when we Talk about actual marketing, because, of course, all things won't be even, and we'll have to account for every expense we incur along the way. With that understanding established, the road to \$1 million dollars in a 12 month period becomes that much harder to navigate, seeing that for any album sold and the subsequent products sold will all incur associated expenses.

In this model, we need to first do some goal-setting and then some strategic planning as well as deriving a set of objectives from the subsequent strategy.

Let's consider a few things;

1. There are four regions in the United States of America, The South, North-east, Midwest and Western .
2. In Model B, we're only going to use the 2 regions highlighted, the South

**Table 1a** - The Four regions of the United State of America

South US	Northeast US	Midwest US	Western US
Alabama	Connecticut	Illinois	Alaska
Arkansas	Maine	Indiana	Arizona
Delaware	Massachusetts	Iowa	California
Florida	New Hampshire	Kansas	Colorado
Georgia	New Jersey	Michigan	Hawaii
Kentucky	New York	Minnesota	Idaho
Louisiana	Pennsylvania	Missouri	Montana
Maryland	Rhode Island	Nebraska	Nevada
Mississippi	Vermont	North Dakota	New Mexico
North Carolina		Ohio	Oregon
Oklahoma		South Dakota	Utah
South Carolina		Wisconsin	Washington
Tennessee			Wyoming
Texas			
Virginia			
West Virginia			

and Northeast US states. Now, the first thing you'll notice is that there are only 25 states, and in the first model we built a strategy based on 40 states and the idea of selling 40,000 albums to secure 60% of our goal. This new model, however, takes into account the geographical setup of the United States of America, and remember, we're only going to look at the predominately black congregations of the church of Christ

right now. And, when we look at just those congregations, the figures look a little like this;

**Table 1b** - Numerical figures for congregations in the Southern and Northeastern Regions of the US

State	Congregations	Adherents	Attendees	Members	Avg. Adherents	Avg. Attendance	Avg. Members
Connecticut	2	520	312	355	260.00	156.00	177.50
Maine	0	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
Massachusetts	3	445	370	360	148.33	123.33	120.00
New Hampshire	0	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
New Jersey	9	1763	1299	1504	195.89	144.33	167.11
New York	16	3722	2785	3116	232.63	174.06	194.75
Pennsylvania	6	677	520	579	112.83	86.67	96.50
Rhode Island	0	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
Vermont	0	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
Alabama	118	13262	8160	10623	112.39	69.15	90.03
Arkansas	57	7479	4459	6118	131.21	78.23	107.33
Delaware	2	314	165	270	157.00	82.50	135.00
Florida	93	20089	10836	16444	216.01	116.52	176.82
Georgia	74	12243	8066	9660	165.45	109.00	130.54
Kentucky	20	2286	1626	1749	114.30	81.30	87.45
Louisiana	35	4715	2794	3599	134.71	79.83	102.83
Maryland	10	3554	2413	3067	355.40	241.30	306.70
Mississippi	89	13116	7346	9791	147.37	82.54	110.01
North Carolina	22	6273	3349	4494	285.14	152.23	204.27
Oklahoma	33	3974	2887	3168	120.42	87.48	96.00
South Carolina	29	5040	3070	3779	173.79	105.86	130.31
Tennessee	141	20778	14570	16338	147.36	103.33	115.87
Texas	231	50339	27644	39324	217.92	119.67	170.23
Virginia	7	830	652	685	118.57	93.14	97.86
West Virginia	1	45	35	30	45.00	35.00	30.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>998</b>	<b>171464</b>	<b>103358</b>	<b>135053</b>			

Now, according to Table 1b, we see

1. Of the 13,700 total congregations of the Church of Christ located stateside, there are only 91 predominately black congregations with 300 members or more.
2. There are 103,358 members attending 998 congregations in the southern and north-

eastern regions of the United States.

3. In the southern and Northeastern regions of the US, there are four states which have no predominately black congregations of the Church of Christ (Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont). **[shaded in Gray]**
4. There are 3 states with at least 100 congregations in the 2 regions studied - Alabama (118), Tennessee (141), & Texas (231).
5. There are 7 states which have fewer than 10 congregations statewide - Connecticut (2), Massachusetts (3), New Jersey (9), Pennsylvania (6), Delaware (2), Virginia (7), and West Virginia (1).

In Model A, we simply assumed that even in the 40 states there were going to be at least 1000 album buyers available to us. Now, however we need to understand a couple of things,

1. 40,000 albums sold across the 25 states would represent selling albums to 38.7% of all members in predominately black congregations in the 2 regions. A more sobering reality is that for most groups, 1000 albums sold is considered a success. So, at that standard, the average artist is selling to 00.96% of the total attendance of the congregations of the church of Christ that are predominately black. Less than 1%. Okay, that may sound like a small number, but, consider this, the top 5 selling albums in the US for 2008;

Artist	Album	Total Albums Sold
Lil Wayne	Tha Carter III	2,880,000
Coldplay	Viva La Vida or Death and All His Friends	2,150,000
Taylor Swift	Fearless	2,110,000
Kid Rock	Rock N Roll Jesus	2,000,000
AC/DC	Black Ice	1,920,000

While the albums look huge in terms of sales, now, consider this; If you look at total available buyers, currently 337 million potential buyers, well, the number looks a lot

Artist	Album	Total Albums Sold	US Population	Reach
Lil Wayne	Tha Carter III	2,880,000	337,000,000	0.8546%
Coldplay	Viva La Vida or Death and All His	2,150,000	337,000,000	0.6380%
Taylor Swift	Fearless	2,110,000	337,000,000	0.6261%
Kid Rock	Rock N Roll Jesus	2,000,000	337,000,000	0.5935%
AC/DC	Black Ice	1,920,000	337,000,000	0.5697%

like the numbers attributed to the average artist. Okay, we simply use the total population in the country, understanding that there are outer regions that won't be included in the buying class, but we simply want to prove a point, and that is that reach of really relative to the understanding.

Okay, planning. The idea is that you want to have a clear goal in mind when you embark on any venture and especially one that involves the time, money and effort that will certainly need to be invested in this project. Building a plan can be as simple as deciding that you are looking to recoup expenses and maybe have a little to purchase a sound system or new wardrobe. Well, you would first need to figure out the total expenses for the project and the look at what it would take to make up the amount, add the appropriate markup on the product and put out your product.

A more substantial goal would be to build a ground game that would insure that you would be able to move product. This would involve developing a distribution network to sell products. This would also involve looking at various ways to exploit opportunity, to manage resources, and to develop a plan to cut costs and maximize profits.

