Case Studies and Professional Guides for Composers
Compiled by the Music Entrepreneurship & Career Center, updated April 2015

THE BUSINESS OF BEING A COMPOSER

The Composer’s Guide to Doing Business
Dennis Tobenski on promotion, working with ensembles, earning passive income from sales and royalties, and more.

Collaboration and the Composer: Case Studies from the End of the 20th Century
Profiles of working composers; emphasizes the importance of collaboration and wearing multiple hats.

Commissioning Music: A Basic Guide
Geared to people interested in commissioning composers, but provides helpful information about fee structures. Published by New Music USA.

ChoralNet.org: How to Commission Music
Guidelines and discussion pertinent to composers, choral directors, and performers who commission music. Includes a commissioning agreement checklist.

Art and Democracy: The NEA, Kickstarter, and Creativity in America
Ian David Moss examines the Kickstarter phenomenon and its role in funding new music projects.

Kickstarter Budgeting and Planning
Kevin Clark offers spreadsheets & tips.

Artist Revenue Streams
Revenue streams for diverse musicians, including different types of composers. Also interviews and case studies.

Hi, I’m Adam Schoenberg
Edna Landau writes on MusicalAmerica.com about how Adam gained opportunities through networking.

Articles by David Smooke
The composer and Peabody faculty member writes broadly on NewMusicBox.org about the practice of being a professional composer.

The Entrepreneurial Symphony
Composer Jeff Nytch on the genesis, funding, and premiere of his first symphony.

GETTING YOUR MUSIC OUT THERE

Advice to Composers Just Starting Out
New-music flutist Meerenai Shim on how composers can reach out to performers. Includes a sample first-contact email.

John Mackey on Self-Publishing
The benefits and pitfalls of self-publishing.

Guide to Social Media for Composers
Deane Ogden on how to present oneself as a composer via social media outlets.
Composition Applications for Beginners
Tips for preparing materials for score calls, by Jen Wang of Wild Rumpus New Music Collective

The Future of the Recording Industry
2010 Interview in the Washington Post with Klaus Heymann, Founder of Naxos.

The Muse that Sings

Randy Gibson
Abandoned academia and went to private composition study in New York with La Monte Young, which helped him find his voice as a composer.

Typical Composition Career Options
A list with concise descriptions published by the Composition Department at the Catholic University of America.

Annie Gosfield’s Advice to Young Composers
Broadly applicable insights and examples.

Dealing With Disappointment
Composer and producer Randy Hoexter talks about handling career setbacks.

New Music Map
Interactive map shows connections among contemporary composers, grouping them into hubs based on style.

COMPETITIONS
Thoughts on Composition Contests
Composer Joseph Eidson reflects.

Hilary Hahn’s Encore Contest
Hahn talks about her contest and judging process.

Eric Whitacre on Competitions
Sage advice and helpful case examples.

Search for competitions via the MECC Job Search Page.

PRESENTING YOUR WORK PROFESSIONALLY
Score Preparation Guidelines
David Dzubay on preparing scores (e.g., never use landscape orientation).

Music Preparation Guidelines for Orchestral Music
Valuable info from the Major Orchestra Librarians Association.

More Tips for Composers
Kenneth Woods on working with orchestras and conductors.