

# WORKING WITH VOCALISTS CHEAT SHEET

## Finding a Vocalist

- Search your local independent newspaper's A&E section
- Ask other producers or musicians for intros
- Ask local studios for referrals
- Search ReverbNation, Fiverr, Upwork, or AirGigs
- Solicit on social media; ask friends to share the post

## Vocalist Considerations

- Do they have any prior stage or studio experience?
- Do they have their own setup for recording a first take?
- Do they have good mic technique?
- Does their sound translate to your genre and style?
- Are they professional, punctual, and easy to work with?
- Do they trash talk a bunch

## Set Expectations

- Payment information
- Define singer deliverables
- Define producer deliverables
- Songwriting split
- How will the singer be credited?
- Vocalist financial arrangement:
  - Work-for-hire, royalty sharing, or hybrid
- Artist fee if work-for-hire
- Studio fee if applicable
- When payment is due: up front or upon completion
- Agree upon deadlines and a schedule
- Technical requirements:
  - File format, bit depth, sample rate, headroom
- How will files be shared and transferred?

## Prepare for Recording

- Provide the tempo, key signature, and chord charts
- Provide a lead sheet with melody and lyrics
- Complete a skeleton Instrumental arrangement
- Record a scratch vocal of the song, or at least provide
- Provide reference tracks to the singer
- Schedule the session
- Optionally schedule a backup or rework session

## Recording

- You don't need a professional studio
- You don't need an expensive microphone
- Reschedules might happen; be professional and gracious about it
- Have bottled water available for the singer in case they don't bring their own or the studio doesn't have any
- Offer frequent breaks
- Beware of headphone bleed
- Give the artist space to do their thing, but... also don't be shy about giving feedback
- Focus on the positives while giving any constructive feedback
- Promptly pay the studio and/or vocalist
- Acquire all files from the studio and/or vocalist

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or comments:

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