

## CHAPTER FOUR

## MARKETING YOURSELF AS A TEACHER

from

**Making Money Teaching Music**

By David R. Newsam and Barbara Sprague Newsam

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**W**hether you've decided to teach in a store, in a studio or in your home, you need to find students who are eager to be taught. For some teaching musicians, a first contact happens fairly naturally when a younger or less experienced player asks, "Do you give lessons?" You want to be ready for this question with an emphatic *yes*, whether this is your first student or the latest to be added to your waiting list. The key is to tap all the right places and techniques to elicit students and to keep on tapping until you have a full schedule and a waiting list.

The single most important aspect of increasing your ability to find (and keep) students is to become as visible as possible in the music area of your community. (There is a hidden or not-so-hidden music culture within every community. It is just a matter of accessing it successfully.) Of course, this single aspect takes on many angles and works differently from person to person and from community to community. But regardless of your approach or your goals, you must get your name out to the public. It is essential that when your name comes up in conversation people say, "Oh, I've heard of her," or "I hear he's a terrific teacher."

No matter how insignificant each gesture may seem at the moment, every hand you shake, every business card you exchange, every concert you perform increases your marketability as a teaching professional.

### LOCAL MUSIC STORES: THE MEETING PLACE

In addition to its obvious function as a place to check out new equipment and purchase your musical supplies, the local music store can also become an important networking place. Here you may meet the area music educators purchasing instruments or music for their band programs. You may run into the leader of the area's heavy metal band

dropping off copies of his latest CD for sale. You may see that sixteen-year-old blues phenomenon taping up a poster for his upcoming show. Regardless of the time of day, the music store is often the hub of activity and the place to begin networking in your musical community. If there are several local music stores in your area, your first order of business is to stake them out to find out where the real action is. You may have to access all of them for different purposes.

### Finding Students in a Store or Studio

In chapter one we discussed giving lessons in a music store. If the local store doesn't offer lessons or have an arrangement with a studio, working in the store may give you the opportunity to offer your teaching talents to the store's clientele. While making the sale of that new five-piece drum kit, you may ask the person purchasing the set if they are taking music lessons. (Tell parents that you use a progressive and *quiet* method of teaching drums and watch your students pour in.) If the purchaser does have a teacher, it gives you a sense of who is out there teaching in your area. Networking is essential, so it's wise to consider this teacher a colleague rather than "the competition." Referrals from teacher to teacher may lead to a large part of your student pool in the future.

### Using Bulletin Boards

So you don't have what it takes to sell sheet music for "The Wedding Song." Perhaps you've heard enough bad versions of "Stairway to Heaven" plunked out on neon-colored guitars for one lifetime. Then you should simply stop by the music store instead of spending forty hours a week there. You may feel that your time is better spent finding students in other ways than through the store's employment.

Stopping by the store is one way to make the contacts necessary for building your reputation and finding students, but you can't hang around long enough to meet or see everyone who comes through the doors. One way to try to reach those people you miss is to use the store's bulletin boards. An ad describing you and what you offer is one way to attract potential students you don't get to meet.

Many stores require ads to be on a 3" x 5" index card, so try to be brief but informative. You may choose to be extremely general (see Example 4-1), very specific, (see Example 4-2), or eye-catching (see Example 4-3). You can speak to the customer: "Do You Want to Play in a Band but Lack Skills?" Or, you can describe yourself: "B.I.T. Grad

## GUITAR LESSONS

- All Levels
- All Styles

In my home or yours.

All evenings:  
(203) 555-5555

Example 4-1.

### ATTENTION SHREDDERS

Guitar Lessons in All Contemporary Styles

METAL \* THRASH

PUNK \* GRUNGE

— 2-Hand Tapping — Sweep Arpeggios — Bending  
In the Style of Vinnie Moore, Paul Gilbert, Steve Vai

Contact: Shane Diamond  
(217) 555-5555

Example 4-2.

## DRIVE YOUR PARENTS INSANE

Tell Them You Want to Take  
Guitar Lessons With  
Aleckz From the Band Moat's Art  
Leave a Message at 555-5555

Example 4-3.

with Ten Years' Teaching Experience Seeks Students." If the store lets you display a flier, then these ideas can be expanded upon with more information and creativity (see page 75). Put some serious thought into what you really want and don't be afraid to advertise for it. If you want adult learners, be sure to specify that you specialize in that area.

If the music store offers private lessons, chances are they won't allow you to advertise yourself as a teacher. As we've mentioned, however, there are many other networking opportunities in the store that you can take advantage of. Additionally, the bulletin board can serve as an indirect source of student recruitment by using it to advertise any local performances or nonteaching services you can offer (studio musician, arranger, etc.).

### Making Connections With the Store Owner and Salespeople

With the tremendous number of opportunities available at and through local music stores, one of the most important connections you can make in your quest to find students is gaining the confidence of the store's owner and salespeople. Taking the time to present yourself in your best light helps build your image. Be sure to let the staff know of any events you are involved in or other skills you possess, because they may get specific requests from customers. Above all, treat these people with respect without hounding them.

While the owner may have the most contacts in the established musical community, the salespeople in the store have the most contact with musicians in the area. More important, most salespeople are often the very first contact with beginner musicians. When a person makes the decision to take up a musical instrument, the first step is usually to head to the local music store to buy or rent an instrument.

While the initial sale of an instrument is important, most good salespeople think about future sales as well. A beginner (or the paying parent) typically buys a student-size, low-budget instrument. After a period of learning, the decision to move up to a quality instrument is made. So most dedicated salespeople have a vested interest in seeing their customers succeed in the learning process. This is where the teacher-sales staff relationship can work to full advantage. New students need a good teacher to help them move to the next level of musicianship. The relationship that you develop with that salesperson can lead to many referrals for beginner students.



The salespeople can serve as a quick judge of ability when the customer is trying out a piece of equipment. The piano student who is shopping for a first synthesizer needs a tutor in MIDI, sequencing or music software. The rock player who is buying an acoustic bass for the school's jazz combo needs a good teacher in swing and improvisation. Parents buying traditional orchestral instruments appreciate a referral to a reliable and well-prepared teacher experienced at meeting the challenges of teaching younger children. Even if you teach lessons part-time, the more you can do to let these salespeople know of your abilities, both as a person and as a teacher, the more likely you are to get a referral from them for new students. Give salespeople a stack of your business cards so they can be generous in giving them out.

### **FINDING STUDENTS THROUGH YOUR LOCAL SCHOOLS**

Many children are first exposed to live music through their school. Thankfully, most states require schools to include at least minimal music education as part of the curriculum, so by the time students reach elementary school they have been exposed to music in some form or another. Making connections at all levels of your schools helps locate students to fill your teaching schedule.

In the elementary grades, often it is the parents who want their children to take up an instrument, so cater promotional efforts to a parent's needs. Most parents believe (and it is true) that studying music can provide enjoyment, a sense of accomplishment, self-esteem, learning and discipline. Parents like those words a lot, so be sure to use them when advertising the benefits of music lessons. As students grow into adolescence, however, they begin to form their own identities around the music they listen to and, for student musicians, the type of music they play. Many musical adolescents discover in high school that their musical ability can land them in a specific social group at school (the band, for instance) or even get them into college. You attract more students at the junior and senior high school levels by appealing to them directly. It is absolutely the kiss of death to tell a teenager what his or her parents want them to do.

### **Getting to Know Music Educators and School Administrators**

In an ideal situation, a school department or district has a general music teacher, an instrumental/band director and a choral teacher for

elementary, middle and high school levels. In addition, many schools employ adjunct faculty and guest lecturers. It goes without saying that if you are looking for students, you need to look to the schools. Meeting with and forming positive relationships with school administrators, guidance counselors and, most important, music faculty provide you with the opportunity to seek employment within the school system or use your association with these people to recruit students from the schools in your area. (For an in-depth discussion of public and private school opportunities see chapter one.)

### **Advertising in Schools**

As in the music stores, the bulletin boards of many schools (especially at the college level) are a meeting place for the exchange of information, products and services. Using bulletin boards in a school allows you to reach out to a population that may not make it into the music stores, since many schools provide instruments and supplies to their students. Your ad could be the motivating factor for a student who has been considering lessons but has been unable to make a definite decision to begin playing. Flashy, eye-catching and humorous ads are just the thing for school bulletin boards where you want to attract a student audience. Obviously, your ad should look a little different if you are running it in the PTA's newsletter. The music department in the school may have its own bulletin board that would be a high priority for any ads you post.

Some junior high and most high schools have a school newspaper and a yearbook that take advertising. Consider purchasing an ad in the newspaper or yearbook to promote your teaching business.

Many school groups and organizations (both student and parent) have newsletters or run special events with programs that sell advertising space. Check with the music faculty about concerts, musicals or fund-raising activities where you could buy an ad in the program. Not only are these ad opportunities generally very affordable, they increase your visibility and indicate your support of school music programs, a feeling you want to foster.

On page 74 are some sample ads that may work well in schools.

### **CREATING AND USING EFFECTIVE FLIERS**

Music stores, universities and schools are obvious places to reach an audience of prospective students by using ads, posters, fliers and brochures. However, often the places that are not so obvious yield the

Woodwinds

**Alvin Bailey**  
private instruction

ALL LEVELS  
ALL STYLES

Los Angeles  
(818) 555-5555

**Best of Luck  
to the  
Class of '95**

Example 4-4. Yearbook Ad

Woodwinds

**Alvin Bailey**  
private instruction

ALL LEVELS  
ALL STYLES

Los Angeles  
(818) 555-5555

- Tutor for all concert/jazz band music
- Specializing in theory/improvisation
- College audition preparation
- Day/evening/weekend lessons available
- Affordable rates

Example 4-5. School Newspaper Ad

most surprising returns. We have found amazing results in the most unlikely locations.

### Public Bulletin Boards

Try to place your fliers in locations with a great deal of public traffic. One place that often has a bulletin board for public use is the local Laundromat. Everyone has to wash their clothes, and in a big city so many people rent that few have their own washer and dryer. We have received many responses from ads placed in Laundromats and similar public places. Bus stations or public transit stops, libraries, banks, credit unions, shopping malls and supermarkets are places traversed by hundreds of people each day. In trying to reach a specific market you may want to look for places near schools, concert halls and conservatories. Some small clubs that feature music have bulletin boards announcing upcoming events. Especially in a smaller establishment, when you are hanging your flier take the time to chat with the person on duty. Don't slink in and out without a word, since this person may become an important referral source.

A well-done flier campaign can really work. Recently we addressed a classroom full of music students who were interested in a career as music instructors. The subject of advertising came up, and the students were discussing the topic of fliers. I said I didn't know who Jim Smith was but I knew he was a "unique music teacher." The class responded with laughter because it was a line from Jim's flier and everyone in the class had seen the flier at one time or another. He had them posted everywhere. There may be a point of overexposure, but if you're trying to build a full load of private students, it's a long way before you reach that point.

### Advertise to the Right People

Your fliers must include detailed facts about you and what you have to offer prospective students. Include a phone number where you can be reached. You may want to have tear-off sheets that include your name and phone number (see Example 4-6). Include "music lessons" or something similar so if the little slip of paper sits in the person's wallet for two months they'll know what the number is for and remember to call you. (Also this helps avoid suspicious looks from spouse or significant other when a mysterious name and phone number falls from a potential student's shirt pocket.) Include day and evening phone numbers if you work and can receive calls without affecting your job.



# Robert Wolfe

## A Piano Teacher Who Makes a Difference

- Bachelor's in Music Performance, University of California
- Ten years' teaching experience
- Extensive performing career including performances with the Wellesley Symphony, Boston Opera Company
- Master classes with Claude Bolling and Andre Previn
- Reasonable rates
- Group and family discounts available
- Certified educator
- First lesson free
- References available upon request

Call Evenings @ (999) 555-5555

Robert Wolfe (999)	Robert Wolfe (999)	Robert Wolfe (999)	Robert Wolfe (999)	Robert Wolfe (999)	Robert Wolfe (999)	Robert Wolfe (999)	Robert Wolfe (999)
555-5555	555-5555	555-5555	555-5555	555-5555	555-5555	555-5555	555-5555
Piano Lessons	Piano Lessons	Piano Lessons	Piano Lessons	Piano Lessons	Piano Lessons	Piano Lessons	Piano Lessons

Example 4-6. Flier with Tear-Off Sheets

*Do not* include a home address in your ads. You may design a poster that details information about your extensive knowledge of MIDI, computer technology and electronic keyboards. Then you include a home phone, work phone and your home address. To a professional thief, your ad reads like this: "Tons of expensive equipment available. Stop by during daytime hours when I am at work. Help yourself." If you teach at home you eventually give directions to your home to any new student. But by that time you have talked to the student and/or the parents and can make a better judgment as to the sincerity of the individual and whether or not you are being set up.

Bumper stickers are another form of displaying your interest in music or the nature of your profession, but consider them carefully. "I've Got SAX Appeal" might get a laugh and let people know of your musical interests. Displaying a sticker in your rear window from New York Conservatory of Music will undoubtedly elicit a wave from a fellow "alum." Unfortunately, you may reach the wrong audience with your message. Having a "Kiss a Musician" bumper sticker on the back of your van, which is weighted down with equipment, may be a clear invitation to thieves to "rip off a musician" instead. Even if your van is empty (when you're performing, for example), really vicious types may wait until you return to rip you off up close and personal.

If you are a piano teacher who travels to students' homes then you probably aren't transporting a piano in your trunk, so it can't hurt to show off a sticker from your alma mater. However, if you're carrying around a guitar, saxophone or anything portable on your backseat or in your trunk, you don't want a bumper sticker or windshield decal to be an invitation for theft.

You can always be a bit more subtle if you still want to exhibit your craft on the highways. We once saw a vanity license plate that read EBGDAE, the tuning notes on a six-string guitar. At least that musician wanted to be robbed by someone who had a fundamental understanding of the merchandise.

### MAKING THE MOST OF LOCAL MEDIA

To really get your message to the public, take advantage of the electronic and print media. We're not suggesting you take out a sixty-second spot during halftime of the Super Bowl, but with some careful research and legwork you may be able to take advantage of some relatively inexpensive advertising or free media services that are available in your community.

## Newspapers and Magazines

Almost every community, regardless of size or location, has daily, weekly and monthly publications that reach a large section of the population. If you are in search of new students, we strongly recommend that you search out the best deal for the widest possible exposure through these publications. Most include a classified ad section listing items and services from used automobiles to chimney repair. Most classifieds have an "instruction" section that may include bartending classes, dance lessons and, most important, musical instruction. Most newspaper and magazine readers are adults, so tailor these ads to a mature population.

Daily newspapers in your area have the greatest circulation (especially the Sunday edition) but they are probably the most costly places to run an ad. We suggest running your ad more than once and checking into lower rates for repeating the ad. If you can only afford a one-time spot then you certainly want to consider the Sunday paper as your first choice. Sundays are the one time during the week when many families (especially those with school-age children) can afford the leisure time to kick back and read the newspaper. Therefore, someone is more likely to happen upon or search out your ad on a Sunday than any other day of the week and to be just relaxed enough to think they can fit a weekly music lesson into their schedule.

Since many people who buy or subscribe to a daily newspaper use the paper for a source of news and information but do not use it as commonly to search out information about services, it's often more economical and efficient to search out a different type of newspaper. Most daily newspapers are located in a big city surrounded by smaller communities and suburbs. Smaller communities often publish a weekly newspaper with more local sports, politics, community activities, etc. Since the classified sections of these papers are also geared more to the individual community, citizens of these communities are more apt to look for services in their weekly paper first, before referring to the larger daily paper. Many of the smaller papers work within a network of communities so your classified ad may also run in four or five other neighboring communities through their weekly papers. Because the cost is significantly less, you may be able to run an ad for an entire month or longer for the cost of one Sunday ad in the daily paper.

Consider running a display ad or reproduction of your business card in the local newspapers. This removes you from the classified section so you increase your visibility by placing an ad in a popular section like

the local news or sports. However, the cost is greatly increased by this move and you may miss those people who look specifically for musical instruction in the classified section.

Larger markets may have a daily newspaper *and* a monthly magazine. These magazines are usually more upscale and geared to the business community and working white-collar crowd. They sometimes offer a classified section in the back of the magazine.

Your city's chamber of commerce may also offer a directory of businesses in the community. Consider including a business ad or reproduction of your business card in this publication, designing your ad for the type of reader you expect from each market.

**VOICE LESSONS.** Caring instructor with over fifteen years' teaching experience. Accepting students of all levels. Specializing in acoustic folk styles. Low rates. References available. Call days 555-5555.

**FRUSTRATED** by go-nowhere guitar lessons? Try my innovative approach to music. Lessons designed with your goals in mind. Call now. First lesson free. 555-5555.

**Always Dream** of taking music lessons? Here's your chance. Learn piano in the comfort of your own home. Experienced teacher. New to area. Now accepting students. Specializing in beginners and children. Leave message 555-5555.

**Example 4-7. Newspaper Classified Ads That Appeal to a Variety of Readers**

## Local Cable Television

Most larger population areas have at least one local television broadcasting station. Smaller communities may have very small independent stations and a local access cable channel. While running an ad on the network or independent stations may be prohibitively expensive, there are numerous opportunities on much smaller levels through cable that you can take advantage of.

Your local cable company may run a separate station that carries printed information such as time of day, temperature, etc. It may also flash the number and address of the cable company in case you have questions. Our cable company offers a community marketplace where businesses can advertise their services. For a very affordable price an ad runs more than 130 times a week at regular intervals during the



day. Many people flip to these types of stations for a few minutes each day to find out about community goings-on.

You can also consider producing a thirty-second or sixty-second television spot to run during a local break on a sports or movie channel received by subscribers. This type of advertising is directed to the market in your specific area and can be very economical in contrast to an ad on a network station.

Local access cable television basically allows anyone in the community to put on their own programming. This affords you two possibilities. First, you might be able to gain an interview, guest spot or feature on an established program. If you are just establishing yourself as a music teacher, it may be difficult to get someone to interview or spotlight you as an expert music teacher, so you may find it necessary to feature some other aspect of your career. Maybe the station has a program featuring local artists and you can showcase special instruments or a particular style of music.

Second, if you are truly ambitious, you can use the local access channel to produce your own show. You may have to take a course in production to familiarize yourself with the workings of the television studio. Courses in video production may be offered through the station or may be available from a local university or community college. You can learn to produce any type of show you want. Perhaps you can interview area artists and musicians and feature their work on your show. If you have a band, you can produce a series of shows featuring your band with guest musicians from the area. Our station has a show produced by a dance instructor featuring a class of young children. The same format can be used for young musicians. Perhaps you can organize several student recitals or group lessons to produce as a series. This is a great way to advertise your teaching style and abilities. You can even try developing a course in musical instruction to be broadcast weekly, then use the tapes from the series as promotional and/or lesson material.

### Radio Advertising

Like television, local radio provides you many opportunities to get your name out to the public at an affordable cost. Community announcements are made on most stations, so you can publicize any performances or public events that you are presenting. Like cable television, radio may have special interest programming on which you can make a special appearance or be interviewed. For instance, if you spe-

cialize in teaching jazz trumpet, advertise your skill during their evening jazz programming.

Most college stations have programs that feature local artists. Some even have the facilities to do live broadcasts of bands. We know of many bands that have done live radio broadcast and received high quality, affordable recordings from the station. The broadcast often features interviews with the musicians, which affords you a great opportunity to promote your career as a teacher.

### Community Calendars

Although it would be ideal to have an endless supply of advertising throughout your area, financial constraints inevitably rule in the end. You may place several ads in the daily papers or on the local cable channel and invest a modest amount of business capital up front. If you gain several students from your ads then it proves a good investment. You may place your ad, however, and several weeks later have nothing but a few crank phone calls to show for it. At this point you may have to rethink your market or try *using* the media without making the initial capital investment.

Most media sources have a community bulletin board listing happenings for the week. Concerts, clinics, recitals and workshops are all things that can be included in a calendar of events. Although this doesn't directly advertise your services as a music instructor, the benefits from the publicity you receive indirectly affect your referrals greatly.

Begin to create a list of media sources that publish or broadcast events of interest in the community. Be sure to include student newspapers from the area schools. If you have access to a personal computer, you can purchase a mailing label software program. Print a sheet of mailing labels for all media sources you have compiled (see Example 4-8). Then, when you have an upcoming event, you can quickly send a press release to each media source. Be sure that each time you compose a press release you include your experience as a private music instructor and a way to contact you. If the press release is published with the information about your teaching experience, you have successfully managed to receive some very valuable publicity *and* advertising for the cost of a postage stamp. If you use this system of press releases often and have an extensive list of media sources, you may want to consider investigating the bulk mail rate available through the U.S. Postal Service (see Example 4-9).

<p>Community Calendar Coordinator          WWDD TV-50          Sunshine Lane          Anytown, USA 99999</p>
<p>Community Calendar Coordinator          Little Newspaper, Inc.          123 Elm Street          Anytown, USA 99999</p>
<p>Community Calendar Bulletin Board          Northern Cable Co.          Industrial Park Place          Anytown, USA 99999</p>
<p>Mark Starr          Arts&amp;Leisure          New London Times          2999 Main Street          Anytown, USA 99999</p>
<p>Rachel Greiner          WNL Radio          Broadcast Lane          Anytown, USA 99999</p>
<p>Community Calendar Coordinator          WELD Broadcasting          PO Box 1334          Anytown, USA 99999</p>

Example 4-8. Media Mailing List

\*\*\*\*\* PRESS RELEASE \*\*\*\*\* PRESS RELEASE \*\*\*\*\*

Local musician David Smith will perform an evening of solo piano music on Friday, June 12, at 8:00 P.M. at the Union Public Library. The public is invited to attend. Admission to the concert is free.

Mr. Smith, a Union resident, is a well-known private music instructor in the area.

For further information about Friday's concert call 555-5555.

###

Example 4-9. Press Release

### USING THE YELLOW PAGES

A one-time effort that can gain you many referrals is an ad placed in the yellow pages of your local telephone directory. It may be a comment on the power of advertising in our culture but think how often we use the yellow pages as our first source when deciding on a service.

The advantage of a yellow pages ad is the year-long exposure you receive. A chamber of commerce business directory or an issue of the town magazine is likely to be tossed in the bottom of the magazine rack or waste can, never to surface again. The yellow pages are at every prospective student's fingertips for twelve months a year. The disadvantages are that only students who are *looking* for music instruction find you and the cost of an ad in the yellow pages is quite high. To make it more affordable, most phone companies will divide the



<p><b>JANICE MARTINEZ</b></p> <hr/> <p><b>VOICE LESSONS</b></p> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Professional Opera Experience</li> <li>● Over Twenty Years of Teaching</li> <li>● Voice Training, Singing, Speech</li> <li>● Beginner Through Advanced Pupils Accepted</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">555-5555</p>	<p>Dawson, Kelvin</p> <p><b>INSTRUCTOR OF MUSIC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Modern Approach</li> <li>● All Styles</li> <li>● Guitar, Bass, Banjo, Mandolin</li> <li>● Beginner &amp; Advanced Students</li> <li>● Day/Evening Lessons</li> <li>● Low, Low Rates Available</li> <li>● Yearly Student Recitals</li> </ul> <p>12 Laurel St ..... 555-5555</p>
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Example 4-10. Yellow Pages Ads

cost of the ad and bill it as an additional cost on your monthly phone statement. Unfortunately, if your yellow pages ad proves ineffective, you must continue monthly payments until the next issue of the phone book is published and you figure out what went wrong.

### **BUSINESS CARDS: FROM DRAB TO FAB**

By now you should be getting the idea that self-promotion is the cornerstone of building an extensive base of students. Your very first investment should be in a good set of business cards. Luckily, this is a very affordable investment. It shouldn't be long before you get to the stage when you can't pass a bulletin board or shake hands with someone without reaching for a business card. Cards stay in a person's wallet or on a bulletin board indefinitely until someone needs a teacher and your name comes immediately to mind.

During any conversation in which the subject of music or music lessons arises be sure to offer your card and let the person know of your career as a music instructor. Even if the person you are speaking with has no interest in music lessons, at some point in a future conversation the subject may arise and this person can be a source for a referral. Without being pushy or rude, you can offer several cards for multiple referrals. Say "Take two, they're very small." Since business cards cost pennies apiece, you can readily afford to give them away to practically anyone.

Because you have so little space on a business card, be sparing with the information. However, don't make your card too drab because

people might connect a boring business card with an uninspired music teacher (see Example 4-11). Make sure you state what your business is because your name and phone number are of little value if the person doesn't have any information about your occupation.

The tendency usually is to go in the other direction and try to include too much information on one card. You want your card to attract someone's eye, not to give them a headache trying to figure out just what it is you do (see Example 4-12). Also, some people are legitimately suspicious of those who claim they can do a million things well. Most of us have to be content with having a specialty. If you are a Jill-of-all-trades, consider having several different business cards for the various things you do. You may want separate cards to advertise your performing and studio abilities; your arranging, composing and music copying service; and your teaching business. Besides eliminating the clutter of too many services, this allows you the option of designing cards for each specific market (see Examples 4-13, 4-14, 4-15).

There are advantages to having several different business cards but there are also disadvantages to be aware of. You have to be organized enough to keep a supply of your various cards with you at all times—a stack in your car, some at the studio or store, some in your wallet. It may be impossible to keep things straight so you hand people the correct card. Someone who wants lessons may be completely confused if they get home and look at a card offering lawn care instead. One solution to the organizational (and cost) concerns of having multiple business cards is to have one generalized business card for everything you do. Don't make it too general but use it to attract people's attention and get them interested in what you really do offer them. The business card David has used for nearly a decade is shown in Example 4-16.

Making your business card attractive and eye-catching is important. Use color background paper in most cases. Remember that certain colors and certain typefaces connote specific images. Tan or ecru card stock with fancy lettering suggests an "uppercrust air" that's good for classical players and for cards given to parents. Bold colors, such as black, white, bright red and fuschia, and block print suggest a more modern approach. White is cheaper but color is much more interesting. Consider using color print as well, perhaps black lettering with color highlighting or graphics. Adding a design, logo or photo greatly enhances the appearance of your card.

Being able to hand a professionally designed business card to a

**Jackie Steward**

**555-5555**

**GUITAR BASS DRUMS KEYBOARDS**  
\* plus a variety of additional instruments \*

**JIM MORRISEY**  
Weddings, Club Dates, Private Parties,  
Studio Work, Private and Group Instruction

Home: (999) 555-5555      Work: M-F 9-5  
(999) 555-9999

Woodwinds

**Alvin Bailey**  
performances, studio sessions

Los Angeles  
(999) 555-5555

Woodwinds

**Alvin Bailey**  
music copying, arranging, film scoring

Los Angeles  
(999) 555-5555

**Example 4-11.**  
*Too simple. Who is this person? Is she a hairdresser? Is he a race car driver? What does this person do? Where do they live? Is there an area code?*

**Example 4-12.**  
*Too busy. Is there anything this guy can't do?*

**Example 4-13.**  
*Jazzy. For musician-to-musician contacts, possible gigs.*

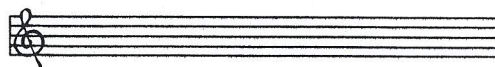
**Example 4-14.**  
*Business referrals. Networking with executives.*

Woodwinds

**Alvin Bailey**  
private instruction

ALL LEVELS      Los Angeles  
ALL STYLES      (999) 555-5555

**David Newsam**



*Guitarist et cetera*

Derry, NH  
(999) 555-5555

VOICE      PRIVATE LESSONS

**PAT TOMLIN**

~~P.O. Box 33  
CAMBRIDGE, MA  
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Stringed Instruments      Private Instruction

**DAVID NEWSAM**

(      ) \_\_\_\_\_

**Example 4-15.**  
*Classy. Inspires confidence in teaching ability.*

**Example 4-16.**  
*A general approach that highlights versatility in a simple way.*

**Example 4-17.**  
*Too many changes written in. Has this person been evicted? Time for a new card.*

**Example 4-18.**  
*For the musician on the move (or constantly moving).*



prospective student, a parent or a colleague enhances the important first impression you make. When someone wants to contact you about lessons, you don't want to have to ask the waiter for a pen and a paper napkin to write down your phone number. Your image is also greatly damaged if the card you hand out has three phone numbers scratched out and your latest written in (see Example 4-17). If you are the transient type, one option is to leave a blank space on your card so a number can be written in or typed in later (see Example 4-18). This way if you are forced into a move on short notice you don't have 450 useless business cards. You can keep a supply of a few dozen on hand and type in numbers as you go along.

### **CREATING A POSITIVE NETWORK FOR TEACHER-TO-TEACHER REFERRAL**

Of all the methods of receiving student referrals, none is more valuable and rewarding than referrals you get from your colleagues. When you are in competition for students, it's easy to fall into the trap of feeling adversarial toward other teachers, but you should resist this temptation mightily. Other teachers can eventually become your strongest allies.

Networking with fellow teachers in your community is an important public relations move. Take time to hang out at the local music store and possibly meet up with a fellow teacher. If it is someone you don't know, stick out your hand and introduce yourself. Find out something about this person and let them know something about you. If the opportunity seems right, exchange business cards. These contacts can lead to important long-term relationships that can benefit you with many future referrals. You may even consider starting a teacher organization, newsletter or networking "club" or hosting a one-time "get-to-know-each-other" event.

Many successful teachers not only have a full teaching load but also have a waiting list of those wishing to study with them as soon as an opening is available. Certain students may wish to begin lessons immediately. Beginning students usually want to jump into lessons the minute they make the decision to take up a musical instrument. Most teachers with waiting lists have several colleagues to whom they refer potential students.

As you begin to establish contacts with your colleagues you may feel a sense of competition. If you teach drums and there is only one other drum teacher in town you may feel a conflict of interest in establishing a relationship with someone who could conceivably take away some of

your business. But competition is healthy. It can push you to be more aggressive or ingenious in recruiting your students and in advertising or promoting your skills. It can also inspire you to become a better teacher. To attract students, you want to develop a method and a style that students can identify with you.

Another feeling that might restrict your networking abilities is simple inhibition. If you're embarrassed or insecure about introducing yourself to a fellow teacher, you may miss an important opportunity to develop a relationship with a colleague. Don't wait around and hope the other person will initiate the meeting! If you feel insecure, one of the easiest ways to introduce yourself is to say, "I hear great things about you. I'm really glad to finally get to meet you." Starting a relationship with a compliment always smooths the way.

While being timid may be a detriment to meeting other teachers, being overly aggressive can be a disaster. If you greet someone and start soliciting them for business before you even get their name, you will probably turn them off for good. And if they have an established network of colleagues, you may jeopardize any future contacts with them as well. Be aggressive in meeting teachers but avoid pushing people or making them feel used.

The best teacher contact may be your own former instructor. Who better to judge your abilities and character than someone who has worked with you and shaped you and your playing style in their own way? Many teachers refer work to former or current students they know to be capable, responsible individuals. Take time to contact your former teachers and let them know of your plans to begin teaching. Ask for their suggestions in developing certain methods. Share any difficulties you have encountered with new students, and share your feelings of fear or insecurity. Most teachers are very generous in sharing their knowledge and experience. We find it rewarding to refer work to former students and to see music become a more and more important part of their lives.

### **ENCOURAGING REFERRALS FROM YOUR STUDENTS**

There is clearly no better advertisement for your work as a teacher than the knowledge you have imparted to your private students. As often as performing musicians are asked, "Do you teach lessons?" performing musicians are asked, "Are you taking lessons with someone?" What better way to get the word out than for your own students



to refer their peers to you? (For a related discussion of student performances see chapter eight.)

One way to encourage referrals from your private students is to offer a bonus to anyone who refers a student to you. Print a coupon advertising a free lesson for each referral you receive. Perhaps you can have a contest in which the person referring the most students receives a month of free lessons. You can also offer musical merchandise, copies of your recordings, or anything that would encourage your students to talk to their peers about your incredible abilities as a music instructor. Remember that younger students, especially teenagers, often "hang" in musical circles. If a student is involved in music, his friends probably are too. Each of your private students can potentially provide referrals to you.

### **INCREASING YOUR VISIBILITY IN THE COMMUNITY**

It should be fairly obvious by now that most of your advertising involves getting your name out into the public. This is definitely more involved than just taking out an ad in the daily newspaper and waiting for the students to start signing up for lessons. Besides advertising directly for students, a lot of your exposure comes from networking, referrals, and gaining visibility in the community.

30  
1993  
Finding students requires continuous effort to get your name out there to the people who are currently or might someday be interested in studying with you. Surprisingly, the business of attracting students sometimes has little to do with music. You rarely hear a student say, "Mr. Jones can really play the french horn. That's why I like him." You are much more likely to hear, "My french horn teacher, Mr. Jones, is a really cool guy. He's nice and I've learned a lot with him in a short time." Finding students means being a diplomat, an active and visible member of your community, and a champion for music and the things "music people" believe in. You must be friendly and reliable, the type of person parents trust with their child.

### **The Financial Wisdom of Volunteering**

The numerous opportunities in the community for volunteering, both musical and not, pay off in the long run. Musicians striving to perfect their craft spend many hours in practice rooms and rehearsal halls. Unfortunately, not a lot of networking takes place in these locations. You need to get out into the community just to meet other residents of your area. One way is to volunteer your time with a charitable

or church organization. The people you meet may be the friends, relatives or co-workers of your future music students.

Volunteer to perform in churches and synagogues. We've gained numerous referrals by actively performing in our church. In addition, we have sung in choir, served on committees, and assisted in the maintenance of the church as a way of being more involved with the citizens of our community. The more people who know you, the greater the likelihood that they will be engaged in a conversation with someone about music lessons, and that your name will come up, not only as a terrific teacher, but as a nice person as well.

Nursing homes and hospitals are also wonderful places to share your abilities and spend time with people who may need strength and encouragement. What better way to do this than to perform for an appreciative audience.

In networking with the music educators in your area, offer your services as a guest lecturer in their schools. Make yourself available to augment a band or orchestra should they be short a player or need a "ringer" for a more difficult work they may present. Above all, become active in the parents' organization at school because that is where you come face to face with the providers of your bread and butter. Most libraries have a community room available free for nonprofit events. You can give a recital or a lecture on a musical topic at no cost to the participants.

Get involved in the community and in the lives of your students. Make them feel like they are more than just a source of income in your life. Attend their school performances, organize recitals, volunteer them (with their permission, of course) for community events, take them into nursing homes and hospitals. Give them a taste of how fortunate you feel to be involved with music and what a career in music might be like (see chapter eight).

### **FINDING A JOB**

As most performing musicians and songwriters know, it is essential to have a carefully organized and professional-looking promotional package to offer potential employers. As you venture into the music teaching business, a similar kind of promotion package may serve you well as you apply to schools, summer camps, and even as you approach prospective parents.



### The Promo Package

Each promotional package you put together should feature a resume listing your experience and education, a list of personal references and sometimes a photo. Include a demonstration tape, showcasing your performance abilities. Each package should include a cover letter composed for and directed to the specific individual or committee reviewing the material.

**Photo.** If you choose to include a photo, a simple black-and-white, glossy 8" x 10" should be sufficient for your package. It should be a head shot and you should appear relaxed and comfortable. Bear in mind that a photo can sometimes hurt your application rather than support it, so use your judgment. When applying for a teaching position at a private academy, it's a good idea *not* to include a full-bodied color photo of your glam-rock band in full pose. In most cases you should lean toward the conservative. Remember that first impressions are crucial in the business world.

Having a black-and-white photo can also be useful for publicizing events in the local newspapers. Most newspaper editors are more likely to publish a story about a player or combo if it is accompanied by a picture. If you are hired at a school, they may want a photo to include in their newsletter or faculty directory.

If you are simply creating a brochure that details your teaching experience, a small picture of yourself printed in the pamphlet may be sufficient. Parents, especially, like to get a glimpse of who will be teaching their youngster so they know whom to let in the door.

**Resume.** The dictionary defines "resume" as "*n.* a summary of one's personal history, background, work and education." For someone applying for a teaching position, a good resume can make the difference in getting that interview and being hired for the job.

If you have a word processor, designing a professional-looking resume is easy. If you have access to a laser printer, the quality definitely enhances your presentation. If not, consider consulting a professional so your resume best represents you. Don't use a typewriter to do your resume.

One advantage to having a word processor is that you can update your resume constantly. In addition, you can have several different resumes on file. If you apply for a job at a community college, your resume should highlight your education and classroom teaching experience. If a prospective student is reading your resume, more of your private teaching and performance experience should be highlighted.

Try to personalize each resume to the particular situation.

Make your resume fit on one page if possible. Highlight only the important, pertinent information. You can go into greater detail during a personal interview, so leave the resume powerful but sparse (see Examples 4-19 and 4-20).

Like the photo to be included in your package, the resume should be neat, attractive and somewhat conservative. Printing a resume on neon orange may catch someone's attention, but what does it say about your ability to represent Stiff Upper Lip University?

**Personal references.** Each promotional package should include either several personal references or a statement saying "references available upon request." You may choose not to release the names and addresses of your references until you are being considered for the position available.

If you choose to list them, include three to six different references. Try to get a cross section of references to highlight different aspects of your abilities and interests. References from your profession are important, but personal references who can attest to your outstanding human nature are important as well (see Example 4-21). A politician, respected businessperson, doctor or community leader listed among your references helps round out your package. Don't include your mother or your best friend from high school as personal references, since there are legitimate questions about their objectivity.

For each reference include the person's title or position as well as address and phone number. Be sure to check that each reference person is comfortable speaking on your behalf and doesn't mind being contacted. Include a business phone and/or address for anyone who prefers not to be contacted at home.

It goes without saying that when choosing individuals for your reference list you should only consider people you feel are strong allies. Don't list the name of your ex-boss because she is a prominent politician in town if she just fired you from your last job, or if your position was so obscure that she won't remember you. Find people who have seen you in your best light and who can convey that impression to a potential employer. Most employers do call at least one or two references.

**Demonstration tape.** If this is your first time testing the job market, you may not have a very extensive or impressive resume. How do you demonstrate experience if this is your first shot at teaching? You can't. Teaching musicians who are just starting out must try to showcase

**Shirley Foudy-Lewis**

212 Long Street  
 Union, TN 99999  
 (999) 555-5555

**TEACHING EXPERIENCE****Community Music School, Instructor, Music Faculty, 1989-Present**

- Teach 25-30 private lessons and five performance ensembles weekly
- Serve on proficiency and placement examination juries
- Design original curriculum for private lessons and ensembles
- Serve as member of faculty Substance Abuse Awareness Committee
- Teach additional five-week specialized adult summer program

**Northfield Guitar Workshop, Instructor, Faculty, 1990-Present**

- Teach core classes in contemporary rock, blues, fusion and jazz styles
- Teach elective classes in improvisation, ear training and theory
- Direct student ensembles for weekly performances and perform in faculty concerts
- Wrote currently used textbook for advanced rock course

**Brown Academy, Director of Music, 1993-94**

- Taught five sections of music courses each semester
- Designed curriculum for music appreciation and innovative guitar course
- Directed student band and chorus, provided direction for seasonal concerts and musicals
- Coached boys' junior varsity soccer and girls' junior varsity basketball

**Private Instruction, 1988-Present**

- Teach students of all levels and ages, interested in a variety of styles
- Maintain extensive library of supplemental teaching materials for students
- Incorporate computer technology and MIDI into private lessons
- Prepare college-bound music students for admission and audition requirements

**EDUCATION****Community College of Music, Union, Tennessee**

- Bachelor of Arts in Music Performance; 1987
- Graduated Cum Laude

**VOLUNTEER AND COMMUNITY WORK****Community Jazz Ensemble, Director, Union, Tennessee, 1992-Present**

- Initiative sponsored by the Girl Scouts of America for outstanding youth ages 14-20
- Performances include Palace Theater, Union; Union Memorial Auditorium
- Annual recording sessions at Sound Tracks Studios in Union, Tennessee

**PERSONAL**

Born 7/25/63. Excellent health. Married. One child. Baseball enthusiast.

Example 4-19. One-Page Resume

**Shirley Foudy-Lewis**

212 Long Street  
 Union, TN 99999  
 (999) 555-5555

**TEACHING EXPERIENCE****Community Music School, Instructor, Music Faculty, 1989-Present**

- Teach 25-30 private lessons and five performance ensembles weekly
- Serve on proficiency and placement examination juries
- Design original curriculum for private lessons and ensembles
- Serve as member of faculty Substance Abuse Awareness Committee
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- Teach core classes in contemporary rock, blues, fusion and jazz styles
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- Direct student ensembles for weekly performances and perform in faculty concerts
- Wrote currently used textbook for advanced rock course

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- Designed curriculum for music appreciation and innovative guitar course
- Directed student band and chorus, provided direction for seasonal concerts and musicals
- Coached boys' junior varsity soccer and girls' junior varsity basketball

**Private Instruction, 1988-Present**

- Teach students of all levels and ages, interested in a variety of styles
- Maintain extensive library of supplemental teaching materials for students
- Incorporate computer technology and MIDI into private lessons
- Prepare college-bound music students for admission and audition requirements

**EDUCATION****University of Tennessee—Union, Union, Tennessee**

- Coursework in Master of Education Program; 1992-present

**Community College of Music, Union, Tennessee**

- Bachelor of Arts in Music Performance; 1987
- Graduated Cum Laude

Example 4-20. Two-Page Resume



**Shirley Foudy-Lewis**

212 Long Street  
 Union, TN 99999  
 (999) 555-5555

**PERFORMING EXPERIENCE****Union Chamber Players, 1990-Present**

Contemporary chamber works by local composers  
 Performances include Palace Theater, Union Memorial Auditorium  
 CD entitled "New World Works" on Earthworks label; released 1993

**Community Arts School Faculty Quintet, 1989-Present**

Faculty Ensemble performing in a variety of styles and settings

**Solo Guitarist, 1986-Present**

Solo performances; classical and jazz guitar

**Jonathan Skyles – Storyteller, 1986-1989**

Accompanist for children's storyteller

**VOLUNTEER AND COMMUNITY WORK****Community Jazz Ensemble, Director, Union, Tennessee 1992-Present**

- Initiative sponsored by the Girl Scouts of America for outstanding youth, ages 14-20
- Performances include Palace Theater, Union; Union Memorial Auditorium
- Annual recording sessions at Sound Tracks Recording Studio, Union

**Unitarian Church of Union, Music Director, 1994-present**

- Organize weekly music program for church service
- Select music, rehearse choral group
- Book local and national performing arts groups for annual concert series

**PERSONAL**

Born 7/25/63. Excellent health. Married. One child. Baseball enthusiast.

**REFERENCES**

Leonard Balley  
 Music Department Chairman  
 Community College of Music  
 140 Elm Street  
 Bolton, Massachusetts 99999  
 (999) 555-5555

Mary Hebert  
 Sounds Good Music  
 Main Street  
 Winchester, New Hampshire 99999  
 (999) 555-5555

Michael Anton  
 12 Abbey Street  
 Conval, New Hampshire 99999  
 (999) 555-5555

Lisa Cole  
 Office of Admissions  
 Community College of Music  
 140 Elm Street  
 Bolton, Massachusetts 99999  
 (999) 555-5555

William Smith, Headmaster  
 Brown Academy  
 Southwood, New Hampshire 99999  
 (999) 555-5555

David Smoltz, Director  
 Northfield Guitar Workshop  
 Box 1234  
 Northfield, New Hampshire 99999  
 (999) 555-5555

Example 4-21. List of References

another aspect of their talents. For many people it's their performance abilities. For someone with a doctorate from Yale, the highlight is their education. For someone who has taught private lessons for three decades, it is their work history.

Although we strongly recommend that you make private teaching a career decision and not a last resort, many of us started out in the field of music as players. Only after many years did the decision to teach become an option in our lives. Being a brilliant performer does not guarantee success in the role of teacher. However, having a wide variety of performing experiences and interests gives you much to draw on as you embark on your new career in teaching. A demonstration tape in your promo package might be just the thing to get the attention of that prospective client or employer.

As with your resume and cover letter, be flexible with your demo tape. Rather than recording and packaging one tape for every situation, have several options for each opportunity that arises. If you have just released a new compact disc with your band, you may be tempted to include a copy of the CD as a demo tape of your playing. It may be wiser to photocopy the album cover and any positive reviews you've received and use sections of the recording as part of your demo. Most people who are considering you as a potential employee or private teacher are not about to listen to a sixty-minute recording, especially if you are one of several candidates for the position.

Make your tape short—five to ten minutes should be sufficient. Tailor your demo to meet the interests or expectations of the people hearing the tape. If you are applying for a job as violin instructor at a classical string camp, is it wise to include a selection from your bluegrass band? It may help exemplify your versatility, but perhaps you want to include a sample of your work with a string quartet instead. And include a variety of selections that feature you prominently. Don't include a five-minute recording that only has you playing an eight-measure solo. Record the solo only and use the other four and a half minutes for other examples.

Be sure to include music that has been recorded professionally. Don't flip on your Walkman and start jammin'. When packaging your demo use high-quality cassette tapes and print a cover with your name clearly marked. Make sure you listen to the tape before sending it out to verify the quality. Sometimes recordings are duplicated on the wrong speed, for instance, and your oboe could sound like a piccolo. Cue the tape to the beginning of your selections.

**Cover letter.** While your promo package may change slightly from situation to situation, it should essentially be comprised of the same basic materials: resume, references, photo, demo and a cover letter. In highly competitive situations, some potential employers look no further than the cover letter and discard any with typos or misspellings. Be sure your cover letter is *perfect*.

Include your address and the name, title and address of the person receiving the materials. If you have spoken to this person previously, refer to that meeting or conversation in the cover letter. State clearly and precisely why you are sending the package to this person. You may be responding to an advertised position, be new to the area and in search of work, or following up on someone's referral of you for a position.

In a concise and simple way, state why you are qualified for this position and what you have to offer this employer or client. Instead of "I think I'd be a good teacher, and I don't mind teenagers so much," try "My extensive teaching and performing experience will . . ." Avoid weak language like, "I feel I could do a good job," in favor of "I will be a positive addition to your world-renowned faculty."

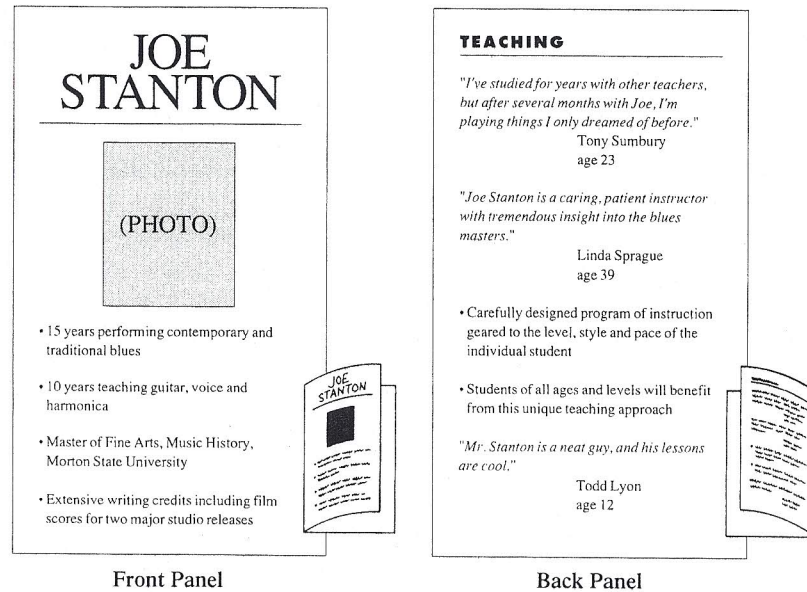
If you are a poor speller or have trouble with grammar or punctuation, use your computer's spell-checker and/or grammar-checker and ask someone else to proofread for you. Having someone else look over the letter is a good idea even if you think it's perfect. It is just human nature that we often overlook our own mistakes.

Conclude your cover letter with an expectation of an interview or further discussion and offer a phone number where you can be reached. "I look forward to meeting with you to discuss my qualifications. Should you have any questions please feel free to contact me at (999) 555-5555." Many good books are available through your public library or local bookstore on writing strong and effective cover letters.

### **Promotional Pamphlets/Brochures**

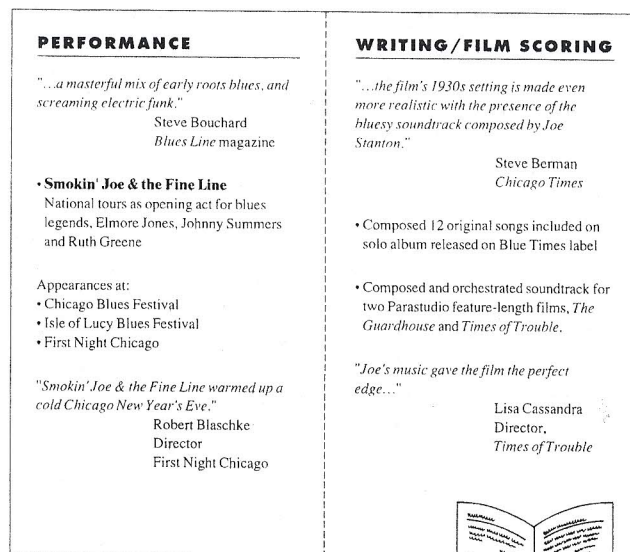
Many music agencies offer prospective clients a brochure about the agency and the bands it represents. These brochures tend to be very glitzy, detailing the myriad ensembles available through the agency. Instead of sending a package of promotional materials, you may want to consolidate your resources and produce a brochure highlighting your many talents and abilities. You can choose a format that highlights only your teaching abilities, or create a more comprehensive brochure describing the many tasks you feel qualified to undertake.





Front Panel

Back Panel



Inside Spread

Example 4-22. Brochure

Begin the brochure with a photo and biography, highlighting education, work and performance experience as you would in your resume. Use a more "reader-friendly" format, such as bullet lists, to highlight certain aspects of your experience. The brochure continues, describing each of your areas of expertise, section by section. You may have sections on performing, songwriting, film scoring, arranging, music copying and private teaching. Each section should list specific experience and work history (see Example 4-22).

The promotional pamphlet is ideal for the person diversified enough to advertise many musical talents. However, if you specialize in only one or two areas of expertise or are applying for one specific opportunity, such as a teaching position, it is preferable to use a package with resume and references. If you have the finances to design a package *and* a brochure then do so. However, the package is much more flexible for promoting yourself in a variety of situations.

### SOME FINAL WORDS ABOUT MARKETING YOURSELF

We can't emphasize enough the importance of getting your name out into the public in a positive light. Promoting yourself requires confidence, perseverance and ingenuity. If you apply yourself to the task and let your creativity guide you, you are sure to enjoy name recognition, the respect of your musical colleagues, and a schedule full of eager students.