



# Multiple Streams of Music Income Self-Study Workbook

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## CHAPTER THREE – STEP 1: PICK YOUR NICHE

### SECTION A. THE POWER OF NICHE MARKETING

The first step to build your Multiple Streams of Music Income business is to Pick Your Niche. In this chapter, we'll cover:

- The power of niche marketing,
- How to brainstorm your possible niches,
- And how to evaluate and choose your first niche.

As you work through this and future Chapters, I have a favor to ask: Do this process in order and complete each Step before moving on to the next Step and the next Chapter. I know that this may feel frustrating and you may want to leap ahead. I ask you to trust me and trust this process. There is magic in this system, if you do the steps in order.

#### *THE POWER OF NICHE MARKETING*

Niche marketing gives your marketing the power of a laser focus. If you have the light of a full moon, it's pretty. It's relatively bright on a dark night in the Arizona desert, but it's not really bright enough to do anything with, not even enough to read by. On the other hand, if you take light in that same visible spectrum, and you narrow it to a laser focus, it can cut glass. The only difference is the focus. The light of the moon is really broad and wide. It's dispersed and as a result, it's not very intense or effective.

The mistake that a lot of small business owners make (not just artists) is that they try to market to everybody. And like the light of the moon, it may look pretty, but it's not terribly effective. The marketing message tends to be general and generic. The impact it makes in the marketplace tends to be fleeting. And the ROI (return on investment) for the dollars spent tends to be negligible.

As a result, you feel like, "I know I'm supposed to be marketing. And I feel like I'm doing a lot of work and spending a lot of money. Why is nobody buying?" Sound familiar?

Niche marketing encourages you to market deep not wide. In other words, you will market to very small, narrowly defined, specific groups of people, rather than trying to market to everybody everywhere. As a result you can create targeted, specific marketing messages, materials, packaging and products designed especially for your target market. And those messages will impact your target market like a laser leaving a deep and lasting impression!



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This marketing model allows you to leverage your time, energy and money and make the best use of it. Because you identify who is the best group of people to be marketing to, and design how you're marketing to them, specifically, when they see it, they feel like:

**“Oh Man, that's just perfect for me. That's exactly what I wanted!”**

## *WHAT IS A NICHE?*

First let's talk about what it isn't, because a lot of people think they know what niche means and they don't.

### **Niche is NOT your Genre.**

I can't tell you how often I've been in a live class and asked individuals what their niche was and what I heard back was country music, folk music, jazz ... man. That's about you and about your product. Niche isn't about you.

### **Niche is about Them!**

It's about who your target market is. But it's also not the kind of broad stroke demographics like age range, male-female, etc. That's not your niche either, because it's too broad, it includes too many people. Frankly, you don't have the money to market that broadly, not effectively. And that's a common mistake that people make. They think, “My niche is women, aged 25 to 35.” It takes millions of dollars to effectively market to a demographic.

Because, like the old marketing adage says, you need to “touch” your market a minimum of 7 times before they have any idea of who you are, let alone will buy from you. And that “7 touches” rule was based on research from the 1950s and 60s when marketing messages were flowing in via newspapers, radio and television at a relatively slow rate.

Look around you. Right now, sitting at my desk, I see at least a dozen different marketing messages. We are being inundated all the time with marketing messages, to the point that its wallpaper and we don't even notice it anymore. And when we do notice it, we tend to want to turn it off.

People used to actually watch commercials. They enjoyed them. It was entertainment. That's not true anymore (except for the Super Bowl). In order to actually make an impact across a broad market, the current wisdom is 15 to 20 touches or exposures to a particular



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brand before someone notices it at all. If you want to “touch” a demographic 15-20 times, you’re looking at a budget in the millions per year.

Your niche market is a **small, highly specific, and narrowly defined group of people**. You want to be able to find and communicate with them in specific ways, with targeted messages that you know they'll see, and remember, because you're talking their language.

## *WHAT STOPS PEOPLE FROM NICHE MARKETING?*

I've talked about niche marketing to a lot of different groups of people. I find the same obstacles stop people from investing in niche marketing.

### **Excluding Possibilities**

What if you're only marketing to this small group of people, there could be a great fan, client, or customer over there in that group of people and you'll be leaving them out. That's the concern, right, that you'd be turning away business.

Niche marketing is about marketing, NOT about accepting work. I am not recommending that if someone comes to you from a different niche to see your show, to buy your CD, to hire you to write music for them, that you say, “No, sorry, I don't want your business because you're not my niche.” That would be silly.

This is about how you make the best use of your marketing time, your marketing energy, and your marketing dollar. It's not about excluding possibilities. It's about focusing your efforts, creating specific and effective messages and getting the biggest bang for the buck.

### **Missing Opportunities**

I can relate to that. I mean I am a business coach and I could coach just about anyone. I've had the experience, because most of my marketing materials are really targeted for people in the arts and entertainment industry (like you!). It may well be that possible clients from other areas didn't go with me because of that. But I found that generally, when I pursue those opportunities even independently, they ended up not really being mine.

I think you need to trust the universe a little bit here. And trust that your best right opportunities are out there and are going to show up for you as soon as you clearly and narrowly define what you want. It's a common response in artists who have been struggling for a long time to grab any and all opportunities, out of desperation. Just because something is an opportunity doesn't mean it's your opportunity.



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Remember, this is just your first niche. You will be developing other niches. And in fact, the more you develop your first niche, the easier it becomes to expand that niche and develop additional niches. So, you will be expanding, but you will be expanding niche-by-niche.

**Trust that the right opportunities are on their way to you.**

## **The Wrong Niche**

What if you pick the wrong niche? What if you pick one that you think will work for you only to discover that there's no traction?

Let me give you the wisdom of my personal experience. My very first niche that I worked on building was in film and television, since that's my background. I have a bachelor of fine arts in theater. I was an actress for a long time and worked in production in Film and TV and so I thought the first niche I should work on is in film and television and theater. So, in early 2002, I started marketing in the Film, TV and Theatre marketplace.

The bottom line is that I worked for about 6 months and got nowhere. I just didn't get a lot of traction. Now, it may be because I hadn't yet learned the Multiple Streams system (remember, I learned it in 2004). Had I used it, I might've gotten better results. And it may be the fact that I hadn't worked in that area for 7 years (since I'd gotten sick) and wasn't actively a part of that community any more.

For whatever reason, there wasn't a lot of traction. I made a few connections, got a few clients, but it didn't feel easy. Meanwhile as I was struggling with the film industry, my social community was filled with musicians. And one of my friends suggested I attend a music conference and Wham! As soon as I dipped my little pinky toe into the music industry, I got immediate and significant traction.

But here's the thing, all of my effort in building and developing the film/theater niche did not go to waste, because shifting to a new niche really only involved changing my language a little bit, perhaps changing the look of things a little bit. It was more a tweak than it was starting from scratch.

So don't worry about picking the wrong one, because all of the materials that you create in pursuing your first niche will not go to waste. You'll be able to use all of that experience and research and results, all of that learning will make the next niche easier to build. If you follow the steps that I'm about to lay out for you, you're more likely to pick a good first niche. You'll pick one that is already working for you. So you'll be able to build from that. But even if it doesn't quite work the first time through, you'll be able to apply all that you develop to the next one.



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## SECTION B. BRAINSTORM YOUR NICHES

### *HOW TO BRAINSTORM*

This information and these skills can be applied to anything that you want to brainstorm ideas for: titles for songs, titles for your band or your album. You could brainstorm ways to market. You could brainstorm really anything that you want to do in your business and in your life. I use brainstorming whenever I'm beginning a new project or venture.

### **Brainstorm BIG**

When you are brainstorming, go for a number that feels ridiculous, I mean, completely absurdly ridiculous. If you think you can come up with five ideas, go for 500. What happens is that when you get through all the obvious stuff, you keep pushing. Because you're going for a ridiculous number of ideas, you will allow silly, ridiculous ideas to surface. And that's when you start to get really creative. That's when your brain starts supplying innovative out-of-the-box ideas.

### **Don't filter your answers.**

You have to remember that you're not committing to anything you put down on this list. Don't filter your answers, anything and everything, the most ridiculous, the most absurd goes down on your list. In fact, I encourage you to get ridiculous and silly in your ideas. Put down the obvious, then put down the ridiculous, then get completely silly.

An amazing thing starts to happen. When your brain realizes that it's got permission to think of anything, that you're not filtering or criticizing its ideas, it will get really creative.

So get ridiculous, get silly, and write them all down. Don't filter out anything, even if it's something you would never in a million years do, write it down. No one else is going to see this list.

Push past feeling like you can't possibly think of anything else **at least twice** before you stop. Here's what will happen:

You're going to write and write and write. And you're going to feel like you're just repeating yourself and you can't possibly think of anything new. And that's OK. It's OK to repeat stuff. If you'll just keep asking the question, you'll feel stuck for a bit, but then you'll go, "Oh, wait, there's another idea and there's another idea and there's another idea."

### **Push through the feeling stuck at least twice before you stop.**



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## *THE NICHE BRAINSTORMING PROCESS*

You are specifically brainstorming your possible niches. What are all the possible small, narrowly defined groups that could be your target market? Following this section, (and also [available for download](#) in Word format), you'll find the "Niche Brainstorming Process". Use this list of questions for your brainstorming. Stick with one question for at least 10 minutes (remember brainstorm BIG).

And remember, push past that feeling of "there's nothing else" at least twice, before you move onto the next question. You could have pages and pages and pages of ideas for each question and that's what you want. The more the merrier, that's brainstorming.

Set aside several hours of uninterrupted time for this process. Once you've gone through all the questions and brainstormed each one of them intensely, set it aside for a couple of days. Then come back and brainstorm one more time for each question. What happens is your brain continues to work on the question even after you've moved on to something else. It keeps chewing on the questions. When you come back to it a couple of days later, you will find that you have new answers.

You may even find an hour later, new answers occur to you. So you might be coming back to it several times. But definitely let it sit and then come back to it at least once before you decide you're finished with the process.

If you prefer to brainstorm by hand - a lot of people like the tactile sensation of handwriting and find it easier to brainstorm that way - once you're done, transfer the entire list into a Word or Excel document. Don't edit the list yet, because you'll be using this list over and over again. Like I mentioned in the first section of this chapter this is just for your first niche. You're going to brainstorm and create new niches throughout your career as you expand your audience.

So download the brainstorming question handout now and do this process before you move on to the next step in this chapter.

## **This system will work if you work it.**

This is not a reading or video watching program this self-study program is an exercise that will walk you step-by-step to your Multiple Streams of Music Income business, but only if you actually work the process. I've included the questions here for your convenience. But you can download them in an editable word document and brainstorm right into that document.

## **So brainstorm your niches now.**





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## *BRAINSTORM YOUR NICHE PROCESS*

Go for a number of answers that feels ridiculous. Don't filter your answers. Stick with each question at least 10 minutes before moving on. Push through feeling like you can't think of anything else at least twice before moving on to the next question.

### **Start with Yourself:**

1. What do you love to do?
2. What were your hobbies as a child?
3. Who do you associate with?
4. What organizations or communities are you part of?
5. What organizations or communities were you part of as a child?
6. What jobs have you held throughout your life?
7. What are your skills & strengths?
8. What experiences have you had?
9. What did you dream of when you were young?
10. If you didn't have to work, what would you do with your time?
11. What's unique or different about you?
12. Do you have material that focuses on a particular issue, historical event or community?

### **Ask about your close family and friends:**

13. What are your family/friends hobbies?
14. Who do your family/friends associate with?
15. What organizations or communities do they belong to?
16. What jobs do your family/friends have?

### **Ask About Your Clients/Customers/Fans**

17. Who buys your product now?
18. Who wants what you have?
19. Who has the money to pay for it?
20. What professions are they?
21. What are the common characteristics of your current clients/customers/fans?
22. What similar problems/desires do your clients/customers/fans seem to have?

Download [Brainstorm Your Niche Process](#)





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## SECTION C. EVALUATE AND CHOOSE YOUR FIRST NICHE

If you have not yet done the brainstorming exercise -

### **Please stop reading right now and brainstorm!**

See, if you read this section before you work the brainstorming process, you may try to make your niche choice while you're brainstorming. And that just kills the creativity of the brainstorming process. The creative brain and the editing brain are two completely different sections of your brain. If you bring the editor brain into the mix, the creative brain tends to shut down.

### **Create first, edit later!**

You may also think you already know your niche, but I strongly recommend doing this process completely from scratch anyway. There are two reasons for this:

One – what if the niche you think you should pursue first doesn't get traction? And you haven't done this brainstorming yet? You may get so discouraged you quit. I don't want that to happen. If you find that there isn't enough traction in this first niche, you want to have that huge pile of ideas as a resource.

Two – **this is just your first niche.** You will be developing more. And it will be harder to do this brainstorming to come up with the second niche when you're so busy because of all the business your first niche is bringing in. So, do the brainstorming now.

### *EVALUATE YOUR NICHE BRAINSTORMING*

Now that you've done all this brainstorming (you did right?), it's time to pick your first niche. This is going to be a process of evaluation and elimination. Then, you will choose the first niche market you're going to develop. Before we start, let go of the idea of the "right niche."

### **Identify the "right now niche."**

#### **Pick the Top 3-6 Ideas**

Take that big long list you created in the last section and sort the list. The idea is to pick the top three to six niches. I'm going to give you some criteria for how to choose them. But, while you're doing this logically, I also want you to pay attention to how you're feeling. You may find that when you look at your list, that certain niches almost glow. They look



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exciting; they look interesting; they look intriguing. They pull your attention back to them over and over again. Pay attention to that.

Using the following criteria narrow down your list until you have 3-6 Niches:

## *First Criteria: Pick the Niches That You're Already a Member of*

Ideally it's a group of people that you already have some connection with. As you build your Multiple Streams of Music Income business, at some point, you're going to choose to develop a niche that you don't yet have a connection with and open it up for yourself. But developing a niche from scratch is a lot harder, more expensive and time consuming than investing in the niches you're already connected with. Because when you're starting from scratch, the biggest challenge is educating yourself about your market and then educating them about you.

So I recommend for the first niche you develop that you start with some group that you're already, at least peripherally, connected to. Because I think you'll find it much easier to get traction in that niche than if you start totally from scratch.

## *Second Criteria: Pick the Obvious Fit*

Choose niches that are an obvious fit for what you uniquely create. So for example, if your genre is music for kids, then you're not going to pursue single men from age 25 to 35, because it's not really the obvious niche. You might go after grandparents as a niche because they are buying music for their grandkids. Certainly Moms and Dads would be a good place to start.

Ask yourself, "What is an obvious fit for what I uniquely create?" For example, I worked with a client who is in a Celtic band and one of the niches we talked about very seriously was the Irish set dance and step dance competitions. That would be an obvious fit for his band because that niche uses the specific kind of music he creates.

## *Third Criteria: Pick the Familiar*

Choose niches that you already know a lot about. You know who they are and where they're hanging out. If you have niches that you already know a fair amount about, they should be high up on your list.

## *Fourth Criteria: Go for the Low Hanging Fruit*

Don't start with the hard-to-reach niches, even if they're romantically cool, even if they're shiny, even if they're an obvious fit. If you think breaking in there is going to be really hard, don't start there. Go for the low hanging fruit.



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For example, I'm very interested in working with professional athletes. And that's a really hard niche to break into. I think I could truly serve that client base, but they're a hard group to reach. I will pursue that niche eventually, but I didn't start there.

## *INITIAL NICHE RESEARCH*

Once you've identified your top 3-6 choices, your next step is to do initial research to narrow the list further. This is not the in-depth research that you will do to get into their heads and find out what makes them tick. Just do enough research to be able to choose your first niche. But expect to do several hours of research in order to narrow the field.

As you do this research, create a swipe file for future reference. A swipe file is a Word document or an Excel document, where you cut and paste the URL addresses that you find in your initial research. Why re-create the wheel? Once you've chosen your niche, you will go back to these places and do a lot more research. I've recently started to use [Evernote](#) for this purpose as I can clip URLs without opening another program and tag them with a key word (like "nursing niche research" for example).

Document what you find as you find it, so that it's easy to come back to it. Remember, you're researching 3 to 6 niches to choose your first niche. But just because you don't pursue a particular niche right now doesn't mean you're never going to pursue it. You may come back to it and pursue it as your second or third niche. All of this initial research won't go to waste. It will give you a head-start on that second, third or fourth niche.

You must be able to answer the following questions in order to identify your first niche. If you can't answer "Yes" for one or more of these questions, drop that niche down lower in priority. Use these questions in order to identify a viable niche:

1. Do you know where to find them? Where do they hang out?
2. Do they self-identify as a group?
3. If they do, what name do they use?
4. Are there organizations, associations and publications that target this niche market?
5. Do those organizations have live events?

## **Where do they hang out?**

If you can't identify where they hang out, they aren't a good niche for you. How will you get in front of them, if you don't know where they are?

Search for organizations, associations and groups that serve your niche in:

- [Google.com](#)
- [Facebook.com](#)
- [Yahoo Groups](#)



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- Ning.com – to find Ning groups, just add “ning” to your keyword in your Google searches (e.g. nurse ning group)
- [LinkedIn Groups](#)
- Directory of Associations – You can use Google to search for directories and then search them. You can go to your local library’s research desk and thumb through their copy of the Directory of Associations. You can buy the directory, but that’s expensive and I don’t think it’s necessary

The more groups, organizations and websites devoted to a particular niche, the stronger that niche will be for you to pursue.

## **Do they self-identify as a group? And if they do, what name do they use?**

Start with the name of the niche that you came up with in your brainstorming and see what shows up. You may find better language for the name of your niche as you do this research, because, you want to use the name they use for themselves.

For example, in the last few years I became aware of a niche that I didn't even know existed. I mean I knew they existed as individuals, because I knew some of them. But I didn't know that they self-identified in this way, WAHM, which stands for work-at-home-moms. If you Google WAHM, you'll find a ton of stuff because they self-identify by that name. The fact that they do self-identify makes them a much more accessible niche.

If for example, you were thinking about environmentalists as a niche and in your research you notice that really they refer to themselves as green this or green that. Then you want to shift and use green as a keyword in your research. Because if that's how they are identifying themselves, that's also how you will be better able to find them in your research.

## **Are there organizations, associations and publications that target this niche market? Do those organizations have live events?**

Because if they do, that's going to make it a lot easier for you to get physically get in front of them. If there are organizations, associations and publications that target or serve your niche market, you will get involved with, subscribe to and even join them. You may attend their live events; even submit yourself as a speaker or entertainer for these events.

### *CHOOSE YOUR FIRST NICHE*

So, now that you've done all of this research and answered the question, “Is this a good niche market?” Here’s the next question to ask, “Is this niche market a good first niche for me?”

If this is a good first niche, you will notice that figuring out where to find them becomes obvious and easy. The idea of connecting is no longer overwhelming. It’s actually



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interesting and exciting. And the methodology for connecting begins to feel organic, clear and doable. That's how you know you've got a good niche.

You need to use your gut. Is the idea of contacting them attractive? Do you relate to this group? Do you want to hang out with them? Are they your kind of people? Do they align with your values, your passion and your B.O.P.?

The more you feel connected and relaxed with them, the more you feel like you can be yourself because they align with your values and your passion, the more successful you're going to be with them as a niche.

Bottom line: are you excited about working with them? If the idea of working with them makes you just curl up in dread. They are not the right niche for you. I don't care how clever or cool it might be. I don't even care if they are already showing up for your gigs.

This should be fun, exciting and inspiring. So if the thought of working with them, spending time with them, engaging with them doesn't appeal to you – don't choose them as a niche.

In the end, the final choice is a heart question not head question. You've done your research, but the ultimate choice is going to come down to your heart, your intuition.

**The truth is that there will never be anyone exactly like you in the world. So who are you a gift for? Who is waiting for you to arrive exactly as you are, right now?**

Often, people who feel on the verge of having a breakthrough with regard to their purpose or the niche market that they are uniquely suited to serve, find that a simple series of questions can open things up for you.

Is your mission actually a lot bigger than what you've been imagining, or maybe it's smaller and less ponderously important seeming or significant?

Is the niche market you are considering actually bigger than what you have thought of so far or maybe it's quite a bit smaller and so much less intimidating?

And if it weren't important to have a niche market, who would you want to be playing and working with now?

Now you have to choose. And when you choose, I recommend you choose only one.

## Choose One Niche NOW!



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## CHAPTER 3 ACTIONS

### 1. BRAINSTORM YOUR NICHE

Using [the handout](#), spend several hours brainstorming each question.

### 2. CHOOSE 3-6 NICHEs AND RESEARCH

Using the criteria suggested in Section C, pick out 3-6 possible niches and research their viability.

Search:

[Http://google.com](http://google.com)

<http://www.facebook.com>

<http://www.linkedin.com>

<http://www.ning.com> (enter your keyword and “ning” into Google to see ning groups in a niche)

<http://bing.com>

<http://groups.yahoo.com>

<http://groups.google.com>

Create a Swipe file to capture the websites, groups, associations, etc., of interest for each niche that you are researching.



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## *3. ANSWER EACH OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS FOR EACH NICHE YOU RESEARCH:*

1. Can you find Trade Organizations, Associations, Publications, Facebook groups, LinkedIn Groups, etc. that serve this niche?
2. Do they self-identify and if so, how do they refer to themselves (e.g. WAHM = work at home Moms)
3. Do you relate to this Niche and are you excited at the prospect of engaging with them?

## *4. PICK YOUR FIRST NICHE – DO NOT MOVE ON TO THE NEXT CHAPTER UNTIL YOU’VE PICKED YOUR FIRST NICHE.*

## *5. READING LIST FOR CHAPTER 3.*

These are my recommendations for your reading. I recommend reading as many of these books as you can, over the next several weeks.

Blue Ocean Strategy (Assigned in Chapter 1 , but if you haven’t read it yet...)

[Tribes: We Need You to Lead Us, by Seth Godin](#)

[Marketing Shortcuts for the Self-Employed: Leverage Resources, Establish Online Credibility and Crush Your Competition, by \(my friend\) Patrick Schwertdfeger](#)

[How to Be Your Own Booking Agent, by \(also my friend\) Jeri Goldstein](#)