



**“The bulk of the work actually happens before the tour.”**

When you’re checking out your favorite band or artist in concert, you may not realize that there is a crucial person making sure that every detail, small or large, is executed without a hitch to get the band ready to rock that stage—the tour manager. And that’s exactly who Ian McEvily used to be for the indie electronic pop-rock band West Indian Girl. Talking to the bassist at a show a few years ago, Ian discovered the band needed a tour manager. “I had been looking for an opportunity like that, so I jumped on board for their national tour,” he cheerfully explains. Ian chatted with us about how being West Indian Girl’s tour manager helped him foster a trusting relationship with the band and gain the invaluable experience that led him to become their current manager.

**who: Ian McEvily**  
**Job: Tour Manager**

### How did you get into the music business?

I’ve always been interested in the live aspect of music. I came to New York in 2002 looking to get into the industry. I was having a hard time because I didn’t know anyone, and the music industry is pretty much about who you know. I then enrolled in NYU’s Music Business graduate program. It was priceless. NYU has professors who specialize in all aspects of the industry, from entertainment lawyers to product managers at record labels. It’s a great way to network and figure out where you fit in. It let me narrow things down to the touring element.

### What does a tour manager do?

The bulk of the work actually happens before the tour. You have to have every hour mapped out, and then stick to that. You get in touch with all the venues you’ll be playing at to plan when you’re going to load in and when the soundcheck is going to be—basically organizing all of the logistics before you hit the road. The rest of it is making sure you’re meeting those logistics and making sure the band has everything they need along the way.

### What skills does a tour manager need?

The number one thing is to be organized in a disorganized environment. Bands tend to be disorganized, and you are the point person who makes sure things run smoothly—when they don’t, it’s your fault. You also have to be the eyes and ears for the manager,

communicating how things are going, and if they aren’t going well, again it’s your fault. A good tour manager will make the manager’s job easier, freeing up time for the manager to focus on other aspects that benefit the artist.

### What’s the difference between a manager and a tour manager?

The tour manager focuses only on the touring. The manager has to see the bigger picture for developing the artist, and needs to be involved in all aspects of his or her career—from publicity to publishing and negotiations with record labels—while maintaining a good working relationship with the artist, too.

### What did you find most challenging?

Getting every member of the band on the same page and making sure you’re meeting the required times for the promoters and venues. You don’t want to upset them because you want them to have you back in the future. There are lots of late nights and not a whole lot of sleep while you’re touring. It’s definitely tough getting everyone going and getting to places on time.

### What did you enjoy most about your job?

I enjoyed meeting everyone who works outside the office, like the promoters, the production people, and the sound engineers. And getting to see the country—I had never seen anything in between California and Pennsylvania—was a great experience.

—Veronica Dominguez-Garcia

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