

## John Rostron

### Current relevant positions held :

Executive Chair of the Association of Independent Promoters - a UK trade association supporting independent promoters across the UK

Manager - Wales - Making Music - A UK membership organisation supporting leisure time music groups.

Co-founder Welsh Music Prize

Freelance Bid Writer and Business Development for the Music Sector

Arts Associate Arts Council Wales

### Former Relevant Positions or Work:

Consultant - Sound Diplomacy - Music Ecosystem Study and Strategy Recommendations for Cardiff City Council

Co-Founder of Swn Festival.

Vice Chair Association of Independent Festivals

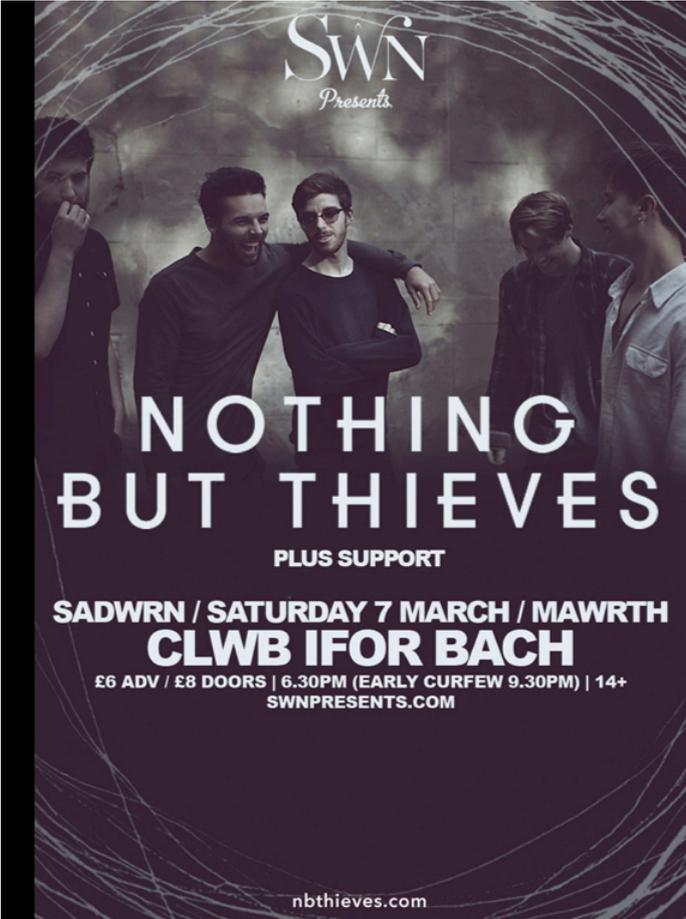
Concert Promoter in Cardiff from grassroots venues to Motorpoint Arena.

Chief Executive of Welsh Music Foundation

Venue Manager - The Point

### The Economics of Promoting in Grassroots Music Venues

I thought it would be useful to demonstrate the economics of promoting live music in grassroots venues as it stands at present as these have not been conveyed to the Committee and I feel are essential in understanding the complexity of challenges facing working in these spaces.



**SWN**  
*Presents*

**NOTHING  
BUT THIEVES**

PLUS SUPPORT

**SADWRN / SATURDAY 7 MARCH / MAWRTH  
CLWB IFOR BACH**

£6 ADV | £8 DOORS | 6.30PM (EARLY CURFEW 9.30PM) | 14+  
SWNPRESENTS.COM

nbthieves.com

INCOME	
SALES (SOLD OUT) : 150 x £6 :	£900
- VAT ON TICKETS	£150
NET INCOME	£750
EXPENDITURE	
PRS	£22
VENUE HIRE	£160
MARKETING	£150
RIDER / CATERING	£83
TWIN WILD (SUPPORT ACT)	£50
NAC	£50
DOOR	£20
TICKETS	£20
STAFF	£60
TOTAL COSTS :	£615
BALANCE :	£135
OFFER	£100 vs 80%
NOTHING BUT THIEVES	£108
PROMOTER	£27

The example above is a real show from 2016 that I put on whilst promoting. It's typical of many shows at this level. Many of the costs are fixed, and, like the ticket prices, are set or controlled by the band's live agent. The show sold out. Some key things to note that despite selling out :

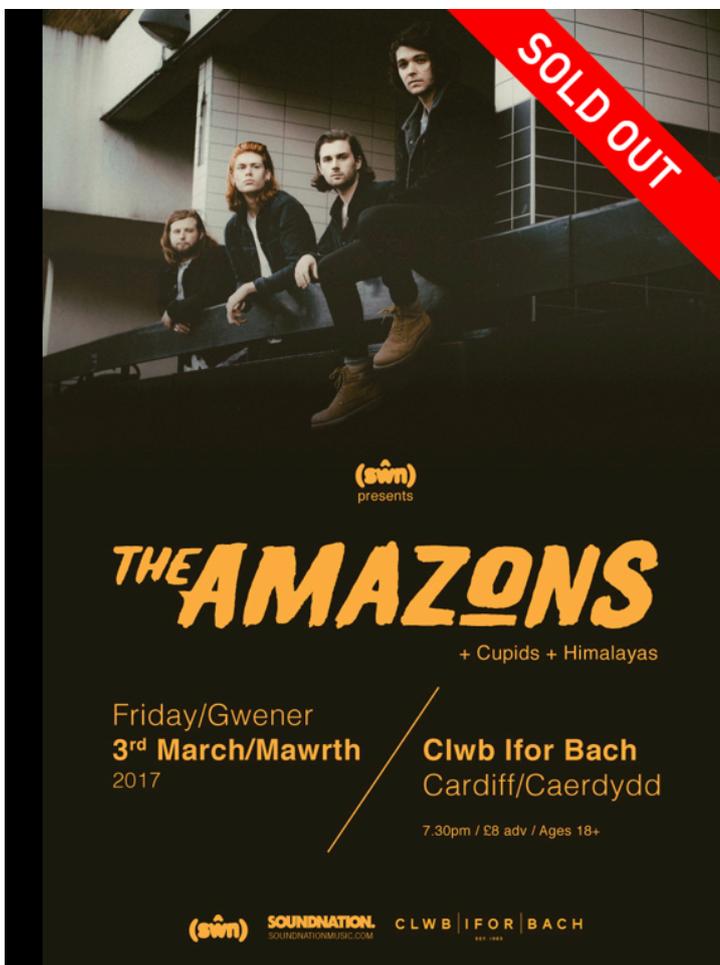
1. The promoter invests all the money into the show, often most of it upfront. After paying everyone their take-home is £27. That is all they have to pay themselves; contribute to their travel; sustenance; office costs etc!
2. The artist only takes home £108. In this case that's to split between five people.
3. This particular band went on to develop a much bigger audience, and are now capable of selling 2000-3000 tickets in a UK market

However, not all shows at this level sell out. Indeed, most don't.

Here's another show I put on. This show only sold 6 tickets. I lost £576.

<p><b>SWN</b> <i>Presents</i></p>  <p><b>THE AMAZONS</b> +SUPPORT</p> <hr/> <p>CLWB IFOR BACH, CAERDYDD <b>15 APRIL / EBRILL 2015</b></p> <hr/> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%;"><b>TICKETS:</b> SWNPRESENTS.COM</td> <td style="width: 33%;"><b>TIME:</b> 7.30PM DOORS</td> <td style="width: 33%;"><b>PRICE:</b> £5 ADV / £7 DOORS</td> </tr> </table>	<b>TICKETS:</b> SWNPRESENTS.COM	<b>TIME:</b> 7.30PM DOORS	<b>PRICE:</b> £5 ADV / £7 DOORS	<p><b>INCOME</b></p> <p>SALES 6 x £5 : £30 - VAT ON TICKETS £5 <b>NET INCOME £25</b></p> <p><b>EXPENDITURE</b></p> <p>PRS £1 VENUE HIRE £160 MARKETING £120 RIDER / CATERING £30 THE MANATEES (SUPPORT ACT) £50 DOOR £20 TICKETS £10 STAFF £60 <b>TOTAL COSTS : £451</b></p> <p><b>BALANCE : -£426</b></p> <p>OFFER £150 vs 80%</p> <p>THE AMAZONS £150</p> <p><b>PROMOTER -£576</b></p>
<b>TICKETS:</b> SWNPRESENTS.COM	<b>TIME:</b> 7.30PM DOORS	<b>PRICE:</b> £5 ADV / £7 DOORS		

However I bought the band back almost a year later to the same venue. This time they sold out.



**INCOME**  
 SALES (SOLD OUT) 150 x £8 : £1200  
 - VAT ON TICKETS  
 NET INCOME £1000

**EXPENDITURE**  
 PRS £30  
 VENUE HIRE £190  
 MARKETING £170  
 NAC £100  
 RIDER / CATERING £87  
 CUPIDS (SUPPORT ACT) £70  
 HIMALAYAS (SUPPORT ACT) £50  
 DOOR £20  
 INSURANCES £14  
 TICKETS £8  
 STAFF £70  
**TOTAL COSTS : £809**

**BALANCE : £191**

OFFER £125 vs 80%

THE AMAZONS £152

**PROMOTER £39**

And then again to a larger 1000 capacity venue, which again sold out.



**INCOME**  
 SALES (SOLD OUT) 600 x £12 : £7200  
 - VAT ON TICKETS £1200  
 NET INCOME £6000

**BUDGET EXPENDITURE**  
 PRS £180  
 VENUE + CREW £1320  
 MARKETING £475  
 NAC £100  
 RIDER / CATERING £200  
 THE PALE WHITE £100  
 LOCAL BAND £100  
 DOOR £20  
 INSURANCES £27  
 TICKETS £10  
 STAFF £100  
**TOTAL COSTS : £2632**

**BALANCE : £3368**

OFFER £1750 vs 80%

THE AMAZONS £2694

**PROMOTER £673**

Finances aside, this gives a good example of an aspect of the artist development pipeline - taking a band through three shows in Cardiff from an audience of 5 to 1000. To enable this journey it has required the promoter to invest in the shows - finance, resource and time - and it's required a pipeline of venues through which to develop the act and reach an audience. There's a financial commitment too, of course, from the artist who is rehearsing for and travelling to and from shows, but without doubt it's that supporting structure of promoter and venues that contributes to enabling an artists and audiences growth.

But its worth pausing here to reflect on the figures thus far.

	Ticket Sales	Band Fee	Promoter Share
Show 1	5	£150	- £576
Show 2	150	£152	£39
Show 3	1000	£2694	£673
<b>Total</b>	<b>1155</b>	<b>£2996</b>	<b>£136</b>

The above examples illustrate the role that a single promoter can play in the artist development pipeline. It also demonstrates how difficult it would be to make putting on shows for emerging artists economically sustainable. It's partly for this reason that most promoters of live music concerts for emerging artists are leisure time promoters. These promoters put on shows in their spare time of bands they admire or want to bring to their hometown, without concern for profit. Clearly they are important to the music development pipeline and the music ecosystem as a whole, but how important?

### **How important are promoters to venues and music in Wales?**

Considering this question, I tracked all the live music concerts put on at Clwb Ifor Bach in a single year. The results were :

217 : Total number of live music shows at Clwb Ifor Bach in a 12 month period.

of which :

53 : Shows put on by the venue (ie booked in-house)

6 : Shows put on by National Promoters

158 : Shows put on by Local Promoters

So 73% of the live music shows in Clwb Ifor Bach were put on by promoters.

MVT have recently conducted an informal survey of their members looking at the make up of in-house booking versus external promoter-booking, showing that venues either do most things in-house or almost entirely rely on promoters. Wales venues follow this pattern.

Clearly promoters are an essential part of the music ecosystem and are vital to supporting venues and artists in Wales.