

LECTURE NOTES FROM 'THE ROAD TO TOUR MANGING' DELIVERED AT PROMUS FEBRUARY 2014

Apologies for any typos. Also, to those who remember my talking about something that's not mentioned below; it's not realistic for me to record everything I say, listen back to it, then transcribe those parts for inclusion below. Forgive me. Content accurate as of February 2014

WHAT DOES A TOUR MANAGER DO?

Tour Management is one of those roles that people fall into without any experience, like artist management, which explains why there are so many bad tour managers and artists managers. But since every band - like every child - needs a different kind of parenting, there's no one right way to tour manage. That said, there are about a thousand things you shouldn't be doing. Like booking a set of flights to Berlin, forgetting you did it, and booking them again a week later. Or flying the band into Manchester for a festival on the wrong day. Accounting, advancing, merchandising, Sound Engineering, driving, and whether or not to declare all the merch you've stuffed into the guitar cases on your US customs declaration: we'll lay bare what's needed to dispatch this role, both physically and psychologically, and let you decide if you're fit for purpose, before you get 50 miles from Chicago and realise you've left the drum kit in Toronto

A LIST OF THINGS A TM DOES

A TM's job description can be very easy to write down in a sentence, if the band are quite big, and they have a crew. The bigger the crew, the less jobs the TM will have. Kind of. Let me explain

Tour Manager

A Tour Manager takes care of the band. Their minute-to-minute well-being are your priority. How far you want to take that is up to you and the band. If they want someone to brush their hair for them, and you don't to brush their hair, they'll probably need to find a new TM and you'll need to find another band. The TM will also take care of the money. Anything related to money: getting it, giving it out, managing it, accounting for it

Production Manager

The Production Manager takes care of the crew and anything technical. Freight, speaking to venues and festivals about what equipment you need, what they'll supply for you, what you'll bring. How you'll take it with you: in which cases you'll carry it in, and in which vehicles, and whether or not it needs insurance (it does)

Driver

It's your job to get the band and crew to wherever you need to go safely, comfortably, and on time. That's not an easy job. When you're starting out you'll find it very hard to get work if you can't drive. At the lower levels, no-one can afford to hire a TM that can't drive

Merchandise Seller

An important, difficult, and time-consuming job. Way more than just standing behind a table and swapping T-shirts for Euros

Sound Engineer

Sometimes called a Front of House engineer. It's their job to make the band sound good for the audience. If a TM can also do sound that will save the band a lot of money. The FOH engineer will also, sometimes, be the...

Monitor Engineer

They need to make the band sound good for the band too on stage, if they're also mixing sound in the band's monitors. This happens when a venue doesn't have a separate sound desk for the monitors, and instead the monitors are mixed from the FOH sound desk

Lighting Engineer

Sometimes there are so few lights that they can be controlled from the FOH desk position and if you're the FOH engineer, that's your now job too

Backline Tech

Or stage tech, or just tech. Bigger bands have a tech for each member of the band. Even bigger bands can have more than one per band member. It's your job to make sure all the equipment is working and properly plugged in, and to maintain that equipment during the show. Again, if the TM can also tech, they're more valuable to the band

Travel Agent

You'll spend a lot of your time booking flights and hotels. You can hire one though, and the greatest benefit I've found is that they can hold flights for you for four or five days while you get your plans together

Security

You're the barrier between everyone and the band. Everyone. Not all of those people will be friendly or sober

Parent

Sometimes the only difference between questions a band will ask you and questions a child will ask you, is that the child will put the word "Dad" or "Mum" at the end:

"When will we get there... Dad"

"What time is dinner, Dad"

It's amazing how quickly adults get used to having a TM, and forgetting all about personal responsibility. I've seen adults not know how to check in for a flight because their TM wasn't with them

Therapist

If you're close to the band, there's a good chance some or all of them will bring their personal problems to you, since they'll probably revolve around someone else in the band or crew. The downside of doing all these roles, particularly the tech ones, is that you'll have less time to actually tour manage, and look after the band, and you'll have less time to rest, and that'll lead to you doing your job badly

BOOKING AGENTS

You're only going to get a booking agent if they think they can make money out of you, and that's fair enough. It's their job to speak to promoters and get you shows, either as the headliner - if you're worth any tickets - or as a support act. It's worth noting that in some countries booking agents are also promoters. In the UK and US it rarely happens. I'm going to base this lecture on the understanding that your band already has a booking agent, but if that's not the case, and either you or your band are having to do the booking yourself, and if you do, here's an amazing place to start for advice and tips:

Ian Jorgenson from New Zealand who promotes under the name A Low Hum. He's a fascinating guy and you'd do well to read this. The book is FREE to download on his site [alowhum.com]. There's amazingly helpful information in there about exactly what you need to do to book your own shows, and advice about where to sleep, shower, eat, how to make cheap phone calls and all sorts of stuff

ROUTING

The band's booking agent will plan a tour in consultation with management and maybe record label, so they're sure everyone gets what they want from the tour, that the band is playing in the right size of room, in the right cities, in the right territories.

During the routing, the agent may involve the TM and consult on how to do the tour (car, van, bus, train). If the agent doesn't specifically ask for your comments, give them anyway. I once drove a tour in a van when the agent thought we were taking a sleeper bus. Those were some long, long drives...

Once the routing is done you'll be asked to do a budget, to see if the tour makes financial sense, and if it doesn't, then what the shortfall is. Sometimes a label can subsidise the tour. This is called tour support. It will be a loan, and the band will pay it back from royalties. Every recording contract is different. Some labels pay bands tour support, some don't, some pay a percentage

Assuming management are happy that the tour makes sense, and you're happy it makes logistical sense, the tour will be confirmed and you can start to 'advance' it

VEHICLE

- Borrow a car or use your own
- Use your parents' or hire one
- Hire a van, shop around. Mercedes Vito is good
- Use the industry-standard Mercedes 313 Sprinter. These are often called 'splitter' vans
- Sleeper bus

Generally your budget will dictate how you travel

- Car? Sure, if you're a party of three. You'll probably need the fourth seat to fold down to take your guitar or keyboard cases. If you can't sleep in your vehicle you'll have to find accommodation
- Van? You'll be charged a day rate. The longer your tour, the better chance of a discount. The Mercedes 313 Sprinter vans are configured to be 'splitters', and bear in mind the size of the storage space will vary depending on how comfortable your passenger space. The basic ones are functional. The luxury ones have smaller storage because the passenger space has more leg room, maybe a table, and fridge. Generally they're built to carry nine people. Three in front, six in back

- Bus? Expensive, but it means you'll sleep in it, so no separate accommodation costs, but you'll need to find a shower every day, and that can get tiring. Hotels can give you a day room, service stations (US are great), public gyms (buy a day pass for all), swimming pool, or maybe the venue has one. A shower I mean. Not a swimming pool. The more of you there are the more difficult it might be to get cleaned up. Two of you? Maybe you can shower at the promoter's place if you're staying there
- Train? You're brave. You'll need train tickets. Though if you're TMing a DJ around the UK, it's maybe preferable if he or she hates driving, someone gets car-sick and you can get a good deal on a week/month ticket, for example. You'll need to arrange ground transport to venue or hotel and back, which promoter might take care of. You need to be very clear about how much luggage you have and if it will fit what you're travelling in. Measure it and weigh it. If you need to take taxis, you might end up having to take two. Some Mercedes cars don't have back seats that go down and if you're in a city that only uses Mercedes taxis, you have a problem. In various cities 'black cabs' are better (sometimes called Hackney cabs). If you're using Uber, you might order the wrong size. I used 'XL' but still, occasionally, not everything fitted
- Plane? You need to book a bunch of airline tickets and arrange ground transport to venue or hotel and back, which raises the same issues as above. I'd also recommend having either a travel agent booking flights for you, or having a second pair of eyes on the details before you click 'confirm'. Airlines are very inflexible when it comes to refunds and ticket changes, so you might throw a lot of money away if you screw up
- Whichever way you travel, you'll encounter a specific set of obstacles and issues to overcome, and also great benefits compared to the other methods
- Fly? It might make sense. If you're going overseas then it's usually fastest. I wouldn't advise trying to drive to the US. And if you're doing a festival tour, say, and you're only allowed to play in one city per country, because that's one of the conditions that each festival lays down when they book you, then you'll be doing a tour of 'fly-ins'

BUDGETS

Once the routing is done you'll be asked to do a budget, to see if the tour makes financial sense, and if it doesn't, what the shortfall is. Sometimes a label can subsidise the tour. This is called tour support. It will be a loan, and the band will pay it back from royalties. Every recording contract is different. Some labels pay tour support, some don't, some pay a percentage. Assuming management are happy that the tour makes sense, and you're happy it makes logistical sense, the tour will be confirmed and you can start to advance it.

Budgets are fun!

Okay, they're not. But they're simple. You take your income, work out your expenses, and see what the balance is. If it's negative, how will you find the money to cover it if you can't get tour support?

- Sponsorship
- Loan (friend, family)
- Your own money
- Merch? If it's not very much, merch might cover it, but you won't know until you get on the road

What's in a budget?

Budgets get more complicated when you have flights, seven people to transport from their homes to airports, and back, excess baggage across multiple airlines, costs in multiple currencies and so on, but otherwise, the items remain constant

Travel

Not just the main vehicle, but the secondary ones too. Taxis from airports, to and from hotel and venue. Excess baggage charges. Gas for your vehicle. If you're using a sleeper bus there'll be all sorts of charges we'll get into some other time. Even if you're just hiring a van, check that they don't add a cleaning cost to your hire when you take it back. Do any of your crew have to travel from out of town to meet everyone before travelling? If so, and you've agreed to pay it, get that

in there. Also road tolls. The French and Italians in particular like road tolls. They can add up. I'm also adding insurance here, but not holiday insurance. Doesn't cover you if you're working. Get business insurance specific to the music industry

Accommodation

Hotel, Airbnb, hostel, maybe you'll feel obliged to give the promoter some money if you sleep on their floor

Wages

For the crew. In our imaginary budget you don't have any allocation in for the wages of a Production Manager, Merchandise Seller, Driver or a Backline Tech, that's because you've already worked out the harsh reality of touring at the ground level; there isn't any money to hire these people, and when a business can't afford to throw money at a problem, all it can do is throw time, and since you're the only person standing there, it'll be your time. Which means that you may be asked to drive (maybe you'll share that with someone in the band, or your one member of crew), and tech, and sell merch, and be the Production Manager. I'd say it's possible to do all of these things, but the two things I never want to do again are sell merchandise and do sound. Tour Managers who can do sound are in demand because it's one less person to pay. But doing all these things will kill you, unless you're under 25, and even then it'll kill you if you have to do it for over a month

PDs

Per Diems (Latin: by day) or pocket money for everyone on the road

Sundries

Small things. Drum sticks, gaffer tape, plug adaptors. Bellboys. Airport luggage trolleys which cost \$6 each in New York

Communication

If you take a phone with you, it'll cost money to use. If you have a second phone (wise in some places like the US) then you'll need a second SIM card, and you'll need to fill it with money and maybe data. Wifi isn't free everywhere. You'll need to pay in some hotels

Visas and Carnets

America is expensive (though the application is for group, not per person), Japan isn't (£20 per person). Think of a carnet as a passport for your equipment

Booking Agent

They'll take X% before you've paid any of your costs, depending on your deal with them

Withholding Tax

Charged by whichever government of whichever country you're in for working there. Varies from country to country. 30% in US, 15% in Norway

Contingency

This is your safety net for all the things you didn't imagine would happen. Make it a percentage of your budget. I do 5%

Income

You might have noticed that the income is only from show fees, not merch. My advice is not to put merch in the budget. It's really difficult to calculate what you'll sell

So your budget is done and everyone agrees that the tour must go ahead, so it is confirmed by the agent, with the promoters. What's next?

ADVANCING AND THE TOUR BOOK

“Advancing a tour”
“Doing the advance”

Now you must talk to the venues and promoters, and whatever they tell you is going to be have to be noted down somewhere, preferably in a format that you can share with everyone. This is called a Tour Book. A Tour Book can be very simple: a Word doc that lists the basic information that everyone will need to let them turn up to the venue on time, play on time and get to bed wherever the bed is. Tour Books can be very detailed. In my opinion, the more (useful) detail the better

You can build a tour book in Word, or Pages. I have a friend who builds his Tour Book using Excel spreadsheets. You can make it look nice, since people like nice-looking things. They might even want to keep it as a souvenir of their first tour, and if they want to keep it, there’s a good chance they’ll read it. The first page should list the date, city, country and venue. You might also want to add distances between cities here, and estimated driving times

The next page should have numbers and email addresses for the crew members. Best not to list band members’ details, in case you print the tour book and someone loses it, and it falls into the hands of a stalker. It happens

Then you have a page per day, whether that’s a show day, travel day, or day off. You list what will happen on that day, and when it will happen

Otherwise, buy an app or online software by tourmanagement.com (Belgian, expensive, no mobile app) or Eventric’s MasterTour (American, industry-standard, not as expensive, has a mobile app). Or you can look at Tripit, which is a travel planner. It’s free and has some cool features, but it’s debatable how much use it would be as a TM tool. I never tried it on the road. If you use an app, make sure it has a ‘private’ area to take a note of the fee you’re being paid and other sensitive information that you might not want certain members of crew/band to see

WHAT GOES IN THE TOUR BOOK?

Everything.

Why? What’s the ultimate function of a Tour Book?

If the TM can’t make the tour, is sacked, is injured, or is killed, the tour can go on, and can be run by the next most competent person. It has to contain everything that person could need to know. The Tour Book should make the TM replaceable. That’s your benchmark

A tour book contains two things: all the things you know, and all the things the promoter knows. But it also contains things you or the promoter know that you don’t think you’ll need. Sometimes I add things to the Tour Book that no-one is ever likely to need, like the mobile number of someone who I know won’t be at the venue that day. I don’t know why I would want to call her, but that’s why her number goes in the Tour Book

When do you start building the Tour Book? The tour might be four months away. It’s never too soon for you, but might be for the promoter. However, it shouldn’t be too soon for the venue. A venue should have some basic advance information for you, because some things never change. Ask for an info sheet or an advance sheet (it’s the same thing), but check their website first. You’ll find basic information there

The Tour Manager should be checking with the promoter to make sure that all things can be supplied. But really, before the show is on sale, the promoter and booking agent should have worked that out. Ultimately, on the road, when things go wrong, the band will turn around and look for someone to either blame, or fix it, or both. That person is you. So, get the advance right and start it early

So, what's inside?

- Tour dates, venue, town, country (don't presume people will know which country they're in because you've given them a city name)
- Band and crew personnel
- Venue address, website
- Venue and promoter personnel contact details (remember my warning from before), including a mobile number for everyone, not just an office number
- Capacity and age restrictions, venue type
- Where will you eat? Is there a buyout or will you be fed in the venue's restaurant, or by the promoter who cooked at home?
- Routing with distance and estimated journey time, where you depart from (studio, then which terminal or platform), any meeting points along the way to collect band/crew members. Flight or train numbers and airlines, whether or not there will be entrainment on the plane, a meal served etc. The things a band or crew will ask you. They don't want to get bored, they don't want to get hungry and when they're tired they want to know where to sleep
- Hotel information. Free wifi? Breakfast? Parking? Is it free? Is there a pool or sauna? Is reception 24hr?
- A schedule of events: the timings for the day: load in, soundcheck, doors, stage time, curfew. Is curfew early? Is that because there's a club night after the show? Does that mean you'll get kicked out early? See below for more on club nights
- Load in instructions, where to park afterwards
- Production information (Stage dimensions, what kind of sound desk and PA they have. Your FOH engineer will always want that information in advance
- How many dressing rooms are there? Is there a production office for you to sit in?
- Showers? Are toilets private or are they shared with the audience? Winter in Europe? Ask for a heater backstage
- Is there a space to sell merchandise and do venue take any of your merch money?
- Local details: currency used, timezone, local amenities (maybe it's a day off and people want to know what they can do for fun)
- Get to know your band. If they like museums, locate them, list them in the tour book. If they like architecture see what you can find that might interest them. Wikipedia is a good place to start. See if you can find out which bands are from that town, which actors maybe, which films were shot there. Tell them how big it is, tell them how that compares to their home city, tell them what it's famous for. Get them interested in what you're writing and there's a better chance they'll read the actually important stuff. Make the TB something they look forward to seeing

Club Nights

They're a fucking nightmare. Venues make a lot of money from them so it's understandable why they do them. They put three bands on, get them off on time, kick everyone out, kick you out, clean the place up, re-open as a club. Or worse, they don't kick everyone out. You end up packing everything up in a nightclub (that's when things get lost and you lose your voice - and patience - shouting at people). You end up loading out through a nightclub (flashing lights, hard to see, drunk people, heavy equipment), you have to count merch and break the shop down in the middle of a nightclub (drunk people, you can't think straight, you can't see properly). Be very clear when you're advancing about curfew, and when you need to be clear of the room

Tour Book Bullshit

For fun, in the information section of the Tour Book, make things up, see if the band ask you about them, then you'll know if they're reading the damn thing or not

Do you print it?

No: it'll be out of date before you reach the airport. It's bad for the environment. If you print it, band will get annoyed when they find inaccuracies and they'll expect it to be fixed. You'll be printing new ones every day. You've no time for that shit. Also you'll maybe need to carry a printer and paper. And ink cartridges

Yes: some of the band don't have data on their phone abroad and can't access it, or their battery goes flat. And it's a nice souvenir

RIDERS

Two of the most important pieces of information of the advance are the Technical Rider and Hospitality Rider. When you're advancing, you'll want to tell the promoter what you need both technically and in terms of backstage hospitality. It's likely your booking agent will supply these anyway, or promoter will ask for them. Either way, make sure promoter has them and has confirmed that they can supply what you need

A basic tech rider should contain email address, phone number of Tour Manager, Production Manager, FOH Engineer, Monitor Engineer, Lighting Engineer. Band's names, what they play, where they set up on stage, the power they need, and a channel list. You can also add lighting notes, notes on monitoring, any staging you need, any backline you need promoter to provide. Then, before you arrive, venue can be setting the stage up in preparation

Your Hospitality Rider should list any food and drink you want backstage, how much you want for a dinner buyout. These have got way out of hand. Only ask for what you know you'll need. Don't waste money or food. Be very specific. Ask for exactly what you need. Exactly. If you want one apple, don't ask for "Apples". If you want a bottle of 2003 Chilean Merlot, say so. Don't ask for "good red wine". Nothing in bold, nothing in red, nothing underlined, nothing IN ALL CAPS. No shouting at the promoter. And if you have some items left over from last night, phone or email tonight's promoter and let them know to not get that for you

VAN TIPS

- Keep it clean, throw the trash out regularly
- Learn how to change the oil and windscreen wiper fluid, how to change and monitor tire pressure
- Carry a 4-way power strip so everyone can charge their devices
- Get some paper towels/napkins. Good for after eating and for mopping up spillages
- Plastic cutlery. Someone always buys lunch at a gas station and forgets it
- Get a van with a movie selection and ability to play music
- Most vans now have WiFi which tends not to work across borders (expensive)
- The driver is the most important person in the van. They control the cab temperature, music. They are fed and watered and assisted in any way they need. They're asked how they're doing often, they're given a break if they want one, they're relieved of duty by the second driver when they need to be
- If you stop for lunch, or a bathroom break, and there's time, refuel. I refuel a lot. You never know when the next place will be, and I never want to be caught out. Keep the receipt. Keep it safely with all the other receipts. If it's lunchtime everyone will want PDs

PDs AND RECEIPTS

PDs are a small daily payment made to band and crew on top of their wages. The band pays for it. It's a tour cost. Not everyone can afford it, and the amount varies. I do £15 in UK, 20€ and \$25 per day. You can alter it for different territories. Norway is expensive, the Czech Republic isn't, in comparison. Management tends to set the PD level for new bands, and you can suggest different amounts. It's a conversation to have. If you spend any money on anything - ANYTHING - you get a receipt for it. When giving out PDs, everyone signs for them before they get them

PDs are a massive pain in the arse. You're touring in Europe across eight countries with six different currencies, and the band start asking for X number of days in that currency and Y number of days in this currency. Maybe there's a day off in a certain place, and they'll spend more money. Maybe they've got a friend in that place and they'll go out with them after the show and need more money. Maybe you'll all be out on a night off, and you're all drunk, and they start asking for tomorrow's money now, but you're in Norway and the next day is in Spain. You'll give them Krona and they'll try and give you some it back tomorrow in exchange for Euros and that's just the start of the PDs headache. Also, you're drunk... do you have your receipt book with you? It can quickly become a mess if you're not careful

BACK ON THE ROAD

And you're heading toward the venue for soundcheck. It's summertime, it's a nice day, the roads are clear (though not in very good condition). But even on nice days you'll get tired of driving, never mind dark, wet nights in high winds

Driving is tiring at the best of times, but now you've a lot more to worry about. You need to be attuned to those around you, and how your driving style might affect that. You need to keep your eye on the time, make sure you're not going to be late for soundcheck. Your crew and band might be in a good mood, blasting music loudly, wanting to watch a film (annoying if you can hear it, loud, but can't see it), they might want to stop for photos if it's a nice place. Hell, you might want to stop for photos too. But you're not on holiday. There are many different kinds of tours. Some are easy, and some are brutally hard. One five week tour in America was the hardest thing I've ever done. During the last four days I was able to get ten hours sleep. I pushed myself to limits I never want to go to again

Pain can be useful while you're driving. Sometimes you have to drive long distances and you've no choice. The other driver is sick. You need to do it. But you've had little sleep, again. You're shattered. If you don't want to fall asleep at the wheel, take regular breaks, and don't try and get comfortable. If it's cold outside, turn the cold air on and point the outlets at your hands. Sit on something uncomfortable. A piece of wood. Anything to stop you relaxing. Play loud music in your headphones. If whoever is sitting up front with you is awake, talk to them. It's a fine balancing act. You need to get the band there safely, but the important word in that sentence is "you"

Driving times

Don't accept Google Maps as accurate. Overcompensate for traffic and stops. A 3.5 hour drive on Google Maps = 5 hours on the road. Some stops are unforeseen, like when the Spanish Police search your van for 30 minutes

Google Maps is based on consistently obeying the speed limit. Sometimes you can safely break it, but sometimes you can't even reach it. You're driving a large, very heavy van. It's not so fast when you're trying to drive through mountains, and the last thing you want to do when you're coming DOWN from the mountains is drive at the speed limit. You'll have to slow down on the corners. Speak to promoters about local traffic in cities, if you're playing in the middle of one. Some French cities have incredibly narrow streets, and these fucking metal bollards on all the corners which make navigating a long van really quite difficult. And speaking of navigating...

Get a Satnav. It'll stop arguments. It takes a lot of the stress out of driving. But make sure it's up to date, and that it covers the country you're in before you start the tour. I once had one that didn't cover the Czech Republic and no matter what I did I couldn't get the map to download overnight

Don't be a hero

A dead band is no good to anyone. Get a second driver. Always. Even if drives are short. You need back up. You might feel sick, tired, you might get drunk. Always have help

EAT WELL, SAVE MONEY

Seek out supermarkets along the way. It's a nice thing to do in the summertime: spend half an hour in there and stock up, then drive to a nice spot next to river, or in a park, and have a picnic. Find a big enough supermarket and it'll take care of everyone. A small one might not suit those who're vegetarian, vegan, or have some allergy or dietary requirement that's not so common. Have a box in the van where you keep some basics: Hard cheese or Philadelphia, crisps, carrots, cherry tomatoes and such, though this doesn't work so well in the summer months when it's warm. Buy bottled water once, then don't keep buying it. Tap water is fine. Maybe not in every country but for the most part. Refill from taps or water coolers. Use washable plastic plates

On the mainland, if you're eating together with venue staff, you'll sometimes come across buffet catering and when no-one's looking you can shovel some in to a plastic lunch box for tomorrow. Same at breakfast in the hotel. Make a sandwich for lunch. You'll have to accept that your diet will change to an extent. They have different brands, and some countries aren't there yet with organic food, juices. Always check with promoters about what's in their local area. You'll not be the first gluten-free vegan they've met and anyway, in a lot of countries, it's custom to feed the band in-house, particularly if the venue also has a kitchen and a restaurant. A lot of them do, because when the venue isn't open, the business can still be making money

Some countries don't cater well for anything other than 'normal' meat and fish eaters. It's really hard to eat as a vegetarian in Tokyo for example. Oh, by the way, when you get to Japan, you should know that they have no 2G network. You don't need to switch on data roaming on your phone, but if you don't put 3G on, your phone won't work

You'll find many differences not just in the food between countries, but also your ability to buy it. France (especially in the countryside) shuts down on Sundays. And it's not easy to find food from other nations there. There's been an explosion in London, for example, of Mexican cantinas, and you can pretty much find any food you like in any major UK city. Not so much in France. The French like French food, though kebab shops which sell falafel are pretty common. Speaking of the French and food: almost all venues have a 'dark stage' an hour before doors, which is to say everyone stops working and goes for dinner, almost always together (staff, bands, crew) in the venue, at a big table. The food is usually made in house and will most likely be three courses with plenty of wine and beer for those who want it

Junk Food

I'm addicted to sugar like crack. I know how hard it is to stop eating junk food, but try. You all need to stay healthy, and alert. Junk food is the enemy. It'll slowly grind you down. Look what happened to poor Lykke Li. I'm not saying she was a big fan of chocolate, but want to illustrate how touring can grind you down. Artists make these announcements every so often and they're usually followed by a load of people who've never toured going "Ah come on! They're just playing some songs everyday! How would they deal with a real job!" Those people are idiots. Touring - in the early days of your band before you can afford a full crew, and a great vehicle - can be absolutely exhausting. And it's a filthy job too

In loud environments we shout into each other's ears, leaving trails of spit behind, while our hearing slowly deteriorates and the long hours add weeks and months to our faces. We bruise and cut our shins on the edges of stages and pull muscles in our backs when manoeuvring bass cabinets. If someone gets a throat infection, cold or some other transmittable bug, there's a good chance we'll all get it, what with being in such close proximity to each other for at least eighteen hours a day. When van hire companies wash their vans before you take them out, they don't disinfect the wheel or gear stick, so you're grasping the sweat, piss and shit of every driver that's ever driven it. The handles of your guitar cases have been held by countless production staff, many of whom will have taken a shit and scratched their balls not minutes before you've arrived to load in, and after shaking hands with festival stage managers - who've been shaking hands with every member of every band's crew since ten o'clock that morning, and haven't had time to stop in front of a sink with hot water and soap the whole day and night - your own hands will be ingrained with the snot, shit and bodily fluids of a hundred men and woman

Stay healthy. Every band I ever worked with drank every night on tour. Almost every band I worked with eventually quit drinking. And stay fit. Run. Do something. If you can find time, because as a Tour Manager, remember: you're always working. Always. Unless you're asleep. When I go to bed I turn my phone on to airplane mode. That's my time

I once asked a fellow TM when she got free time on the road and she said: "That's what the shower is for." You'll get other time off though, maybe. On days off, but maybe you're too busy advancing the next shows, or even the next tour, or catching up with the accounts that you've missed because you've been going to bed at 0200 and getting back up at 0600 for a week

Back on The Road

You're back on the road, heading toward the venue. You'll be able to tell by the satnav if you're going to be on time or not. And if you know you'll be on time, or early, or late, tell the promoter. If you're driving, whoever's sitting next to you is your assistant. Have them do it. Personally I like crew up front, band in the back. And no more than two up front if you can help it, otherwise elbows and legs get in the way

Arriving and Parking

If an advance matches what you find when you arrive, it's a miracle, and parking instructions are the cruellest illustration of that. Promoters will lie to you, as will hotels. Get photographs of the load in areas and the parking areas. Use Google Streetmap if promoter doesn't send you anything. You can waste huge amounts of time parking. HUGE amounts. Never trust ANYONE when they say parking is easy. If you get there and you discover that yes, it was, fine, you got lucky. Research parking

Welcome!

Everyone helps with the load in, unless they're sick or injured. You decide who does the heavy lifting, and who takes charge. Maybe you leave someone to do this while you go inside and check things out for the band. And smile at everyone! Very important. Also ask your local host to give you thank you, hello and goodbye in their language. Speaking of languages...

There are 230 spoken in Europe alone. Luckily you speak the most common one. In some countries (the Nordic region for example) the incidence of English-fluency is very high indeed, and they mostly won't expect you to know their language, though some basic phrases show courtesy. Learn: Hello, Goodbye. Please. Thank you. Beer

In other countries a working knowledge of the language would be very useful (some parts of France and Germany for example). And language skills don't just mean speaking someone else's language; it also means moderating your own speech to ensure you're understood. If you have a strong regional accent, alter your dialect. If you speak quickly, slow down. If you encounter someone with a basic grasp of English, simplify your vocabulary and if that person is a Sound Engineer, don't use regional colloquialisms with them when you and the band are on stage. Don't ask for "a smidgen" more bass in your monitor, for example. Or "a tad" less kick drum

Checklist

- Where is backstage? It's your home for the evening. Is it comfortable? If it's not, what can be done?
- Is the Hospitality Rider all there? Some promoters don't put the alcohol in straight away. Smart idea. No-one needs a drunk band at soundcheck
- What's the WiFi code and is it working?
- It might be a month or more since you advanced the show. Has the schedule changed?
- Where and when will you eat? I should warn you; you'll notice that, on tour, adults - like the band you're looking after - will forget how to find their own food, and generally look after themselves

Once that's done, I have a look around, or have someone show me around. Specifically I'm looking for the Fire Exits. And specifically the closest one to backstage. When you arrive at the venue, find it, make sure the band know where it is. A dead band isn't much good to you.

When I'm walking around I want to meet the staff and crew, and get their names, and be very friendly to them. Write down staff names and pin them to a wall backstage. The band will forget. Be their memory. Sound Engineer and Artist Liaison are particularly important. Make sure the band know the Engineer's name, and the promoter or promoter's rep name. Make sure they have your telephone number. And don't pester the staff with one question at a time. You have a finite number of lives here. So, take a minute, get all your questions together at once if you can, and try not to blow all the goodwill you might have with the staff in the first ten minutes. You might need to ask for a favour later and you don't want to be 'the annoying bastard who keeps asking questions' then

Actually, before all this, what I'm actually looking for is a place to sit and work from. You might need to make do with the floor backstage in small venues. If they have a backstage

If you're sharing a dressing room, hide the water and towels you need for stage. They might be limited. The support band might take them all

MERCHANDISE

Once the band are settled, you need to set up the (fucking) merch stand

Dealing with merch is a full-time job. Or anyway, it can take up to six hours per day. Now, where are you meant to find the time to do that? Well, you can do two things: you can either do it properly, or you can do it half-arsed, and if you're driving and tour managing, I'd suggest you do it half-arsed, because there's no way you can do it properly. Management need to be made aware that, if they want the merch managed properly, and accurate accounts kept, they'll need to hire someone, because you've no chance

Even with just two shirt styles, if you've got four men's sizes, and 3 women's, and a bag, that's 15 items to keep a track of. Merch is hard. It's heavy, it takes up a lot of space, the boxes fall apart, stuff goes missing, you need to convert from your own currency every time you get to a new country, you need change in that currency, you need to do new price lists in that currency. You need to make sure the shop is in a well-lit place where the audience can see it and - IMPORTANT - you need to make it look nice. It's a shop, so you're selling things, which means you're in customer service. Make it look nice. Make sure you stack things so they're easy to get to if it gets busy. I've got a checklist for you:

- Get merchandise in the first place. It's amazing the number of bands who can't be bothered, or forget
- Dominate the space. Set up early, have the shop the way you want it
- Don't dominate the space, you selfish bastard. Leave space for the other bands. If you don't, they might fuck your shop up when you're not there
- Carry a shop. You don't just need merch; you need a lamp to light it, a spare bulb, an extension cable and a plug adaptor. Hell, if you've got space in the van, bring a table. Or one of those folded displays with everything pinned up inside. Be prepared. Don't expect the venue to have what you need, or to have a designated place to sell merch
- Don't charge in fractions. Unless they're notes. You'll end up coming home with a bag full of coins. In fact, on the last night of the tour, be sure to give the venue all your coins in exchange for notes. Banks don't convert coins, only notes
- Staff it. Amazing the number of bands who set it up then walk away. Work out a rota. Staff it before the show then have someone there two songs from the end. People might have to leave early so either buy on the way in, or before the show's over. If your singer's a miserable bastard, don't put him or her on the shop. The promoter might offer to hire someone for you. I've done it a lot, and it's good and bad. They won't know the stock like you do, but you can train them quickly before doors open, hopefully. It means someone can be there from doors open. If it's just you, that's a big waste of your time. If you're on your own, just put a sign up to say that merch will be available after the show. You'll miss a few sales from people who have to leave before the end, or don't have time to queue, but that's the way it goes. Having someone local means that they can talk to customers in their own language. A good thing

- Make it look nice. Table cloth, matching price tags, fairy lights, whatever it takes. Make it look attractive. It's a shop and you're trying to sell things
- Keep track of stock but not as you sell. Don't try and keep up with sales. On a busy show you'll be screwed. Count in before you open, then count out when you're closed. Have an online spreadsheet which shows venue and city, what was sold, what was lost, what was given away as promo. When you add stock, add it to the sheet. Always keep a running total of what you've sold and where, helps you understand your audience better in different cities/countries
- Price things in local currencies. Self-explanatory. Take local advice on this too. Price according to your market
- You're in customer Service. Act like it

Mobile Payments

Not everyone has cash, not every venue has an ATM

Investigate mobile payment options. Square looks good for US, Canada and Japan, iZettle for UK and Europe. They both take a percentage of your transaction and wire the money to you

Spreadsheets

Use Google Docs to share an online sales sheet with whoever needs to see it (manager, accountant, merchandise company). List your items, their price, how many you have in stock, what you sold, and how much you made from each item. Then your total. Basic

BEFORE DOORS OPEN

You'll have to coordinate any promotional activities the band does. Interviews and such. The label will be in touch in the days before the show, asking when the band are free to meet journalists for interviews and photoshoots. Some bands like it done quick, before soundcheck, or after soundcheck, before dinner or after dinner, or after the show. It's one more thing to juggle

Last thing before doors open?

THE GUEST LIST

The only thing I hate more than dealing with merch

Wait until maybe 20 minutes before doors to send it in. Send just one. Collect names from label, management, band, crew. The guest list goes through you only. Someone will always want to add a name after doors open

PUNCTUALITY

For some reason, all over the world, doors usually open at 1930. Except in Japan when they open them at 1730, the headline band's on by 1830 and everyone's out the door by 1930. Well anyway, get your band on stage on time. I don't know how it ever became cool, and rock and roll to go on late. Show the bands around you some respect, show the venue some respect. And at festivals: don't ever run over time

Before doors open you might be asked to give a security briefing to the venue's security staff. They'll just want to know if the crowd will mosh, if the singer will jump into the crowd, that kind of thing; anything that might cause them to have to act

Before band go on, you'll want to have towels on stage, and bottles of water or whatever they're drinking, and set lists and such. Whatever they need to play. Then what? Well, it depends on the band. If you're also the Backline Tech, you'll have helped the band set up for soundcheck, made sure that went well, made sure they lighting engineer understands what the band want went they play, and I'd suggest you're always visible to them at side of stage, ready to run on and fix anything that might need fixing. It's probably worth saying it's best if you TM a band whose music you like, because you'll be hearing it a lot.

After Savages got a Tech I stopped watching the whole show. Not because I didn't enjoy it, but because I had lots to do. I'd been driving half the day and missed loads of work, so I'd sit backstage and work, and pop my head out every so often and make sure things were okay

After The Show

Once the show's over, get them to the backstage room, make sure they're happy and get them anything they need, then run to merch to help your merch seller. If you've no merch seller, then be at merch stand during last song, ready to sell, make sure band know you're there. Your job from here is to get everyone back in the van and to the hotel as efficiently as you can. You need to have an eye on merch and an eye on them. You might have crazy fans who want to meet them, or they could be really cool fans, who the band want to hang out with, which can delay your departure. They've come off stage on a high, you're 17 hours into another hard day and all you want to do is sleep. You need to try and juggle their enjoyment with the need to make sure they get to bed soon, so you can too.

GETTING PAID / DOING THE SETTLEMENT

Can I suggest that you carry only the cash you need on the road? You're in a big van, with unusual-looking people who wear sunglasses indoors. You attract attention and therefore you're a target. You don't want to be carrying all the show money, and all the merch money. Either don't take cash, or be sure that if you do it's because you need it for the next day, for PDs, or to pay for some equipment repairs or such. Either way you'll need to check the settlement with the promoter and either take payment, or don't, but you should always sign for something. I had a habit of photographing everything. If I sign to say I've confirmed a wire transfer, I'd photograph it and email that to the band's booking agent so that someone else had a record of it, because a month later, when promoter says I paid the band in cash, you'll want some proof that they didn't, because sure as shit you won't remember it

Once you're paid, your next target is...

BED

You've got to sleep and it's best if you all go together. If people are going to go out at night after the show, okay, they're adults. But personally I want all the gear loaded out (unless venue let you leave it there if it's secure, and that means you can get out of there sooner, which means more sleep), and I want everyone checked in to the hotel. That's when I feel my work is done, or anyway, my work with them is. I've probably got some accounts to do. Load out is often done in a room that's still busy, that might be converting into a nightclub, and if the band are talking to their fans you might get some help from venue staff and crew. If they want to go out all night and drink, fine. I'll worry about it in the morning. I've never had to bail anyone out of prison yet. Once you've loaded all the gear into the van, and you're ready to go, there are two very important things to do, no matter how tired you are

IDIOT CHECK

Go backstage, and on to the stage and make sure you can't see anything that belongs to you or anyone with you. This is where it's good if you're leaving your gear in the venue overnight and coming back in the morning. You can see the room in daylight (maybe), but anyway with fresh eyes

SAY THANK YOU

Thank everyone on the way out. Including the crew. When I arrive at a festival site I make sure I meet the crew, for crew are the most important people to me in the live music industry. If you want anything done in a venue or on a festival site, ask the crew

If it was a really good show, email the next day and ask manager to extend thanks to all and mention anyone specifically (or email venue staff yourself). Be sure to tell band's booking agent too, and manager, because they're wondering how things are going. Consider staying in touch with those you worked with and keep good records of your contacts. In the future they can perhaps help you professionally, maybe to get you work with other bands, or with local advice, backline, maybe a place to stay

AT THE HOTEL

On the mainland, accommodation (rarely in the UK or US) is usually something that will be provided for you, or you'll be given help with it. A promoter's floor, a friend of the promoter who has some space at his apartment. So far as the hotel location goes, you can stay close to venue (maybe harder to park, maybe heavy traffic in the morning) or you can head out of town, where parking is easier, and you're already 20 miles along the road when you wake up so avoiding city traffic. It's not much fun to hang out at a hotel at a motorway service station though

It's nice to have a bit of luxury sometimes, keep the band's spirits up. It's very hard to find triple rooms in America, and "twin" and "double" mean different things in different countries

A fellow TM tell his band and crew his two rules (which I also now use):

1. Stay the fuck away from me at the check in desk at hotels
2. Stay the fuck away from me at the check in desk at airports

Hotel check-ins are a pain in the arse. You're shattered and there's seven people standing around you with 14 cases and they all want to know what time breakfast is and what the wifi code is and what time check out is and... on it goes. So, tell them all to take a seat while you do your job, and once you give them their keys and tell them about wifi and breakfast and - crucially - what time lobby call is in the morning - take care of parking the van. Hotels abroad usually want to see passports at this point, and take copies of them, and have everyone individually fill out a form, and sign it. You can speed this up by calling or emailing ahead and giving them a credit card to secure the rooms, and asking them to arrange fast-check in. Some will, some won't. If they do, you'll walk in, be given an envelope with all the keys, you can send everyone to bed, and you can fill out one form

I always recommend calling ahead on the morning of a show to make sure the hotel has the reservation. If someone else booked it for you, this is doubly important, since you'll need to fix their mistake if there is one

Generally I go inside and check everyone in while a member of crew takes care of unloading personal bags and cases out and into the lobby. Some band members like to sleep with their guitar cases, so bear that in mind when you're loading the van; put those at the front so you're not pulling the van apart to reach them. Then I usually have a crew member park the van. Or, if I'm parking it, I sometimes have one of the crew come with me. Someone to help me reverse into a tight spot, or to look out for a parking space if I have to cruise around for a while

PARKING

If you need to park in the street, find a well-lit area, then find a brick wall and reverse into it, or something to stop door being opened. If someone wants to smash a window and take a shit on the front seat, fine. But there's no way they're getting the equipment. Accept parking tickets if you have to. Sometimes you just need to sleep. Getting to bed at 0300 then having to get up again at 0745 to walk to the van and put some money in the meter before you get a ticket? Fuck it. Stay in bed, accept you'll get a ticket

So you head back to the hotel for some sleep.

Actually, you don't. You need to take care of the...

ACCOUNTS

I know your tired, but do this now. If you're sharing a room with someone, sit in the lobby. They need to sleep. Tell you what though, when you finally head upstairs to go to bed, and you're sharing a room, use the bathroom near the lobby. Get half-undressed there. No point doing that in a dark bedroom while your roommate's trying to sleep. And when you're upstairs, and you know you need to leave early in the morning - maybe to put some money in the parking meter if you've decided to do that, put everything you've just taken off in the room's bathroom so you can dress there without waking your colleague

Everyone will have their own way of doing accounts, but you'll always have these two things as your basis for starting: a money wallet and a pile of receipts

Accounts are simple. In theory. You list all the money coming in, and have a piece of paper that corresponds to it. Those monies will be either from ATM withdrawals (you can get a receipt from the machine), or from merchandise income (you can make a receipt and have someone else sign it to say they confirm the amount)

You list all monies going out, same as above. PDs, equipment you hadn't figured would break so soon, taxis... anything you spend money on. There are sometimes occasions where you can't get a receipt for an item. Make one or, if it's for a very small amount, just mark no receipt on your spreadsheet. If you lose a receipt, mark it as lost. Good luck trying to number the receipts are you go along. You'll find one you forgot. Someone will give one to you for a pack of guitar strings they bought two days ago and forgot to tell you about it. That's your receipts out of order. If you want to have numbered receipts, go back and number them at the end of the tour. I used to number them, then two accountants told me they didn't care if they were numbered or not. Ask the accountant what they like. Talk to them about doing tour accounts before the tour starts. Make sure they're happy with your methods

It's not always possible to get a signature from a band or crew member when you hand over money. Maybe you've no time to issue a receipt, maybe they're getting in a taxi to some label meeting or promo. Take a note of it somewhere. Write it on your hand. Work out your own system

I convert currencies if I have the chance and so when the tour is over I have a balance in one currency. Maybe you lose a few pennies each time you do it, but you'll not do it much. There's not much time to visit banks

I used to keep my own money and the band's separate but it's largely impossible on a busy tour. If band needs money for a taxi, say, and the float is in another part of the building, I just give it to them out of my own money, but do that enough and before long you've no idea how much you're owed or how much you owe the float. So, just have one float and if it's down at the end of the tour I top it up from my own money to balance the books. Works for me. Other TMs might be reading this and thinking I'm out of my mind but whatever

DropBox

Check with the band's accountant whether or not they need paper receipts (US ones I've dealt with tend to, UK one didn't care). If they want paper receipts, it's one more thing to lose, one more thing to carry around. I've lost a few, left envelopes on planes and such

Either way, I still upload all the receipts to a DropBox, just in case I lose them. I photograph them on my Phone, convert to b&w (smaller file size, useful if your DB is of limited size), then upload them to a shared folder using DB. The band's accountant can then see the receipts as they're being issued, or received. I have a habit of naming each receipt so it's obvious what it is. Then, if the accountant doesn't want the physical receipt, I throw it away. It's held on my machine and in the DB, and because I back up my machine every day, I don't worry about losing it

If you have to spend a lot of money on something that you hadn't budgeted for - maybe you need to buy some new equipment - tell management and accountant. Don't give them surprises at the end of the tour

PRODUCTION OFFICE AND GENERAL TOOLS OF YOUR TRADE

A printer, paper and spare ink are very useful, but it's three more things to carry around. If you're doing a van or bus tour, fine. If you're on a plane, it starts to become a hassle. I've toured both with and without one and what I learned is this: for bands who want a printed set-list every night, I needed a printer. For bands that didn't, I didn't bother. I just asked venues and hotel receptions to print things for me when I occasionally needed it

You'll need a packet of Sharpie pens. Merch stand for autographs, marking boxes, writing on your hand. You'll always need a Sharpie and you'll lose them often

A Leatherman or some other multitool device. You'll need one with a pair of scissors for cutting backstage passes off. Remember you can't carry it on as hand-luggage on planes, and can't take it on Eurostar, because it has a knife. Or, just get a pocket knife

Pharmacy: Multivitamins. You're going to find it hard in some places to eat what you usually eat. There's not always time to stop at services, they don't always have what you want, and they're expensive. Headache tablets, hand sanitiser, particularly if any of the band are women. They'll find it useful after using festival toilets

Speaking of which, you should grab toilet roll from the hotel you're staying in, keep it in the van for use either at festivals, or between service stations when someone absolutely has to go

And get yourself a back-up battery for your phone

You'll need a bag. You'll be spending a lot of time with it, in all kinds of weather and indoor environments. You might decide to get something by Fjall Raven or John Chapman. Both great bags for walking around town on a Saturday afternoon, both utterly useless for your purposes. Get one light in colour if you like, but it'll get filthy quickly and unless you treat it with wax and a waterproof spray, you'll have a wet laptop. If you drop it, your laptop may get damaged. In my case - as someone with no fixed abode - my bag is my home. Instead of paying rent on a flat, this is what I spent my money on

The Tumi T-Pass retails at about £375, so make sure you buy it at Airport Duty Free. It's made of ballistic nylon, the precursor to Kevlar. It's waterproof, rip proof, hard-wearing, has many pockets, and all manner of nooks and crannies. The alternative is a rucksack which is better for your back, but takes longer to get off and they tend to have flap pockets with buttons or straps. You need zips. Quicker to access

If you're insistent upon a backpack, Mission Workshop get a good write-up. They've been called the Apple of the bag world. Snap-fasteners on flaps. Between £150 and £200. Do not cut corners when you're buying a bag

WASHING

Washing machines manufacturers have somehow convinced us that all our clothes needs 90 minutes to get them clean. They don't. They need a sink, hot water and a bar of soap. Travel with one pair of socks and one pair of underwear. Maybe two if you think you won't have time to wash them each night, or if you don't want your smalls hanging up in a friend's house. In fact, don't worry about drying them. Wash them in the shower then put them on. You'll not notice them in under two minutes, especially in the summer

Okay, I confess, I don't do so much of that now, but it isn't always easy to find time to do laundry, so you might need to. I travel with two suits now and six identical shirts. The last thing I want in the morning now is a decision about what to wear. Now I just need to worry about finding dry-cleaners

While we're talking about washing things, the most important thing to keep clean on a tour is you. Please shower. If you don't, it will soon become unpleasant for everyone. And speaking of unpleasant, if you're sharing a room with someone, try and use the bathroom in the lobby if you're "taking care of business". If you're sharing a room with someone, in a 24 hour period, you might spend as much as 23 hours in close proximity to the same person. It's no wonder people argue on tour. You're going to piss each other off, so being aware of how your actions affect other people is a very important skill. You're about to discover things about people that even their best friends and partners don't know, because their best friends and partners have never seen them under tour conditions. Keep close eye on everyone. Who's getting tired, who's arguing, who feels the cold, who's carrying an injury. Take care of them. If someone's struggling, pay for an extra room for them. Get them away from everyone and get them rested

WHAT WILL THE BAND EXPECT FROM YOU?

Methodical

A lot of TMinig is admin. You just need to be organised, and able to create order in very messy situations. The band will want - mostly - the same things each day Lights like this, X and Y backstage, merch set up like this, X and Y on stage before the show. You need to be able to recognise what needs to be set aside, and what needs to be prioritised and you need to rely on technology to help you. Have a checklist on your phone. You need to be able to set up systems and implement them. I use my hand a lot for taking notes, and also my iPhone's alarm clock to set myself reminders. Do not try to remember everything. You will fail

Dependable

You're going to want the band to depend on you but without completely relying on you. You need to be dependable. You need to inspire confidence in them. You need them to trust you. But they're adults. Treat them like adults (even when they're behaving like a bunch of kids. Set limits and guidelines. They might pay your wages but it's your job to keep the tour on the road and if their behaviour jeopardises that, speak up. If they're causing a ruckus in the back of the van while you're trying to navigate dark roads through the Welsh countryside at 3am, tell them to pipe the fuck down

Protective

Now and again you'll need to deal with an asshole. Don't become one. You're going to have to get in between the band and drunk fans, rude staff, whoever. Try not to punch anyone. Or just get good at spotting potential situations before they become situations

FINAL ADVICE

Loyalty Programmes

Start collecting points now, and try and focus on one or two airlines and hotel groups so you build up your points and membership level more quickly

Walk in Front, Stand Behind

Take them to security at an airport, and make sure they're all through safely before you go through, because if you're through first and one of them gets stuck, you may not be allowed to go back to help. This goes for anywhere where you can get separated. Always make sure they've checked in before you do. Always make sure they're on the bus before you leave. If the band and Sound Engineer make it to the show and you don't, the show will go ahead. If one of the band doesn't, it won't

Enjoy It

At the risk of getting philosophical, this is your life, and it's the bands. There's an extremely high chance that the band will never make a living at this, that this is their first and only tour. Make it enjoyable. Leave hotel earlier, push soundcheck back later (if you're quick to soundcheck). Stop for a hot meal, swim in a lake, climb a hill, look at the view, take photos

Don't be a Dick

There are enough dicks in the world