

## BLOG entry 03 June 2006

### *Reflections on project managing the greatest Rock'n'Roll tour in the World*

As well as a few corporate performances for Pfizer and GSK, much of my time has been taken up recently in project managing the John Otway 2006 World Tour. This is an audacious goal, with a budget of £2.5 million, requiring project execution skills with the precision of a Swiss watch to make it work.

How do you describe such an undertaking to people who don't understand the English Eccentric Cult Punk Rocker who has made an enduring success out of apparent failure? This has been occupying my mind for a while as I try to capture people's interest. Here is one of the 'elevator pitches' I developed to explain the concept:

Have you ever watched the cult rockumentary film 'This is Spinal Tap'... How about 'The Young One's... Whoops Apocalypse... The Rocky Horror Picture Show... ? Have you ever wanted to fly round the World in a private jet on a Rock'n'Roll tour; Play air guitar in BB King's exclusive club in New York? Get on stage at Sydney Opera House? Meet rock stars and make new friends as you traverse six continents in two weeks? Well, now we offer you the chance to live the dream life of a Rock'n'Roll star on the record breaking John Otway 2006 World Tour.

This trip really is unique – we have just booked Central Park in New York for our reception from the Cavern in Liverpool. The President of Tahiti is aware that we are calling in and has asked for a private performance. Chinese National TV is interested in putting the concert on every TV set in the land and we are making a documentary film to accompany the tour. Every day brings a fresh challenge and it truly is one of the best pieces of 'work experience' I have ever undertaken.

Yet, like most Rock'n'Roll adventures, it's the hard work that counts. At the moment my most pressing business problem is summed up by Abba in their hit 'Money, Money, Money'. Forget, sex and drugs. Cash is king. Hiring an Airbus requires that you pay in instalments. This means that like most business projects, cashflow is more important than the balance sheet and profit line. Fortunately the cashflow situation now looks fine with ticket sales coming in now that we have secured the venues and some other celebs. We also have some investors and a

number of corporate sponsors to help the tour go in style. The World Tour sponsorship prospectus and the World Tour brochure may be found at Number 8 on the amp knob at the front page of this website (the numbers go up to 11) if you are interested to learn more.

Far from improvisation and creativity, I have found myself reaching for some boring old structure to keep people focused on delivering promises etc. The music business is perhaps the complete opposite of many of the companies I visit. In the music biz, project plans are written on the back of fag (cigarette) packets, a critical path analysis is about finding the shortest route to the pub and promises are made to be broken. We now have a project team that could probably give Microsoft a run for its money. I shall report on progress as we move through the project towards take off.

Alongside this, I did a session for 'Teacher's TV' the other week, which was fairly riotous. It will be broadcast in early autumn once it has been vetted by 'Government experts'. 7 minutes may get cut to 7 seconds!!

Please post your comments on anything in this blog or start your own thread on the message board.

All the best / rock on

Peter aka The Dean