

Over the course of my internship this semester at Now Hear This, I learned many things that will prove to be beneficial in my future (and some things that have already been helpful!)

One thing that I did a lot of during my internship was sending out pitches for clients to radio stations, newspapers, and podcasts. At first, I only sent pre-written pitches. Later in the semester, I did end up writing my own pitches for some clients to be used for specific purposes. In doing this, I learned that it was important to keep the information included in the pitch relevant to the opportunity that I was asking for on behalf of the client. This determined what notable things about the client and their work to include in the pitch and what things weren't necessary to include. This also goes hand-in-hand with making sure that the pitch was the right length—not too long or too short.

On a related note, I learned a lot about searching for opportunities for clients. There are a lot of resources out there that can be utilized to find sources that would be willing to interview people for articles, podcasts, etc. Sending pitches out to all these places might seem a bit tedious, but you're bound to get at least one or two that respond saying they are interested. It would be foolish not to take advantage of these resources so that these clients can get their name out there.

Similarly, this experience really put my email communication skills to the test. I learned that when you are trying to book an interview for a client, or once an interview has already been booked, it is important to consistently send updates to the interviewer to keep them in the loop about everything that is going on. It is also vital to ask questions about anything that might be uncertain or that will be necessary to know on the day of the interview (especially if it takes place in a virtual setting: Zoom link, phone call, etc.) And, of course, it makes a world of difference to be polite and specific in any emails that are sent to the interviewer so that everything runs smoothly.

Another thing that I did a lot of during my internship was social media work for our clients. I went from never having used Facebook in my life to making multiple posts a month for a few different clients. I learned what sources can be used to find different occasions that could be related to the clients and their work, so that there could be more frequent and consistent posting. Once I determined what the posts for the month should be, I had to write captions for each of them. When writing the captions, I had to make sure the relation of the occasion to the client's work was clear and that it was worded in a way that promoted the client. Not every post is necessarily telling people "Buy my book!" but it should at least mention the work, so that it's kept at the forefront of people's minds. From there, I learned how to schedule posts for times when the client's audience is most active, so that it would be more likely that their posts are seen and engaged with.

I also did minimal website work for one of our clients. They were just starting up and so we had to determine what things were important to put on their website. Then, we had to organize and title things in a way that made sense, so that people would know where to go when they navigate through the site. I also figured out how to make an online form on the website that could accept applications for their membership, and have the responses sent directly to the email address of our client without him having to log in directly to the website.

Lastly, I wrote a handful of newsletters for the two podcasts that Bruce hosts on a weekly basis—one being his entertainment podcast, the other being his Catholic sports podcast. For the entertainment podcast, it was especially important to make sure I wrote the blurb about the featured guest in a way that grabs people's attention but without throwing a bunch of stats and numbers in their face. For the Catholic sports podcast, I had to make sure I highlighted the featured guests' sports background as well as their faith. With both newsletters, I learned the

importance of length and formatting to make it more likely that people would actually read it, instead of skimming it or not reading it at all.

The amazing thing about all these skills that I learned during my internship at this PR firm is that they're not just applicable to a PR job—PR isn't what I want to pursue as a career, music ministry is. But all these skills are transferrable. One example of this is that pitches could be used both internally and externally as a music minister, from pleading my case about hymns or equipment to the pastor or finance committee, to trying to promote a concert series being held at the church. Social media is also often something that falls under the purview of a music director at a church, if only because there's usually not a separate tech person. Whether it be setting up livestreams for Masses or making posts calling people to come to events happening at the parish, working efficiently with social media is an important skill to have.

In summary, working at Now Hear This as an intern this semester was an amazing experience that allowed me to learn so many things that will be valuable for my career, and I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity!