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EIGHT TIPS ON CLICK TRACKS FOR YOUR WORSHIP BAND

USING A CLICK TRACK CAN BE AN INCREDIBLY HELPFUL TOOL FOR YOUR BAND IN NUMEROUS WAYS. IT CAN HELP ADDRESS VARIOUS TIMING ISSUES THAT YOUR BAND MAY BE FACING. RUSHING DRUMMERS, LOOSE SECTIONS WHERE THERE IS NO RHYTHM HAPPENING, SLOPPY DELAY REPEATS ON ELECTRIC GUITARS, ETC. THESE ARE JUST A FEW THINGS YOUR BAND WILL BE ABLE TO ADDRESS BY STARTING TO WORK WITH A CLICK TRACK. HERE ARE SOME QUICK TIPS TO HELP YOU GET STARTED.

CHOOSE A METRONOME UNIT OR APPLICATION

THERE ARE NUMEROUS HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE CLICK TRACK SOLUTIONS. FOR EXAMPLE, THERE ARE MANY MOBILE METRONOME APPS THAT ARE EITHER FREE OR VERY LOW COST. IN CONTRAST, A DEDICATED HARDWARE METRONOME IS MORE EXPENSIVE BUT IT IS ALSO EASIER TO USE AND MORE RELIABLE. I WOULD RECOMMEND STARTING WITH A SOFTWARE SOLUTION TO HELP YOU GET A HANDLE ON WHAT WORKS BEST FOR YOU AND YOUR BAND.

ONE THING TO KEEP IN MIND, IT IS HELPFUL TO FIND A CLICK TRACK SOLUTION THAT HAS PROGRAMMABLE PRESETS. IN THE LONG RUN THIS WILL ENABLE A QUICKER TURNAROUND TIME GETTING FROM SONG TO SONG IN YOUR WORSHIP SETS.

CHOOSE A CLICK TRACK SOUND THAT CUTS THROUGH THE MUSIC

MAKE SURE TO CHOOSE A CLICK TRACK SOUND THAT WILL EASILY BE HEARD OVER THE LOUDEST MOMENTS OF YOUR BAND'S PLAYING. ALSO, CHOOSE A MONITORING SOLUTION FOR YOUR BAND THAT MINIMIZES THE AMOUNT OF CLICK TRACK BLEEDING OUT. ANY DECENT PAIR OF IN-EAR MONITORS SHOULD CUT DOWN THE BLEED ISSUE SUFFICIENTLY.

PRACTICE OFFLINE

BEFORE YOU START YOUR BAND WORKING WITH A CLICK TRACK, GET COMFORTABLE PLAYING WITH ONE BY YOURSELF. SPEND TIME GETTING USED TO DIFFERING TEMPOS AND TIME SIGNATURES. GET USED TO PLAYING IN TIME WITH A LOT OF MUSICAL DENSITY AND ALSO WITH A LOT OF SPACE. THEN BRING THE CLICK TRACK TO REHEARSAL AND DO THE SAME EXERCISES WITH THE BAND.

DECIDE ON THE BEST APPROACH

CHOOSE WHO WILL TRIGGER THE CLICK TRACK. MANY TIMES THIS WILL BE THE DRUMMER. IF YOU DON'T HAVE AN IN-EAR MONITORING SYSTEM THE CLICK TRACK CAN BE FED TO THE DRUMMER ALONE. THE TEMPO CAN BE COMMUNICATED BY PULSES ON THE HI-HAT, RIDE CYMBAL, OR BY USING SHAKERS OR OTHER PERCUSSION IN MOMENTS WHERE THE DRUMS ARE NOT PLAYING.

USE THE “ONE BEAT” SETTING | E.G. 1/4 & 1/8

4/4, 6/8, AND OTHER TIME SIGNATURES ARE USUALLY NOT NECESSARY. TIME IS WASTED WAITING FOR THE “ONE” TO COME AROUND. USING “ONE BEAT” MEASURES HELP TO EXPEDITE GETTING INTO EACH SONG.

SUBDIVIDE AS NEEDED

SUBDIVIDING IS THE ACT OF BREAKING EACH BEAT INTO SMALLER PIECES. FOR INSTANCE, A CLICK TRACK CAN BE BUILT BASED ON EIGHTH NOTES RATHER THAN ON QUARTER NOTES. SLOWER TEMPOS MAY NEED A SUBDIVIDED CLICK. TEMPOS BELOW 80 BEATS PER MINUTE (BPM) CAN BENEFIT FROM USING AN EIGHTH NOTE SUBDIVISION. SUBDIVIDING CAN ALSO HELPFUL FOR BETTER DIALING IN THE GROOVE. MANY METRONOMES HAVE “SWING” OR “SHUFFLE” SETTINGS TO AID THE GROOVE WHEN SUBDIVIDING.

IF NECESSARY, USE THE CLICK AS A TEMPO REFERENCE ONLY

ONE WAY TO START USING A CLICK TRACK IS AS A TEMPO REFERENCE AT THE START OF SONGS ONLY. PLAY THE CLICK TRACK AT THE TOP OF THE SONG BEFORE THE DRUMMER COUNTS IN AND THEN TURN IT OFF. YOU CAN CHECK THE TEMPO DRIFT BY TRIGGERING THE CLICK AGAIN AT THE END OF THE SONG. THIS CAN BE A HELPFUL FIRST STEP ON YOUR WAY TO RUNNING A CLICK TRACK THROUGHOUT ENTIRE SONGS AND SETS.

HAVE AN ESCAPE PLAN

MANY TIMES WHEN USING A CLICK TRACK THINGS CAN GO WRONG. THE BAND SLOWS DOWN OR SPEEDS UP. THE CONGREGATION CAN START CLAPPING ENTHUSIASTICALLY AND ALSO SPEED UP THE TEMPO. IT IS IMPORTANT TO HAVE AN ESCAPE PLAN. IN OTHER WORDS, KNOW WHERE THE "STOP" BUTTON IS LOCATED. MAKE IT SIMPLE TO ELIMINATE THE CLICK TRACK IF THINGS GO AWRY.

USING BENCHMARK TOOLS SUCH AS CLICK TRACKS CAN BE CHALLENGING.

BLESSINGS ON YOUR EFFORTS TO HONE YOUR MUSICIANSHIP

BY USING CLICK TRACKS!!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

CASEY CORUM

CASEY AND HIS FAMILY ARE BASED IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA. PRIOR TO HIS MOVE TO SOUTHERN CAL, CASEY SERVED AS VICE PRESIDENT AND CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER FOR VINEYARD MUSIC (NOW VINEYARD WORSHIP) FOR OVER 10 YEARS. IN ADDITION TO THIS ROLE, CASEY ALSO SERVED AS THE NATIONAL WORSHIP TASK FORCE LEADER FOR VINEYARD USA. HE IS AN ACCOMPLISHED MUSICIAN AND PRODUCER AND HAS ALSO BEEN AN INFLUENTIAL VOICE AS A WORSHIP LEADER, CONFERENCE SPEAKER, AND SONGWRITER. SOME OF CASEY'S MOST WELL-KNOWN SONGS INCLUDE FORM US, DWELL, BETTER THAN, & YOUR LOVE IS AMAZING. CASEY HAS A PASSION TO ENCOURAGE AND EQUIP WORSHIP LEADERS FOR LIFE AND MINISTRY. CASEY IS NOW THE WORSHIP PASTOR FOR THE VINEYARD ANAHEIM. CASEY AND HIS WIFE ANGIE HAVE FOUR DAUGHTERS AND ARE VERY GLAD TO CALL VINEYARD ANAHEIM HOME.

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