

Brian Hartzog – www.brianhartzog.com
brian@brianhartzog.com

Tools for the indie songwriter/ artist

Survey

- 60% wanted this topic
- 46% are songwriters; 33% are artists
- What did you want?

Tools: What I mean

- Any tool (hardware, software, or physical)
- Not just tools, also process
- Will cover free and paid
- Will cover how I do things
- Forum: please ask questions and suggestions

Who am I?

- Songwriter/indie artist
- 2 CDs
- 3 Music-related websites
- Technical Analyst
- Technical writing experience
- Windows based, Internet based, some Mac
- Have laptop, desktop, smart phone (Blackberry), iPad



Start with the obvious...

Music Business

Music

Business

Music

Where does it all begin?

It all begins with a song...
-NSAI

Where does a song begin?

With the Idea!

Songwriting: Ways the idea comes

Inspiration vs Perspiration

Songwriting

Inspiration: the tools

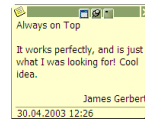
- The goal: quickly capture and securely preserve the idea!
- For lyrics: phone or notebook
- For music: phone, answering machine, hand-held recorder

Songwriting: Capture the Inspiration

Lyric ideas:



Sync
→



When it gets
too big



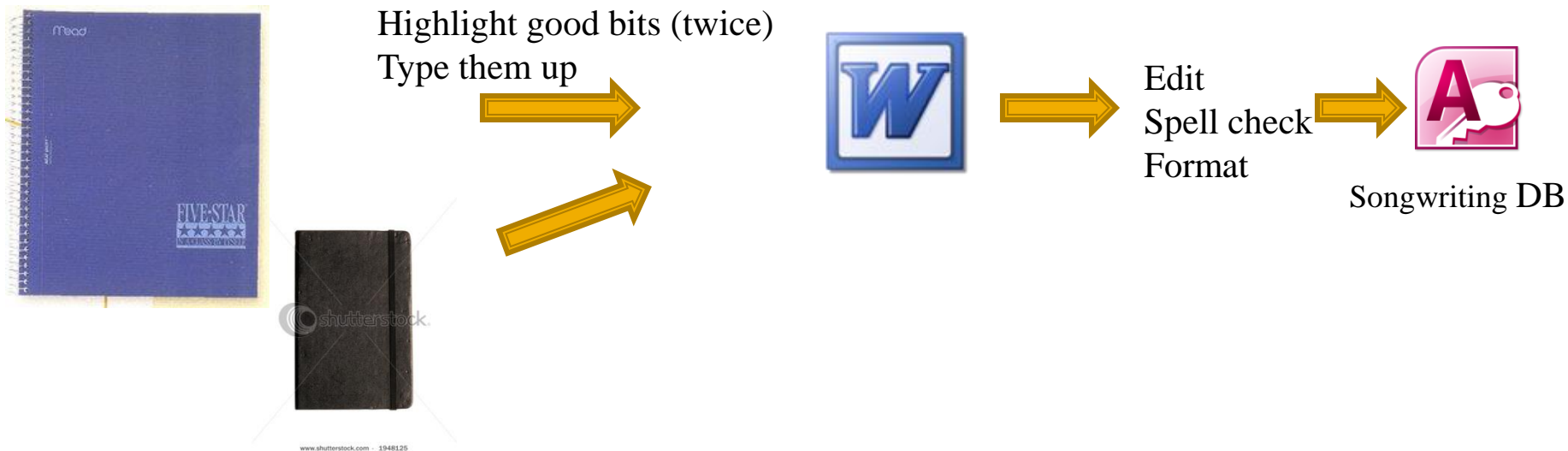
Edit
Spell check
Format



Songwriting DB

Songwriting: Capture the Inspiration

Lyric ideas:



Songwriting: Capture the Inspiration

Lyric ideas:

- Show notebooks
- Show typed file
- Show Outlook memos/sync
- Show songwriting DB

Songwriting: Capture the Inspiration


Music ideas:



Copy
Email
MMS



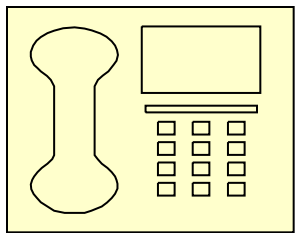
Listen/categorize
Data entry



Songwriting DB

Songwriting: Capture the Inspiration

Music ideas:



Call an answering
machine



Listen/categorize
Store



Songwriting: Capture the Inspiration

Music ideas:



The Uncontrolled Environment

Paid tools:

- Smartphone or handheld recorder
- Microsoft Office (Outlook, Word, Access)

Free tools:

- Notebooks and pens by the bed, in the car, at work, in your coats.
- Answering machine
- Google docs

The Uncontrolled Environment

Other options:

- Master Writer
- Microsoft Word as the storage medium (bookmarks)
- iPhone or new iTouch (with a \$2 mini mic)
- Hand-held recorder

The Uncontrolled Environment

- Questions or tips?

Perspiration

Creating music in a controlled environment.

Controlled environment

- Place where you create, extend, edit, and finish music, lyric, and full song ideas
- Can have multiple ones or portable ones
- Anywhere you work where your tools are already set up

Examples:

- Practice room
- Band room
- Home office/studio
- Cowriting session
- Configuration of your demo studio...or your writing space

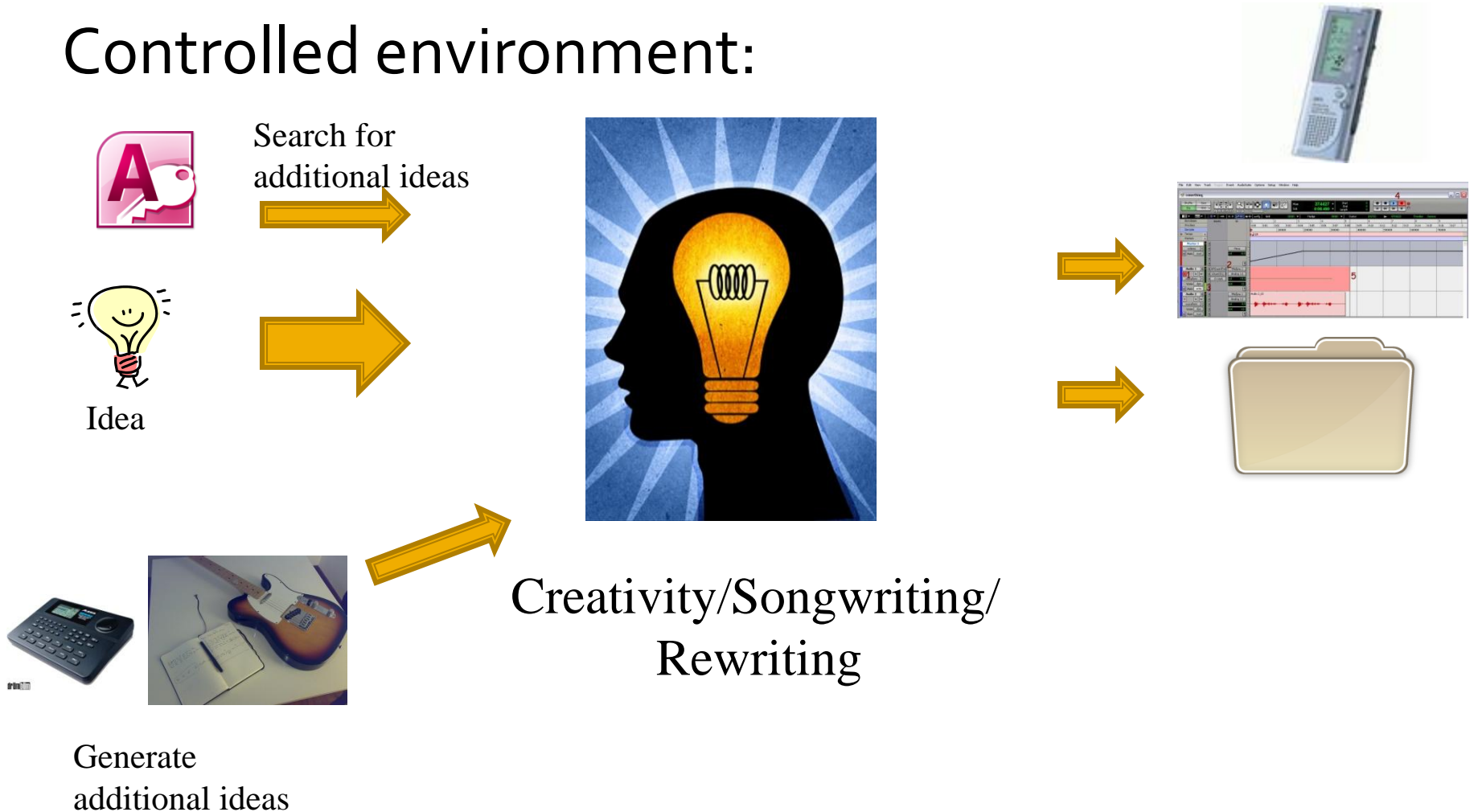
Perspiration: Process

Goals:

- Create an idea
- Flesh it out
- Combine lyrics and music
- Finish draft of song
- Preserve it

Perspiration: Process

Controlled environment:



Controlled environment

Tools:

- A recording device that is easy to use, quick to set up--makes it easy to preserve ideas
- A workspace where you can write or type your lyrics.

Controlled environment

Tools:

Notebook

Instruments

Laptop with:

- A looping program like Acid and/or Multi-track program (Sonar, ProTools, Logic) and/or a 2 track editor like Sound Forge
- A rhyming dictionary (Rhymesaurus)
- Access to quotes, thesaurus, dictionary, research, etc. (Google and rhymezone.com)
- Chord progressions (SongTrellis)
- Searchable access to your ideas (MS Word of your lyrics, MasterWriter, a custom access database)
- Drum beats (Groove Monkee and/or Drums on Demand)
- Morning pages tool or Microsoft Word for stream of consciousness writing
- Lyric and character worksheets
- Backups! (USB hard drive)

Controlled environment

Show Lyric Tools:

- A rhyming dictionary (Rhymesaurus)
- Searchable access to your ideas (MS Word of your lyrics, MasterWriter, a custom access database)
- Notebook, Morning pages tool (750words.com), or Microsoft Word for stream of consciousness writing
- Mind mapping tool (Freemind or Mind Meister)

Controlled environment

Lyric tools (free)

Notebook

Google:

- Definition (define songwriting)
- Google wonder wheel

Rhymezone.com

Figures of speech/tropes

- <http://rhetoric.byu.edu/>

Lyric and character worksheets

Controlled environment

Show Music Tools:

Multi-track program:

- Sonar, ProTools, Logic
- Acid
- 2 track editor like Sound Forge

Chord progressions:

- <http://www.songtrellis.com>

Controlled environment

Show Music Tools:

Drums:

- GrooveMonkee (midi beats/drum patterns)
- Drums on Demand (loops and individual drum sounds)

Recording

Recording tools:

- Instruments
- Sequencing
- Multi-track recording
- Audio editing
- Signal processing
- Mixing
- Two-track editing
- Notation

Recording

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Sonar

Digital tape

Sound Forge

Finale and GuitarPro

The Controlled Environment

- Questions or tips?

Questions?

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