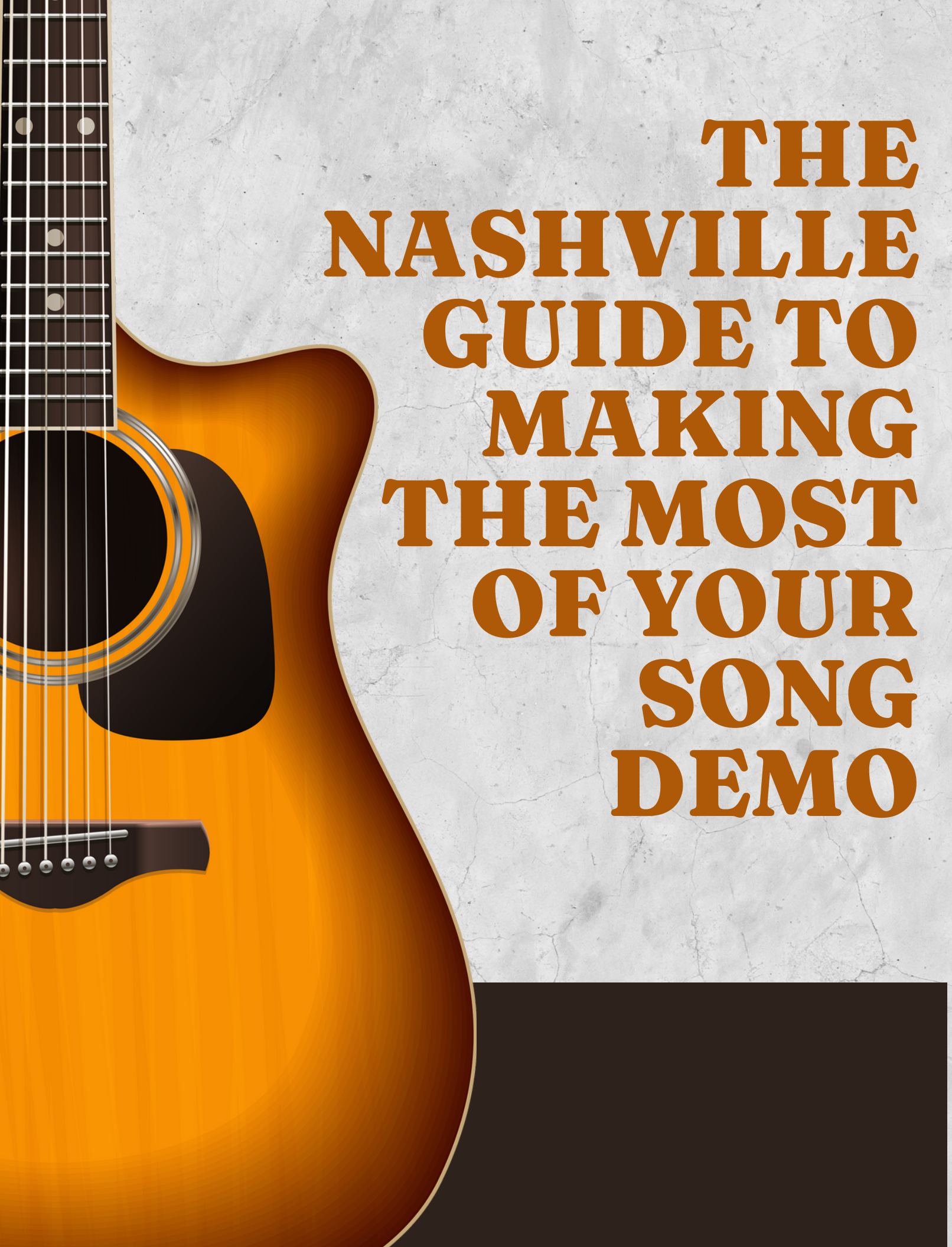

THE NASHVILLE GUIDE TO MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR SONG DEMO

You wrote a song that you are really excited about, now what? Well, you need to get a great demo of the song! The demo is what you will then take to all the different avenues to try and get your song out there. Whether it is putting your demo on your website or social media for promotion, or pitching your demo to publishers/record labels/artists, you have to have the best display of your song to do this.

Does that mean it has to be expensive? No. Stripped down is in and can still be great. But you want to have quality music and a quality singer that fits the style of the song you are going for. And you want the style of the demo to fit the song.

It is important for you to be selective all the way around. You may not demo every song but you do want to demo your best songs. One thing you could always try is to play your songs for some friends or put up your personal recording of the song and see what others think!

A couple of things you need to think about when planning your demo --

WHO WILL BE LISTENING?

If you are just throwing it up on social media for your friends and family, then you don't need to get too technical. If you are playing it for experienced producers or A&R people, a well-done professional production will suffice and it doesn't have to be anything overly fancy. But if you are playing for someone newer in the game, they may need all the bells and whistles and may not be able to hear the potential in your song without going all out. Something to consider, you can always do a simpler demo and add more things later if you choose to. For example, just do drums, bass, acoustic guitar, electric guitar, and piano and if later you want to give it more flair by adding things like fiddle or mandolin, etc., you can always do that with the tracks (you would need to use the same studio/production team or you would need to make sure you have the individual tracks and not just the finished, mixed copy).

WHO WILL YOU BE PITCHING TO?

Will you be pitching the song to male or female artists? This is an important one because it determines who sings your demos. If it is a song that can be sung by either, you should either do the demo in two versions (male and female) or, if you can only afford one version, it has been long recommended to do a male version as it tends to be harder for male artists to picture singing a song that they are hearing being sung by a female. So, if you can only do one demo, go with a male demo as you will have more gender crossover appeal.

WHO SHOULD PRODUCE YOUR DEMO?

Leave this to the pros! Does that mean you shouldn't weigh in and give your thoughts and opinions, of course not! You should absolutely share your vision for the song. But, at the end of the day, assuming you hired professionals, don't stifle what your song could be by micromanaging. Allow them to do what they do. You can always take things away if you don't like them! But if you allow them creative freedom to play what they hear, you have no idea the new heights your song can go to!