

d.i.y. publishers

EVER THOUGHT ABOUT MAKING YOUR OWN ZINE OR RUNNING YOUR OWN LABEL? OR HAS YOUR BAND EVER PONDERED ON RELEASING A LIVE DVD? MICROCOSM AND MVD ARE TWO PUBLISHING COMPANIES THAT STARTED FROM THE DIY COMFORTS OF THEIR OWN LIVING ROOMS AND ARE AN EXAMPLE TO US ALL TO GET OFF OUR LAZY ASSES AND DO SOMETHING.



Steve and Joe on tour with the Bouncing Souls | Photo by Sarah Downey



Joe & Sparky on tour, eating at the Hard Times Cafe in Minneapolis, from Dave Roche's photo series "people eating" | Photo by Dave Roche

MICROCOSM PUBLISHING

Microcosm Publishing is an independent publisher and distributor based out of Portland, OR that distributes ideas and information through awesome zines, books, pamphlets, stickers, buttons, patches, t-shirts, films and more.

Like most notable DIY companies, Microcosm emerged from boredom way back in '96. "Microcosm came about because my roommates had day jobs and I worked at night and was always hanging out alone during the day while my friends were at work or in college. I needed a hobby," says founder Joe Biel. Over the past 12 years, Microcosm has morphed from a hobby to a terrific company that aims to publish one book per month and that independently distributes information worldwide with the aim to reach anybody and everybody. They have even just opened their first store to the public.

So they must be busy as hell, right?

"I'm not sure there is anything 'behind the scenes' going on here," Biel confesses. Microcosm isn't a company that nurtures in-house egos, but is more a two-way street between the company and creative people worldwide. Microcosm aims to expand minds outside of the box, but within the community.

The company stands up with such a wealth of creative material, it's hard to pick favorites. Book-wise Biel decides, "I just read Erick Lyle's *The Lower Frequencies* and felt compelled to write about it endlessly. That makes a good book, right?" Right, and such compulsion captures the point of Microcosm perfectly - inspiration, DIY innovation and creativity - all within a fuckin' good read.

Microcosm has gone from strength to strength and is an invaluable resource for zine writers across the world. The company stands up and makes the point that zines should be a recognized contribution to a society, which generally overlooks them. Biel's ultimate goal is to add "...credibility to zine writers and their ethics, teach self empowerment, show hidden history, and nurture people's creative side."

The future looks bright.

microcosmpublishing.com

MVD

MVD Entertainment Group is a Pennsylvania-based visual (and audio) company that puts out some of the most recognized music DVDs worldwide. The list of punk rock and underground releases is beyond comparison. Ranging from The Cramps, *Live At Napa State Mental Hospital* to the Bad Brains, *Live At CBGB 1982*; MVD finds and releases all of 'those' shows you wish you could have seen.

How did this company come to be? Flashback to 1986, MVD started very DIY in owner Tom Seaman's house. Clint Weiler, MVD's resident publicist, enlightened us further, "MVD began in [Tom's] living room. Essentially, he was doing a rare and hard to find VHS service of all music-related videos... Eventually what happened was he would get a hold of exclusive content from the artists themselves and that's sort of how the label side began."

As interest grew in his work, so did MVD and by '99 they took the leap from VHS to DVD which was "still considered to be a bit of a risk because it was a new format, but it proved to be our bread and butter" leading them to become one of the top two DVD producers in America this year.

No matter how far they excel, MVD is still a family affair, with Seaman and his wife, plus their son and daughter all taking involved senior roles in the company, "It's very interesting," says Weiler, "it's a rare and pretty nice side to the whole thing." The family works alongside sales people, publicists and more to acquire and release music footage of the highest caliber.

Weiler is also excited about the future of MVD, which is set to release a wealth of independent films, documentaries and live DVD's of all genres, along with new CDs and even limited vinyl. The beauty of releasing punk rock and underground footage is "it's just like this insane stuff that would never ever happen again," says Weiler, which is what makes MVD such a valuable resource for music lovers everywhere.

mvdzb.com



Music Video Distributors Photos by Luigi Ciuffetelli Photography



Ed Seaman, CCO
Photo by Luigi Ciuffetelli Photography



Clint Weiler, Director of Publicity
Photo by Luigi Ciuffetelli Photography