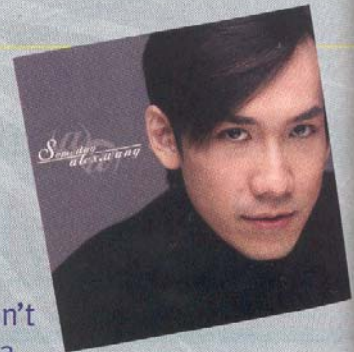


# Alex who?

You don't know Alex Wang? With one CD to his name (on display at HMV – thankfully, he says – where you don't have to be tying your shoelaces to spot it), Alex Wang is a singer, songwriter and an entrepreneur. He even markets his CD, between studying for an NUS degree and running his own web design business.



**WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO MAKE OF A YOUNG MAN** who comes early for his appointment, chooses a seat at a local restaurant where the lighting “sets off” his jet-black hair and clear skin? He's just cut his own CD, forking out somewhere in the region of \$20,000 of his own money.

Who wrote and sang all the songs in *Someday*? Alex Wang, 25. Who composed the music? Alex. Who practises his waves and smiles in anticipation of stardom? You guessed it – Alex Wang, who was born Alexander Wong.

Depending on how you look at it, Alex is either an amusingly persistent vainpot or a go-getter. He confesses that his mother, a retired pharmacist, wears a distressed look when she enters his room and finds her youngest of three sons trying to perfect his celebrity smile in the mirror. (Her other sons are a financial reporter and a postgraduate student in London. Alex's father is a retired manager).

Alex is different. He bears a resemblance to a celebrity newscaster we once used to know – Sen Lam. Certainly, Alex is well spoken with a manicured look that will let him carry off a glamour TV job.

But, the Penang-born Singapore PR wants to be a singer and wants to realise his childhood dream of cutting his own album. Unlike others with similar dreams, this young man has done something about it.

He's had to take a few hard knocks along the way. The hardest was when he was cheated of \$8,000 early last year by three men who said that was their fee for helping him cut an album. Nothing came of it and he soon realised that they were taking him for a ride. Alex feels the pain of this lesson to this day. The money he lost came from an inheritance from his late paternal grandmother.

## Conned, but not beaten

“It did strike me as odd that the soundproofed room for the recording studio only appeared after the \$8,000 left my pocket,” said Alex, still seething with anger at the thought of having been so gullible.

After months of giving him the run-around, one of the three squealed and confessed that the “CD was not going to happen”. With his second brother in tow, Alex confronted the “kingpin”, who met them at an appointed time with a “greasy gangster”. Exit brothers!

Alex's parents decided to put their foot down at that point, telling him to write off the \$8,000. They wanted him to focus

on his studies.

Alex finished his Diploma in Electronic Commerce at the Singapore Polytechnic and made them happy by continuing his education as a second year student in the NUS School of Business.

But, he also started a web design company to earn money to pay for his dream of cutting his own album. “I was determined to have the cake, the icing and to eat it as well.”

In early August this year, *Someday* was born. The price tag for making it: \$20,000 plus, plus.

“It would have cost much more if I had hired people. I designed my own cover, sang and wrote all the songs. The only thing I splurged on was the glamour shot of myself on the cover,” he added.

To Alex, the well-styled photography was an investment, the first step in promoting his CD.

“I had cut my own CD. But, the album is not going to move itself. I have to help it move.” he said.

Here's a chap who deserves to get to where he wants to be.

You might want to ask for his autograph early. ✕



## Alex Wang's tips on how to cut your own CD

- **Empty your pockets** - It's expensive to cut your own CD – \$20,000 is just a base figure. Check out as many recording studios as possible and compare prices. Remember to factor in the cover printing cost. The studio where I finally recorded charged me about \$50 an hour. They gave me a lot of freedom to do as I wanted and just helped me where I needed help.
- **Be very confident** - Too many people will tell you that your dream is not going to come true. Don't take another step unless you're willing to go the mile.
- **Be practical about it** - If you have the skill, go for it and cut cost by doing things yourself. If not, you must be able to pay people to do the job for you. But, check people out and don't make the mistake I did.
- **Package yourself** - This is the toughest bit. Glamour and singing doesn't stop with just one CD. You need to think about the kind of image you want to project and work at being consistent. This is a new game in Singapore. It's okay if people think you're weird.
- **Go for it!** - You never know until you try.

Love, Alex