BANDCAMP EMPOWERS ARTISTS [29/6/2013]

We provide a rock-solid platform for **selling your music and merchandise to your fans**, and we bring your music to a thriving community of enlightened listeners who understand that the best way to support the artists they love is by directly giving them money. To date, artists have made $41 million using Bandcamp, and $2.0 million in the last 30 days alone.

Bandcamp provides a professional home on the web for your music. It's straightforward to set up, you get your own bandcamp.com address, unlimited storage, and high-quality audio. An MP3 may be fine for most, but a vocal minority of fans demand your tunes in high-quality formats like FLAC and Apple Lossless, and obscure ones like Ogg Vorbis. We say it's crazy to expect an artist to create and maintain all those choices. So on Bandcamp, you upload a single, lossless audio file (such as a WAV or AIFF), and we lovingly convert it to every conceivable format your fans could possibly desire.

Bandcamp sites work and look great on mobile devices. Everything is optimized for the smaller screen and touch interface, so your albums look good, fans can browse your merchandise with ease, and the checkout flow is fast and intuitive.

Bandcamp gives you the flexibility to charge whatever price for your music you see fit (including zero), or let fans name their own price, with the minimum chosen by you. It's entirely in your hands (as it of course should be).

You can sell both your physical merchandise and your digital music from Bandcamp, and better yet, you can sell them together. So, for example, you can easily create a vinyl + digital package where your fans get the music immediately, without having to wait for their record.

Bandcamp's community features – things like fan accounts, artist recommendations, Discover, tag pages and the weekly show – drive tens of thousands of sales each month, far surpassing our modest fees.

Bandcamp's rich, up-to-the-instant stats system reveals who's linking to you, where your music is embedded, which tracks are most and least popular, and what's being downloaded and when, which search engine terms are sending traffic your way.

Bandcamp gives you, your fans and the press a bevy of sharp, customizable music players to embed across the web. They're simple, effective, and completely focussed on driving fans back to your site.

Unsolicited Testimonials

I've always tried to be as directly connected with fans as possible, but until you guys came along, the actual facilitation and sales-element of the infrastructure was much more difficult. Bandcamp brings the whole picture together into a very lovely package that not only works, but works WELL. Me and my team made more in one night than I've seen to date from my 2008 (major-label) album.
Amanda Palmer

Bandcamp is the best thing that's happened to music in the last 5 years. I find myself using Bandcamp almost exclusively as my website these days. Being able to set my own prices, and not those chosen by a corporate hive-mind, is great. The staff is helpful and responsive, and getting paid immediately via PayPal is soooo much better than waiting months for a check savagely slashed by 30%. It's always encouraging to see the Cha-Ching emails roll in, especially with how many people

pay more than I ask for! Bandcamp has made it so much easier to make a living off of music, and I can't wait to see what new features lie in wait!
Danny B

(from a fan writing to an artist)
Subject: Awesome
I heard of the Cuban Cowboys this morning on NPR and liked the music, so I listened to more at your site and loved it so much I bought two copies of your CD. I love rock and I love Cuban, Mexican, and Spanish music and find your music to be refreshingly excellent. Thank you for:

- Allowing me to listen to the whole CD before purchasing
- Giving me that many choices of downloadable music (I rip all my CDs to FLAC, so that is great), especially the open and non-drm formats
- Letting me download the music right away even though I opted to purchase the CD
- Making the whole site experience work perfectly in Linux
- I don't write letters often for things like this, but I was so pleased with your site and music I had to let you know. I wish more musicians would distribute their music like you do. Keep making awesome music :) -Andrew

Subject: I love what you guys are doing
I discovered your site a couple weeks ago when Sufjan released the All Delighted People EP. At that time, I downloaded the EP without really thinking much about the website I was on; the process was very fluid and the site did a good job of facilitating my purchase without getting in the way. I discovered the site anew today while researching a small artist who, I learned, has a Bandcamp page. Impressed by the page design and especially the full-track streams, I did some poking around to figure out what exactly Bandcamp is. The conclusion I came to is that Bandcamp is nothing short of the future of digital music distribution.

You see, I spend a lot of money on music and I worry a lot about where that money goes. When I buy an album digitally on Amazon, how much of my money goes to Amazon, how much to the label, and how much actually reaches the artist? I always wonder. A few times I've simply thrown up my hands in frustration and decided that it's impossible to know which mode of purchase will most greatly benefit the artist, which is why I've settled on Amazon -- it's the most straightforward and seamless for me, the consumer. That said, Bandcamp blows Amazon out of the water. Hands down. No clunky downloader, no frustrating searches for the right artist, album, or song. Your artist page design is wonderful in its simplicity, and I completely agree with your philosophy about how important it is to allow customers to hear music before they buy it. I cannot think of any way that I could have a simpler or more satisfying experience as a customer. And most important is your transparency about the cut you take. I think the cut is a perfectly reasonable amount for the service you provide. It's not just reasonable, it's a great deal for the artist.

All this to say, I am overwhelmingly excited about what you guys are doing and I thank you for it. I will spread the word about Bandcamp and seek opportunities to support the site as a customer. Congratulations on the recent Billboard chart achievements; I'm sure they won't be the last ones.
-Andrew Smith

PRICING

The basic service is free. There are no signup costs, and no listing fees. We make money via a revenue share on sales: 15% on digital, 10% on merchandise. In addition to all our great free features, we also offer some optional premium features.

Is there a volume discount? Yes, the revenue share on digital drops from 15% to 10% as soon as you reach $5,000 USD in sales (and stays there, provided you've made at least $5,000 in the past 12 months).

How does that work for labels? The revenue share rate is based on sales to your PayPal email address, not your Bandcamp account. So if you're a label and have five artist accounts all using the same PayPal address, your rate will be calculated by looking at the combined sales of all five of those artists. Power in numbers!

For merchandise sales, does the 10% revenue share apply to shipping and tax?
No. Shipping and tax, if applicable, are not included when calculating the share on merch.

Are payment processing fees included in the revenue share rates?
No, processing fees are separate and typically range between 4 and 6%. Please see the details on our website, including tips on what you can do to minimize those fees.

I'm selling higher priced items through Bandcamp. Can I get a better deal? Definitely. Some people sell higher priced items like super deluxe packages or beat licenses through Bandcamp, and with name-your-price we occasionally see superfans paying big bucks for a single item (thanks mom!). That's why the revenue share only applies to the first $100 of an item (or the item total when more than one of that item is purchased).

How do I get paid, and how often? When a fan makes a purchase, the money flows directly from them into whatever PayPal account you specify (Bandcamp doesn't hold your money).

Then how does Bandcamp get paid? As you sell on Bandcamp, we track your revenue share balance, and when a sale comes along that's less than or equal to your balance, that sale goes to Bandcamp. Let's look at an example. Say you're at the 10% rate, and you sell an album for $10. All $10 of that sale goes straight to you, but your revenue share balance (the amount you owe Bandcamp) is now $1. Then you sell another album for $10. All $10 of that sale also goes straight to you, but your balance is now $2. You keep on selling $10 albums, and those sales keep on going to you. However, upon the sale of your tenth $10 album, your balance has reached $10, so that $10 sale, and only that sale, goes to Bandcamp (and your balance is then reset back to zero). You can view your balance at any time by exporting your sales history from the Sales section of your Tools page.

Bandcamp Premium Features

Bandcamp Pro – Our monthly Pro option offers several great additional features, including batch upload for queueing up an entire album's worth of material at a time, private streaming for giving the press exclusive access to unreleased tracks and albums, custom domains for a touch of added professionalism, and Google Analytics integration for obsessing over even more stats.

Download codes – Download codes are unique codes good for a download of a track or album. Generate them for any of your tunes on Bandcamp, then send them out via email or print them up and bundle them with your merch. Every account comes with 200 codes to try out. You can either buy more for a small fee (from 1.5¢ to 3¢ each, depending on quantity), or earn more by selling (we add 1,000 codes for every $500 USD in sales).

Download Credits – Every Bandcamp account comes with 200 downloads per month of tracks or albums that you're giving away (meaning you've set them to free, or let-fan-name-price with no minimum and the fan enters zero). Once each month, we look at your download credits, and if you

have less than 200 remaining, we bump you back up to 200. If that won't cut it (because you're planning a big free download campaign, for example), you can either buy more (they're 1.5-3¢ each, depending on quantity), or earn more by selling (we add 1,000 credits for every $500 USD in sales).

We want our pricing to be as clear as possible. There's a frustrating lack of transparency in this industry, with many services requiring you to comb through fine print to see what you'll really be paying. If any of the above doesn't make sense to you, please get in touch. We'll happily answer your questions and use them to keep improving our service.

Explaining the Bandcamp concept
Earlier this year, one of my favorite bands left their label, recorded a new album, and released it as a digital download from their own website. The hour it was due out, I headed to their site, and after several minutes of watching the page struggle to load, concluded that they were just slammed and made a note to check back the next day. But when I did, the site was, once again, excruciatingly slow. This time I was a bit more patient, made it to the checkout page, entered my billing info, and...the download didn't start. I checked my credit card statement, saw that I'd indeed been charged, and emailed the band. A few days later, the lead singer sent me an apology, along with a direct link to the album's zip file. I did not then forward that link on to my 200 closest friends, but I wondered how many did, and couldn't decide whether it was a good or bad thing that most fans had probably given up before getting this far.

Well the new record turned out to be even better than I'd hoped, but now, months later, I'm still running into other fans who don't have it. This just kills me, because here's a relatively unknown band that deserves all the success in the world, made the admirable decision to do an entirely independent release, yet was tripped up by the sorts of aggravating technical issues familiar to anyone who's ever tried to build out their own website. What choice did they have though? They could have put their music up on MySpace or any of its dozens of imitators, but all of those services offer bands what is essentially a sharecropping arrangement. They host your tunes, and in exchange it's their logo, their ads, their URL, their traffic, their identity. What if you want to build out a site that's very clearly yours? The only choice seems to be to do what the band did: hire a designer and engineer, buy or rent some servers, spend a lot of time and money, and risk ending up with something that either works poorly or not at all. Does it not seem crazy that if you're a blogger, you can create a rock-solid site that's your own in a matter of minutes (and for free), but if you happen to create music instead of text, your options just suck?

Seemed nuts to us, so we created Bandcamp, the best home on the web for your music. We're not yet another site wanting to host your tracks alongside the trailer for High School Musical 4: I'm Pregnant. Instead, we power a site that's truly yours, and hang out in the background handling all the technical issues you dread (and several you've probably never even considered). We keep your music streaming and downloading quickly and reliably, whether it's 3am on a Sunday, or the hour your new record drops and Pitchfork gives it a scathingly positive review. We make your tracks available in every format under the sun, so the audiophilic nerderati can have their FLAC and eat MP3 v2. We adorn your songs with all the right metadata, so they sail into iTunes with artwork, album, band and track names intact. We mutter the various incantations necessary to keep your site top-ranked in Google, so when your fans search for your hits, they find your music long before they find bonkersforlyrics.com or iMyFace. We give your fans easy ways to share your music with their friends, and we give you gorgeous tools that reveal exactly how your music is spreading, so you can fan the fire.

Does Bandcamp take any ownership rights in my music?
Nope. Full details are in our Terms of Use, but the short of it is that the only rights we take are the obvious ones we need to run the service. For example, the non-exclusive right to host the music you upload, sell it on your behalf (if you choose to enable paid downloads), display whatever lyrics and artwork you publish to the site, and so on.

Can I also sell my music on iTunes, Amazon, CDBaby, and so on?
Of course! We compete by making Bandcamp the place you want to send your fans, not by making it the place you have to send them. Exclusivity is for the birds.

My band already has its own official site, can I integrate it with Bandcamp?
We concentrate on the most important, and the most technically challenging part: the music. If you already have an official site, we respectfully submit that Bandcamp might be an improvement upon its music section, and suggest you simply let your Bandcamp site be your music section. To do so, we recommend you link to Bandcamp, but make it a bit more seamless by customizing your design, and perhaps specifying an image map in your custom header as well, so that you can emulate your own site's navigation. What we don't recommend is dropping Bandcamp into an iframe. Doing so will harm your SEO (since tracks and albums will no longer have unique URLs) and break the payment flow in Internet Explorer.

What's with the WAV/AIFF/FLAC upload requirement? Why don't you just accept MP3s?
It's all about maximizing flexibility for you and your fans. WAV, AIFF and FLAC are high-fidelity (lossless) formats. By starting with the highest possible quality source, we're able to convert your track into a bunch of different format and quality combinations, including MP3 (320, VBR V0), Ogg Vorbis, Apple Lossless, FLAC and AAC (aka .m4a or iTunes store format). Sure, most fans will just want the MP3 and won't know or care about anything else, but there's a rabid minority out there who'll love that you're giving them a choice. And if a new format/quality becomes à la mode (like when Amazon's MP3 store made iTunes' 128k AACs seem antiquated), we'll transcode to that too, without you having to do a thing.

You upload lossless WAV, AIFF and FLAC files; 16 and 24-bit samples; 44.1, 48, 88.2, 96, 176.4 and 192kHz sample rates; stereo and mono. We don't do any audio processing to your uploaded files except whatever's necessary to fit into the download format. For example, for MP3 downloads the audio is resampled to 44.1kHz. FLAC downloads on the other hand are bit-for-bit identical to the audio you upload, all the way to 24/192.

Lossless files are very large – much bigger than MP3s - but you only have to upload them once, and we think the goodness it buys you is plenty worth it. We'll also allow batch uploading pretty soon, so you'll be able to queue up your entire oeuvre for import while you're off at practice. Until then, you can upload two tracks at a time by just opening up two track edit tabs or windows (two is the limit though -- three or more won't work).

New tracks (from the studio) are probably already in WAV or AIFF or can easily be saved in one of those formats by your audio editing software. And if you're importing old tracks from CD, it's pretty easy too: just rip the tracks to WAV or AIFF using iTunes. Select "Preferences..." from the iTunes menu, click the Import Settings... button in the General tab (for versions of iTunes earlier than 8.0, click the Advanced tab and select "Importing"), and next to "Import Using:" choose "AIFF Encoder" or "WAV Encoder." The maximum upload size is 291MB.

Bandcamp automatically adds metadata to all of your downloadable tracks. We can't tell you how many times we've downloaded music from some band's site, only to bring it into iTunes and find that it has no cover art, a name like "Master 2 (final).mp3" and no information about who it's by or

what album it's from. Annoying, but not really surprising when you learn what a pain it is for a band to add all that information to a track themselves. Well, we've got you covered. As you add information to your site, we automatically attach that data to the underlying tracks, so that when your fans download and import them into iTunes or anywhere else, they come with their title, artist, lyrics, album, track number, release date, and artwork intact. Smoove.

You can collect a fan's email address when you let them download a free track or album. Simply enter "0" for the price, then tick the "require email address" checkbox that magically appears on the Edit Track or Album page, and when a fan downloads your music, Bandcamp will ask them for their vitals and email them a link to the goods. You may then extract that solid gold nugget of data from our servers with a flick of your mouse: on the right side of the navigation bar at the top of the screen, click Tools, and under the section titled Mailing List, click Export. You'll not only get the fan's email address, but their country, zip/postal code, and even the date they signed up. Given the power to use that information for good, or for awesome, we trust you will choose the latter. For **paid** downloads or packages, the fan's email address is collected automatically.

Does Bandcamp offer label accounts? No, but various label features are in the works. For now, we recommend that you sign up for individual accounts for each of your artists (sounds more painful than it is -- you really only need separate usernames for each account -- they can all use the same email address, PayPal account, and, if you're crazy like that, even password). We also suggest that you sign up for a separate account just for your label, and use that to create any sampler/compilation albums (editing each track's artist field so that the metadata is correct).

I've heard that SEO is important, but I don't even know what it is. What is it?
"SEO" stands for Search Engine Optimization, and Bandcamp greases yours up extremely smoothly. For example, check out what happens when you Google this track by 20 Minute Loop. Notice their Bandcamp-powered site is at or near the top, ahead of GarageBand, iLike, CDBaby, eMusic, Rhapsody, and the rest. That means 20 Minute Loop has first crack at engaging and ultimately, profiting from, their fans. Contrast that with the typical Flash-based band site -- you know, the expensive one with the shadowy crow that cries blood-red teardrops as it flies across the screen between page transitions. Totally invisible to Google. Might as well not even exist. The fact is, we're living in a Google world, and if your fans aren't finding you when they search for your track names, lyrics and so on, you're throwing away an opportunity.

Does Bandcamp place my music into iTunes, Amazon, etc?
No, we're not a digital distributor. Bandcamp is a service for selling your music through your own site, directly to your fans. If you're looking for digital distribution, check out TuneCore.

Is it possible to sell physical items (like vinyl, CDs, and bullet-shaped USB sticks) alongside downloads? Yes.

Why is my Bandcamp-powered site not the first result in Google?
If you're not seeing your site at all, much less highly-ranked, first confirm that Google has at least indexed it. You can do this by changing your search term from "my band or album name or whatever" to "my band or album name or whatever site:bandcamp.com". If you still don't get a result, make sure that 1) it's been at least 24 hours since you signed up, and 2) you've uploaded cover art to your latest release (otherwise it won't show up on the general artist index, which is the fastest way search engines find Bandcamp sites).

Are you showing up in the results, but your rank is just lower than you'd like it to be? We do everything possible on our end to help your page rank, but you can help too. Probably the biggest impact you can have is by simply linking to your site from elsewhere on the web (your blog, official

site, etc). Note that if your band has been around for a while, it's likely that there are loads of links out there pointing to your old sites/hosts, and it may just take some time before your new presence catches on. Finally, and perhaps this goes without saying, but the more general the search term, the more difficult it will be to own a top spot. No matter how hot your new single is, if it's called "Lost Love," your site is likely to be lost on result page 17.

What pricing performs best? For digital albums of seven tracks or more, most artists will maximize their earnings by charging $7 USD. For EP-length albums (six tracks or fewer), $4 USD is the sweet spot. But again, there are exceptions, and if you're an established artist who has seen recent success charging $18 for your digital albums, go for it. However, in all cases, leaving "let fans pay more if they want" checked is key: fans pay more than the minimum a whopping 40% of the time, driving up the average price paid by nearly 50% (in fact, every day, we see überfans paying $50, $100, $200 for albums priced far lower). While we have your attention, we would like to discourage you from doing one-penny-off pricing (e.g., $0.99, $9.99, $11.99). Present a straightforward price, let fans pay more if they want, and they'll reward you.

How much is PayPal's transaction fee? PayPal's standard transaction fee is 2.9% + $0.30 USD. There are two ways you can lower that fee:

PayPal offers a micropayments rate of 5% and 5¢ per transaction, which ends up being a better deal if most of your transactions are $12 USD or less. You can sign up for micropayments at any time. There's nothing to do on Bandcamp; just contact PayPal Micropricing Support at 888-433-6829. You can switch back to the standard rate at any time.

Also, be aware that PayPal allows you to use only one rate at a time. After you switch a PayPal account to micropayments, all items sold via that account (through Bandcamp or elsewhere) will use the new rate. If you happen to sell a lot of items priced more than $12 USD, you'll notice the micropayments fee will be a bit higher than the standard fee. (One way to work around this restriction is to use two PayPal accounts, one with micropayments for your Bandcamp sales and another with the standard rate for the other, higher-priced transactions.)

Apply for merchant rate pricing. Depending on your monthly volume, PayPal's rate can be as low as 1.9% + $0.30 USD.

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