

DISC MAKERS®

The Musician's Guide to

SOCIAL MEDIA



Take action and build your online presence with Facebook, Twitter, Google+, and more



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SOCIAL MEDIA



IS ONE OF THE BEST



PROMOTIONAL TOOLS

Available To Independent Musicians.



Social media is free (mostly), it gives you world-wide reach, and helps you interact with new and existing fans of your music. But managing half a dozen social profiles can also feel like a full-time job, especially when all you really want to do is pick up your guitar, hit the studio, or play your next show.

This guide provides simple tips that will help you quickly climb the social media learning curve, boost your online engagement, distribute (and sell) more music, and avoid becoming an Internet zombie.

This information is by no means exhaustive – social media services change frequently, so you've got to stay active on any given platform if you want to explore every promotional opportunity.

After reading this guide, hopefully you'll feel *empowered* and *excited* to engage your audience online.



PROMOTION & SOCIAL MEDIA

PRIORITIZE YOUR ARTIST WEBSITE

It might seem strange to begin a guide about social media by emphasizing the importance of your own website, but listen up: your artist/band website is more important than any single social media platform. Here are four good reasons why:

1. You need design control

Social media involves generic profiles plastered with ads and other distractions. With your own website, you create a design that suits your artistic aesthetic and functions the way you need it to. Plus, the layout won't change unexpectedly overnight (we're looking at YOU, Facebook!).

2. You need to own your fan relationships

Social media platforms come and go. Your website is here to stay. When a visitor to your site provides you with his or her contact info, YOU own that fan relationship – NOT Facebook or Twitter – and YOU get to decide how and when you communicate with those fans.

3. You need to create a rewarding user experience

Remember those ads and distractions we mentioned? Facebook wants users to click on paid ads for smartphones, laptops, and blow dryers. They want you to play MafiaWars and Farmville. It's how they pay the bills (and shareholders, too). On your own site, you

call the shots. You can create a rich experience that feels more focused, personal, and clutter-free.

4. You need your own dot com

What's easier to remember, "ManicMonday.com" or "Facebook.com/ManicMondayMusic?" Which do you think Google likes more when someone is searching online? When you have your own domain name, you're easier to find.

WHY WORRY ABOUT SOCIAL MEDIA AT ALL?

Billions of people are active on social media every day. Billions of people are NOT active on your artist website every day. You need to wade into the streams where people are already swimming and invite them back to your pool party.

Don't worry; we said "wade." No need for full immersion into Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest, Google+, Instagram, and Vine – though we do suggest you dive deep into two or three social media platforms and maintain a minimal (but up-to-date) presence on the rest of them. Each service provides a unique experience, supports a unique mode of communication, and attracts a unique user-base, and you want to make sure your music is discoverable in as many places as possible.

Your website is like a train station, the hub for all your online content

Internet gurus like to repeat the mantra, “Your website is your hub.” Here’s what they mean: your website is your central headquarters where you house most of your content, blog posts, reviews, music, merch store, etc. From this hub you’ll “push content out” to your satellite offices – your social media profiles!

One way to envision this process is to imagine that your website is a train station and the various social media services you use are inbound and outbound trains that your fans will travel on. Some travelers are riding the inbound Twitter or Facebook train; they’ll see a status update or tweet that leads them to your website. Other travelers are already at the train station; they may click to see a YouTube video or Instagram photograph that you’ve embedded on your website, and off they go – bound for one of your satellite offices.

The important thing is that your fans visit your website at **SOME POINT** during the promotion and engagement process. You should encourage them to do one or more of the following:

- Subscribe to your newsletter
- Stream or download a song
- Purchase a CD or t-shirt
- Watch an embedded YouTube video
- Leave a comment on one of your blog posts
- Like or follow you on their preferred social media platform
- Share your content with friends
- Attend a show

JUGGLING YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA PROMOTION

Managing half a dozen social media profiles, a website, a musical life, and a life outside of music can get tricky. But there are some simple ways to tame the social media beast before it slips out of your control.

Here are a few tips to help you integrate aspects of your social media promotion with your website.

Use social media widgets

Displaying your Twitter and Facebook activity ON your website is a great way to alert fans that you’re engaged on those services, and to encourage them to follow you without even having to ask.

Use social media plug-ins and shortcodes

If your blogging or website-creation platform supports third-party plug-ins, there are a number of great tools out there to make it easier for you to pull social media content into your blog posts, enable your followers to quickly share your content, and more. For instance, there are Instagram plug-ins for WordPress that let you feature Instagram images in your blog posts by simply copying and pasting the photo URL into your blog editor (rather than having to upload the photo itself).

Use a tool like HootSuite or TweetDeck

There are many apps and web-based tools that let you manage multiple social media accounts from one location. You can also schedule your social media updates in advance, which is very useful if you are the type of person who prefers to get this online promotion work out of the way for the whole week in one or two sittings.

Use your content to populate multiple platforms

Whenever you write a new blog post, update your event calendar, or upload a YouTube or Vine video, there is a great opportunity to spread that news across all your media channels. However, you'll want to tailor the message to the platform – otherwise it may read like a generic PR blast to folks who follow you across multiple social media outlets.

9 CONTENT IDEAS TO KEEP YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA UPDATES ENGAGING

Sometimes you know exactly what to say to your fans following you on social media. Other times you stare at the screen and scratch your head. Here are some ideas to try out on one of those uninspired days. Note: not all of these will work across all platforms.

1. News update

Announce your big news items (new song, new album, big gig, etc.) at least six weeks in advance. Provide the relevant details and a little extra context to hook 'em. Then send periodic updates as things take shape. Also, share positive reviews and other milestones.

2. Direct engagement

Ask your fans questions. Post a poll. Solicit feedback. Crowd-source your new album's naming process. Get your followers involved in a fan-funding campaign.

3. Video or photo

Share videos of you rehearsing, video diaries, live photos or backstage video, photos or interviews with fans, or even someone else's videos.

4. Tell a story

Your readers love to hear about the highs and lows of your creative life. Give them the embarrassing stories,



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the triumphs, the travelogue. Or make up a story appropriately sized for social media. Flash fiction!

5. Lists

We love lists. Top 10... Five Ways... Worst Three... Put a list together, even if it's only tangentially related to your genre or subject. Lists are easy to write and quick to publish. Plus, your fans will want to respond with their opinions.

6. How-to

Instructional information can be extremely popular. Do you have some particular knowledge or advice to share? How to fingerpick. How to write a bridge. How to draw a duck. Share those tips.

7. Older popular content

You don't always have to create something NEW. If an older blog post, song, or video is still relevant, share it again. Or record an acoustic version of a full-production tune and post it.

9. Answer reader questions

Put the call out that you would like to answer some questions from your followers. Then, answer them, one post at a time.

TOP 3 RULES OF SOCIAL MEDIA

If you want to build a large online following and effectively promote your act through social media, there are three very important things to remember, no matter which social networks you're using:

1. It's all about connection

Don't be one of those annoying spammers, constantly boasting or always demanding fans to "Listen to me! Buy my music!" Instead, provide value either through writing and sharing useful information or by being entertaining. Once you've made a real connection, your followers will be more receptive. Soft sell!



SOCIAL MEDIA IS A WAY TO COMMUNICATE
ONLY A FEW OF THE MOST IMPORTANT FACETS OF YOUR
PERSONALITY, AESTHETICS, & BELIEFS

8. Reviews and recommendations

Your followers want to know how you feel and what you think. Share your thoughts on favorite albums, popular artists, restaurants to avoid, great vacation destinations, best coffee shops, and whatever else you feel passionate about.

2. Be a shinier, more compact you

Here's the thing: you can't communicate all of your beauty, depth, and complexity via social media. We can't even express those things in their entirety in the real world (that's why we write music). So embrace the idea that social media is a way to communicate only a few of the most important facets of your personality, aesthetics, and beliefs. Social media is a chance to

supercharge that version of yourself. Not exactly a persona, but a heightened expression of a more focused you. Think about the three or four things you most want to convey. Now go!

3. Authenticity is key

This one might seem to be in contradiction with #2, but it's just to say that you should never do anything online that makes you feel drained, embarrassed, or fake. You'll feel even worse afterwards and your audience will see through it. Your fans have good B.S.-detectors, they know when you're putting something on and they'll know when you're being your best social media self.

When you're presenting a focused version of yourself, one which also fits comfortably within your sense of authentic self, making connections on social media is easy. The more connections you make, the larger

your online community will grow, which can lead to increased music sales, gig opportunities, and more.

RESPONDING TO COMMENTS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Your social media profiles are buzzing. Your content is getting shared far and wide – and generating lots of comments. Now what?

Well, first, congratulations! Now it's time to sit down and RESPOND to those comments. Responding to comments can have an incredibly positive effect on your social media promotion. It shows your followers that you care about them, thus furthering a sense of connection and authenticity. It also provides additional opportunities for sharing and engagement. Some platforms even reward you for quickly responding to comments. Facebook, for instance, will boost your Edgerank score (more about Edgerank later).

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5 RULES FOR RESPONDING TO COMMENTS

1. Respond to every single comment

It's a basic courtesy. Someone took the time to interact with you, your work, your content; so take the time to acknowledge this by responding, even if your response is short and sweet: "Thanks! Glad you liked the post."

2. Be thorough in your responses

If someone asks you three questions based on your latest Facebook update, don't just answer the first one and hit "enter." To the commenter it'll look like you didn't care enough to read their whole comment.

3. Don't be afraid to disagree

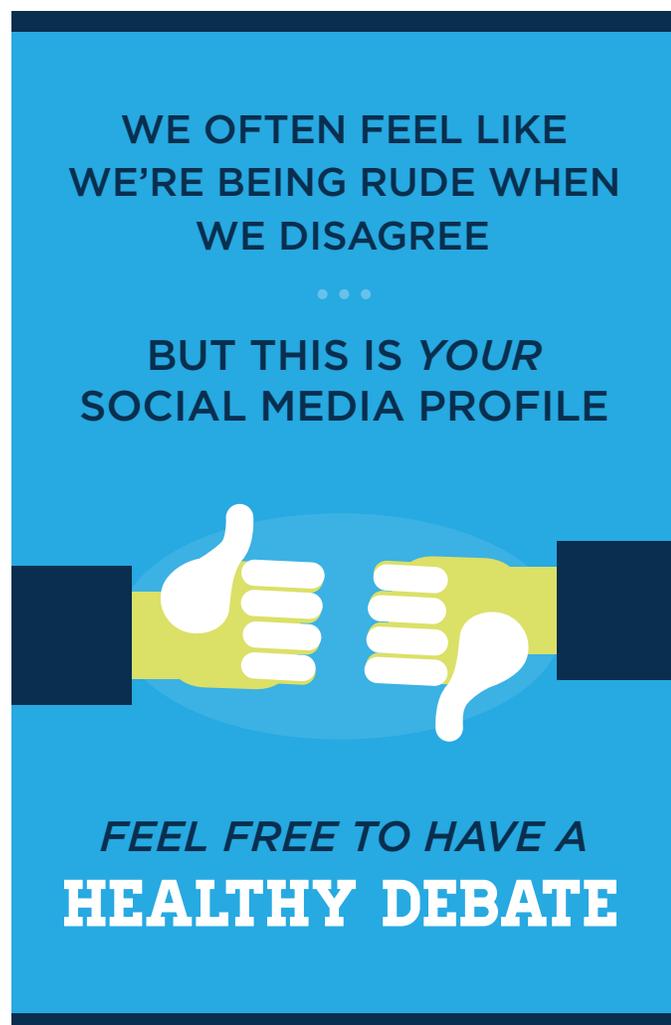
We often feel like we're being rude when we disagree, and so we hold our tongues. But this is YOUR social media profile. It's YOUR content. These are YOUR ideas and personality. Feel free to have a healthy debate in your comments section. Just don't cross the line into an argument. Which brings us to...

4. Let the trolls go hoarse

Haters gonna hate – so let 'em. The funny thing about angry Internet trolls is that they end up outing themselves with their weird rants. And if you delete comments by trolls, they just keep coming back. Better to let their comment sit there, give them their moment to shine, and the world will see them for the dense black holes they are. Oh, and with trolls you can ignore Rule #1 – unless it's to say, "Thanks for commenting."

5. Use your comments to inspire further engagement

By responding to comments, you're taking advantage of more opportunities to have your voice heard. You can deepen relationships with your fans. You can converse. You can solicit the opinions of folks who are your biggest supporters. You can point commenters to other useful resources (like your website!). You can ask them to take some kind of action, or make a purchase.





FACEBOOK FOR MUSICIANS

Facebook is the largest social network. Chances are you're already using it to share family photos and silly cat videos. But are you promoting your music through a Facebook band page?

PAGE VS. PROFILE

Facebook calls the typical individual profiles Personal Profiles. They refer to any profile created by a brand, product, organization, or band as a page. Profiles and pages look similar, but there are some big distinctions in how they work. A Facebook Page is a far better option for promoting your music career. Why?

Security of your personal information

Most people use their profiles as a way to share personal info, pictures, and updates with friends and family. When you "friend" fans on your personal profile, they may have access to more details than you really want them to have.

When you use a Facebook Page to promote your music career, anyone can be your fan/follower – but you don't have to worry about them getting to know you more than you'd like.

Anyone can access your content

With your band page, all Facebook users can see and hear your content. They do not have to be a fan or have your approval. This makes it more likely your content will be discovered, and also makes it easier for your content to be shared with others.

Fans, not friends

When you use a Facebook Page, anyone on Facebook has the ability to become a "Fan." This means they can choose to see your content in their news feed without having to get your approval. This is ideal for your fans.

Multiple admins

The "multiple admins" feature allows anyone designated with "admin status" to make official posts on your band page. Admins also have the ability to make changes to the page details. This is great for the people on your team (band mates, manager, street team, etc.) who help out with your social networking efforts.

Facebook ads

Of course, anyone on Facebook can run a Facebook ad, but one of the most effective ad campaigns for a music artist is a campaign designed to increase the fan numbers on your band page. This type of campaign can only be accomplished with a Facebook Page.

How is it different?

With a normal ad, you might link to your official website where users click through to find out more about your band and then move on to other web browsing. With an ad geared towards increasing your Facebook fans, when a user clicks through, they are becoming fans of your page. Your content will now show up in their Facebook feed, increasing the chances for future interaction.

For more about band pages on Facebook, read *Disc Makers' Echoes* blog post, "[Facebook Marketing Tips for Your Music Promotion.](#)"

Page Insights

Also known as analytics, this section of the Facebook Page gives you all the info you need to improve your Facebook marketing efforts by showing you data like impressions per post and a full demographic breakdown of your fans and page visitors.

Here are a few tips to help you increase your Edgerank score, thus increasing the number of followers who see your posts:

- Post every single day
- Post only one or two posts per day
- Wait at least four hours between posts
- Respond to comments
- Use Facebook targeting tools to ensure your posts reach the appropriate audience



THE MORE PEOPLE WHO LIKE, COMMENT ON, & SHARE YOUR POSTS, THE HIGHER YOUR EDGERANK SCORE, INCREASING THE PERCENTAGE OF FOLLOWERS WHO ARE SHOWN YOUR CONTENT.

That's just the beginning, there are even more advanced features for those of you who really want to invest some time and tweak your Facebook Pages.

Understanding Edgerank

Edgerank is the algorithm Facebook uses to analyze what content its users are most interested in seeing. What this means in simple terms is that your Facebook content will only be viewed by a percentage of your fans. The more people who like, comment on, and share your posts, the higher your Edgerank score, which increases the percentage of your followers who are shown your content.

If you want to extend your reach beyond that, you need to pay Facebook to promote your posts to followers who didn't initially see your content in their feed.

If you do end up paying Facebook to promote one of your posts, make sure to see what kind of "legs" the content has first. If it's a hit on its own, you might not need to do as much paid promotion. Give it 24-48 hours to sink or swim, and THEN pay Facebook to show it to the rest of your followers.



TWITTER FOR MUSICIANS

Twitter is one of the best ways to network with other artists, bloggers, and music fans.

For more about using Twitter to promote your act, read [Disc Makers' Echoes blog post](#), "[Twitter for Music Promotion](#)."

BEST PRACTICES FOR COMPOSING TWEETS

1. Interact!

You can't just tweet "Download my new single!" every couple of hours and expect to see your number of Twitter followers growing. You need to be interesting. Post compelling content. Share truly exciting news about your artistic journey. Take your fans behind the scenes on your latest project. Be vulnerable, and show them the ups and downs of your musical path. Ask questions. Reply to those folks you're following. Join existing conversations. Be useful to others first. Then you can expect your followers to help promote you.

2. Be consistent

Whether you tweet once a day or once an hour, stick with your schedule for a little while and you'll see how effective Twitter can be as a promotion and networking tool.

3. Share other peoples' content

There's an unwritten rule in the Twitter world: you share my content, I'll share yours. By retweeting, you're earning karmic points and increasing your chances that you'll get followed back. Plus, if it's interesting content, your followers will want to see it too! Tell your fans about some other great bands you love. Hype their tracks and gigs. Link to other artists' blog posts and YouTube videos.

4. Don't autopost everything

Some of the tools mentioned earlier, such as HootSuite and TweetDeck, allow you to post a single update to multiple social profiles – Facebook, Twitter, etc. – with the push of a button. But people who follow you on every platform want to get a unique experience in each place. So while it's ok to use the autopost method occasionally, try to give your Twitter audience a little something different than they'd get on Facebook or Google+.

5. Pretend the whole world is watching

Unless you have a private/protected profile, everything you tweet is public. Don't write something you'll be ashamed of later.

6. Write longer tweets

Internet marketers like to tell you to keep things short. But a tweet is only 140 characters, so it's one of the few cases online where you actually benefit from using all the space you're allotted. Also, some data shows that longer tweets get more clicks.

7. Go verb-crazy!

We're emotionally stirred by action. So make your tweets sing, screech, punch, and dance.

8. Tweet in the afternoon and evening

Twitter traffic increases rather dramatically after 2 PM. Maybe folks feel like they've gotten enough work done for the day that they can afford to sneak in five minutes on Twitter. Whatever the reason, you might want to schedule your tweets with those people in mind.

9. Tweet closer to the weekend

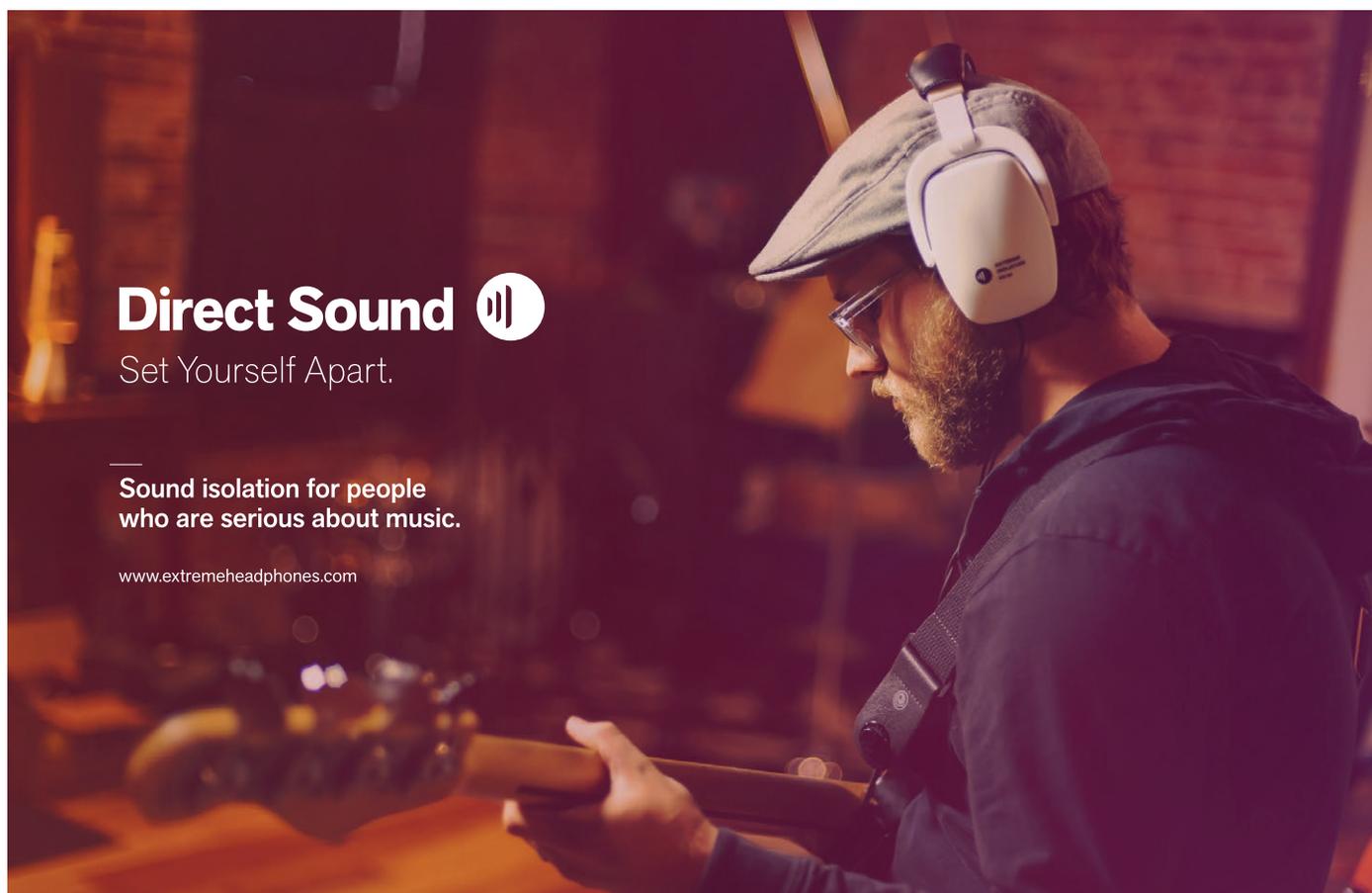
Similarly, as the work week draws to a close, Twitter traffic soars, with Friday being the busiest day. So your heaviest Twitter activity should be on Thursday and Friday – just in time for your big gig on the weekend.

10. Don't be afraid to ask for a retweet

A lot of times in life the easiest way to get something is to simply ask, and it's true for Twitter. People are far more likely to retweet your content if you ask them. Doing this too much, of course, can have the opposite effect.

11. Spread tweets out by at least one hour

You want to get the most people possible to see your tweets. By spreading out your Twitter activity by at least an hour, you're increasing the likelihood of different folks seeing your updates. Plus you're not annoying your followers by cluttering up their news feeds all at once. There are exceptions to this rule: when you want to live-tweet an event, when you're in the middle of a Twitter conversation, etc.



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12. If something is worth sharing, tweet it several times

Got a new video of your latest single? Come up with a bunch of different tweets linking to the video. One could say, “Man, I look good in a tux, huh?” Another could say, “Check out the nutjob in the background at 1:25.” Another could say, “I bought that fabulous dress at the thrift store on Bridge St!”

MONITOR THE TWITTERVERSE USING TWEETDECK OR HOOTSUITE

The advanced search on Twitter.com is ok for finding people to follow, but it doesn't let you monitor multiple conversations on Twitter in real-time. That's where third-party platforms like HootSuite or TweetDeck come in. Both TweetDeck and HootSuite let you see who is talking about you and topics related to your music.

Imagine if you could graft instant Google Alerts over everything being said on Twitter. That's essentially what these social media apps/dashboards allow you to do. You can set up and monitor multiple “searches” in real-time – for instance: your band/act name, your song or album title, your genre, names of you and your band mates, discussions about venues you play, etc. – and see who's talking about the things that matter to you.

Add searches for:

- Your band/act name
- Your album and song titles
- Your music genre
- Your favorite artists, record labels, and music mags/blogs

Monitor these searches once a day and start some conversations!

TweetDeck and HootSuite also let you manage multiple Twitter accounts from one dashboard. That's particularly useful for folks who may have a personal Twitter account, a band/artist account, and a work account – and it saves you having to leave multiple browsers open all at once just to manage your separate Twitter accounts. Plus, you can schedule all your tweets in advance.

YOU CAN SET UP AND
MONITOR MULTIPLE
“SEARCHES” IN REAL-TIME

...

AND SEE WHO'S TALKING
ABOUT THE THINGS THAT

MATTER TO YOU





GOOGLE+ FOR MUSICIANS

Another social network!? Yes, musicians should consider using Google's social platform too. And here are three reasons why.

1. YouTube comments require Google+ accounts

Despite the furor, you need a Google+ account to leave comments on YouTube videos (and respond to comments on your own videos). Also, comments made about videos shared on Google+ are displayed on YouTube, too.

2. Google Authorship requires Google+

You know when you search for something in Google and a blog author's avatar shows up beside one of the search results? That's Google Authorship – a tool that helps Google view all the web content you've created both as an online collection and as individual pieces – and it helps your search ranking too. If you want your picture to appear next to your blog articles in search results, you need Google+.

3. Keywords are going away

Well, that is not totally accurate. Google is making keyword data more... obscure, hidden, secretive, hush-hush. They want to encourage content creators to focus on the quality of their writing – rather than gaming the system with a bunch of keyword trickery. As keywords begin to play less of a role in search, the social engagement with your content will become more important. That means Google will be looking

at Facebook and Twitter, yes. But guess where else they'll be looking? Google+.

USE GOOGLE+ HANGOUTS TO PROMOTE YOURSELF

Hangouts is a free video chat service linked to Google+ that allows you to participate in group conversations with up to 10 people via desktop or mobile. When you use "Hangouts on Air," you can make these video conferences public, viewable to all – worldwide.

Here are some ideas for hosting Hangouts that will help promote your music

Music clubs

Talk to small groups of people around the world who are familiar with your music.

Talk shop

Convene a bunch of artists and discuss matters of craft or promotion strategies.

Concert series

Host a monthly concert event with a different featured band each time. The other musicians involved will promote your concert series too.

For more about Google+ and your music career, read "[Using Google Plus To Build A Global Music Audience and Community](#)" on Disc Makers' Echoes blog.



YOUTUBE FOR MUSICIANS

Whether you're producing music videos, vlogs, behind-the-scenes clips from shows, or recording a video tour diary, YouTube is one of the most powerful promotion tools for musicians. And yes, YouTube is considered a social network, with subscription and commenting features and the ability to easily share/embed videos on other sites and social media platforms. Not to mention it's the second biggest search engine in the world.

In the age of smartphones, almost anyone can shoot a video, post it to YouTube in minutes, and share it with their fans via their blog and social networks. But since this technology is available to everyone, you've got to make sure you're doing it RIGHT in order to cut above the clamor.

HERE ARE A FEW THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND TO HELP YOU MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR VIDEO PRESENCE

1. Add links at the top of the description field for each video

Make sure the viewer knows where they can hear your music, purchase your songs, and sign up for your email newsletter. Simply enter the URL to your blog or website at the very beginning of the video description field (to ensure that it's visible to all viewers). YouTube will hyperlink it automatically.

2. Make the first 15 seconds count

As the saying goes, "Don't bore us. Get to the chorus."

You have to hook viewers right from the start. YouTube videos, like pop songs, are best enjoyed (and shared) when short and catchy.

To help you capture your audience's attention, the official YouTube blog has offered some good advice on how to make the first 15 seconds of your video irresistible.

- Start off with something that will immediately grab attention, whether it's what you say or a stunning visual.
- Make it clear what your video is about early on so viewers aren't confused about what they are watching.
- Tease the rest of the video so the audience is intrigued to see where you take them.



MAKE SURE THE VIEWER KNOWS WHERE THEY CAN:

- ✓ **HEAR YOUR MUSIC**
- ✓ **PURCHASE YOUR SONGS**
- ✓ **SIGN UP FOR YOUR EMAIL NEWSLETTER**

- Share your channel branding later in the video.
- A flashy intro may look cool, but it's not the star of the video – let them see you or your great content first.
- Make your branding compelling by making it entertaining or unique to each video.

3. Add tags to your channel and videos

Tags are the important keywords that help people find your video in YouTube's search engine. What will your readers type into YouTube to find your video content? Tag your videos with your song name, YOUR name (both the correct spelling and misspellings), band mates' names, music genre, and other relevant keywords. Then when someone types in a search for you, your videos have a much better chance of coming up first.

4. Choose great titles for your videos

Not many people on YouTube are going to be searching for "Song2 at CHI HoB-ver.2 w/o intro." We don't like mystery when we're searching for something on YouTube, so make it clear! Include your name and any other relevant info to quickly describe what someone is about to see. For instance: "Manic Monday plays 'Hot Pocket' at Chicago House of Blues 9/12/13"

5. Respond to every comment

Responding to comments will not only make your viewers/fans feel appreciated, it will also inspire others to comment on your videos. Try sparking conversation by asking a question, or by pointing out something interesting in the video.

Some other YouTube tips:

- Use annotations to link viewers to other original content
- Embed all your YouTube videos onto your own website, either on a media/video page or on individual blog posts

- Share your YouTube videos on all your other social networks
- Create playlists to group your videos into different categories (House of Blues, vlogs, music video, etc.)

IDEAS FOR MUSICIAN VIDEOS

Apart from producing the obvious (music videos), there are plenty of ways to create compelling video content to share with fans.

1. A One-minute documentary about your studio

The guitar rig, the MIDI set-up, the mini-bar, the posters of your idols... show us where all the magic happens!

2. Mini-documentary

Gather or shoot whatever footage or photos you think you'd need to edit together a three-minute story of your band, your influences, your motivations, your struggles, and your successes. Show the world what makes you tick!

3. Moving-picture marginalia

If done cleverly, you can entertain fans with short (30-90 second) video clips about things that have little direct connection to your musical life. Show us the school where you first played in the band, the snowed-in car you're shoveling off to get to your gig, the cranky way you sit when you're in the airport, etc.

4. On-camera interview

Answer the questions you'd want to ask your favorite artist. Keep it casual and fun.

5. Behind the music video

We saw the video, now show us the behind-the-scenes footage of what it took to make it.

Read more about using videos for promotion on [Disc Makers' Echoes blog](#).



PINTEREST FOR MUSICIANS

Isn't Pinterest a website for lovers of delectables, travel planners, and vintage-clothing aficionados? Well, yes, but musicians are finding creative ways to promote themselves using the social scrapbooking site too.

Pinterest is a combination of a digital pin-up board and a scrapbook. It's a bit like Twitter, only for videos and pictures instead of 140-character tweets.

From your Pinterest page you can create different boards for different interests. Plus, other people can pin things to your page (if you allow them to become "contributors" to a particular board), which encourages more sharing and interaction.

HOW MUSICIANS USE PINTEREST AS A PROMOTIONAL TOOL

1. Create a Pinterest board for individual songs

Ask your fans to add photos they think relate to the vibe or content of a song. What does that sound look like? What images does it evoke? (Note: you'll have to add fans individually as "contributors" to that particular board before they can pin their own content to it).

2. Give us a behind the scenes glimpse into your process

Show fans your studio, rehearsal room, your go-to acoustic guitar or piano, outside your window, etc.

3. Get aspirational

Where do you want to travel on your next tour? Where would you love to spend a week writing new songs? Show us the photos!

4. Ask for inspiration

You can create boards to bring your songs into pictures. But the process can flow the opposite direction, too. What about asking your readers for help when you're writing a new song? Are you searching for compelling song titles or images to describe in a lyric? Ask for photos that inspire your fans so they can inspire you.

5. Promote your friends and heroes

Social media followers are turned off by constant self-promotion, but promoting songs by other folks can go a long way. You're giving solid recommendations to your fans, and the bands and artists you promote will be thankful.

6. Pin pics of fans holding your CD or wearing your merch

Show that other people are enthusiastic about your music. You can even hold a contest for best fan picture.

7. Pin images from your gigs and house concerts

Show people that you're active and playing, and be sure to get the audiences into the shot as well!



INSTAGRAM FOR MUSICIANS

Instagram is a popular social photo (and video) tool for iPhone and Android. Simply take a picture on your phone, apply one of Instagram's many hip filters so the photo will look like it's straight outta the 70's, add a caption, and post it to all your social media profiles with a single click.

10 WAYS TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR PRESENCE ON INSTAGRAM

1. Sync Instagram to ALL of your social profiles

This includes your Facebook band page, not just your personal Facebook profile.

Before posting a picture, though, make sure you've selected the appropriate default Facebook page or profile for that particular image. Otherwise, you might find you've accidentally shared a snapshot of your family reunion with your fans.

2. Share images across all your social networks

Some of your followers prefer Twitter. Some like Facebook. Some check your blog. Others wait for your weekly email newsletter. That's why it's wise to share your Instagram images everywhere.

3. Diversify your portfolio

Your fans want to see it all: shots of you practicing, hanging out at gigs, your CDs in the box, photos of you traveling on tour, working late-night in your rehearsal studio, eating a cheesesteak with your musical hero, the Santa Monica sunset, etc.

4. Post a photo series

It's fun to post a whole series of related photos over the course of a month or two, and it'll keep your fans coming back for more. Maybe you take a shot of your audience at every show on a tour or post a series of photos of places and people you shared the stage with. Whatever sounds fun.

START OFF WITH SOMETHING THAT WILL

IMMEDIATELY GRAB ATTENTION

WHETHER IT'S WHAT YOU SAY OR A STUNNING VISUAL.



5. Use hashtags

Tag lots of your images with hashtags. This groups your photo together with related photos by other Instagram users (or with other photos you've taken with the same hashtag) under a single category. Instagram users can then find your photos based on their own interests.

6. Elevate the everyday

Even mundane moments in your musical life can interest readers if you frame it right. Share the minutia, the ennui, the drudgery. It's guaranteed to be exciting to those fans working all day in an office cubicle.

7. Put your Instagram photos on your blog or website

You can use Instagram's API or a third-party service to put your Instagram photo gallery on your own site. Check out these sites for further details:

- [View your photos on the web](#)
- [Adding an Instagram feed to a website](#)
- [Getting started with the Instagram API](#)

8. Captions can make or break the image

A little context can go a long way – and can turn a bad picture into something hilarious, moving, or otherwise share-worthy. Be brief, clear, and memorable.

9. Don't over-think it

Instagram is supposed to be fun. Snap a picture, add a filter, and post it! Don't spend 20 minutes setting up the perfect shot or fretting over the filter options.

10. Ask your readers to help

Get your followers to take Instagram pictures too. But don't just ask them to take pictures of YOU. Make sure you're including them. Have them take pictures of themselves at your shows, holding up your CDs, wearing your merch, etc. And make sure they tag you!



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REGISTER TODAY AT SWEETWATER.COM/GEARFEST

Sweetwater
Music Instruments & Pro Audio



VINE FOR MUSICIANS

Vine is a [video app](#) for iOS, Android, and Windows that allows you to quickly shoot and edit six second videos, upload them to your Vine profile, and share them instantly with your followers on Twitter and Facebook.

Curious what you can do in six seconds to effectively promote yourself? Lots.

9 WAYS TO PROMOTE YOUR MUSIC ACT USING VINE'S MICRO-VIDEOS

1. Do a six-second summary of your album

Yes. People have been doing six-second record reviews. They're really fun to watch. (But talk fast!)

2. Sing the first line of your song

It's a hell of a good line, right? Sell it!

3. Create a short video-trailer

Since Vine let's you edit as you go, you can set up multiple shots and scenarios. The trick is to make each scene quick!

4. Tease your album cover before release

The power of curiosity! Show us a little, but not the whole thing.

5. Show off how pretty your CDs look!

Once your CD is released, let everyone see you opening those boxes fresh from Disc Makers.

6. Create a stop-motion montage of your record release

The food. The drinks. The crowd. The show. The line at the merch table.

7. Make an inanimate object the star of the show

Show off your instrument, your microphone, your computer, your cup of coffee, your notebook.

8. Review your reviews

Hold a magnifying glass up to your record reviews (literally) – positive or negative. Highlight the most flattering or offensive moment.

9. Do a miniature interview

Ask your readers for questions, and then do a series in which you answer one brief question per video ("My favorite band is...").

OVERWHELMED YET?

That's understandable. Just take it slow!

After all, we've just dropped a ton of tips on you to help yourself on social media – there are plenty more we didn't mention – but that doesn't mean you have to try them all, and certainly not all at once.

The sanest way to proceed is to start with just one or two outlets (Facebook and Twitter for instance), get familiar with the functionality and etiquette for each network, and then start some conversations.



Once you've got the hang of it, you can get more

personal & creative with your promotion

and that means *authenticity*, which will help you

ATTRACT FANS, BUILD YOUR FOLLOWING,

& GET MORE MUSIC HEARD AND SOLD!