

Using Social Media To Build A Massive Fan Base [By Donavon Parker]

Technology has had a huge impact on the music industry. According to a 2013 Music Think Tank survey, over 40% of people consume music via social media. A&R's start their workday by checking the most popular social media websites. Justin Bieber, Soulja Boy, Avery and Alyssa Bernal were all discovered on the internet. In fact, Russell Simmons, Brian Robbins (Film Director) and Steve Rifkind (Founder of Loud Records) just announced the launch of All Def Music, a joint venture solely dedicated to developing talent discovered online.

Young independent musicians are told to use the internet to "create a buzz" and to "build a following." This advice has led to an oversaturated market, with most unsigned musicians marketing their music the exact same way! Technology has made it so easy for anyone to record and upload their music. An artist can even create a music video with their cellular phone. Many of these hopeful superstars have not devoted much time to perfecting their craft.

So how do you market your music in a way that stands out? Here are my 5 TIPS on Using Social Media to Build a Massive Fan Base.

(Tip #5) Create a Unique Name (Moniker or Pseudonym)

How important is a name? Vince McMahon built a billion dollar empire by effectively using great names. He developed a great name for his company and developed great monikers for his wrestlers. Now take a look at the music industry. Observe each genre's greatest period of growth, from jazz to rock to hip hop. You will notice that their musicians had great pseudonyms. When you first heard the names Aerosmith, Sid Vicious, 2pac or Herbie Hancock, was there ever a chance you would forget them? They were so unique yet simple that they are instantly branded in a person's mind.

Hip Hop artists in the '80's and '90's had creative, simple and brilliant stage names; Beastie Boys, A Tribe Called Quest, N.W.A, Wu Tang Clan, OutKast, LL Cool J (Ladies Love Cool James), Snoop Doggy Dog, and Nasty Nas. Russell Simmons was a marketing genius and he made sure his artists had great names before he would market them. In the early 1980's, Russell Simmons agreed to manage Easy D and his friend. He thought the group needed a simple, memorable and totally unique stage name. The group absolutely hated the name Russell proposed and thought their careers would be destroyed. Mr. Simmons convinced them to give the new name a chance. He understood marketing from his experience as a party and concert promoter. In 1983, he rebranded and marketed the group. Twenty six years later, Easy D and his partner were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame under the pseudonym... RUN DMC. If this concept (creating a great moniker that is sticks in people's minds) was important before the internet age, how much more important is it today (with the market being overstated)?

Many independent artists completely underestimate the value of creating a great moniker. If a person attended a concert and several independent artists performed, would your band's name be hard to forget? A memorable, unique and simple pseudonym can be the difference between your band's music being discovered or lost amongst the millions of other bands who have also uploaded

their music. Your name should be simple so your youngest fans can spell it without confusing you with another band or musician. If you market your music like every other artist, your album cover is like every other artist and your name is similar to every other artist, why would fans assume your music sounds different?

(Tip #4) Understand the power of pictures and colours.

Have you ever been to the mixtape website, datpiff? What caught your eye? What grabs your attention when you are overwhelmed with choices? The answer is great artwork with vibrant colours! Colours convey certain messages. There is a reason why companies invest so much time and money in developing colourful logos to attract people's attention. Look at Run DMC's logo - thirty years later, it still grabs people's attention.

Research the words: colours and marketing. You will discover why black is used to market luxury items (e.g. Jaguar's marketing campaign, AMEX's Black Card). The colour black usually represents authority, boldness, power, strength and elegance. Black "attract a specific target market of individuals who... earn a higher income, and have a higher level of education"-Alden Morris. The colour also attracts the attention of intelligent people who enjoy Classical music, Jazz, R&B and Indie music.

Some colours attract the attention of one gender and turn off the other gender. Some colours (green and blue) attract the attention of both genders. Some colours (red and blue) work well on the "click" button online and can increase the conversion rate as much as 40%. Understand your target audience and use colours to gain their attention. An independent hip hop performer should consider using great artwork with vibrant colours and incorporate the colour black as well.

There are millions of other musicians trying to get people to notice them; there are advertisements on the left side of the screen and there are popups vying for an individual's attention. Using colours effectively is an advantage that will help your music stand out. If the internet is saturated with artists, shouldn't you do something that helps you stand out? Why invest so much time into making a great product (your music, art or poetry) if it's not going to get noticed?

(Tip #3) Look at the NUMBERS and market to the right people.

If you were a country artist, which option would you choose? (A) Sale or pass out your cd at a country music club with 3,000 people attending (B) Sale or pass your music at a hip hop open mic with 50 people attending. The choice is clear-cut. On social media a lot of artists commonly make this mistake. Do you know the fourteen different ways people discover new music? Does your marketing plan address the various ways people discover new music?

Are you aware that "people 21-34 are the core digital music audience" -Neilson Music. Running an online marketing campaign and targeting the "core audience" will yield greater results than just marketing to everyone. Narrow your audience to music lovers of your particular genre. This will be more cost-effective and allow you to spend that money in other areas.

Do you know which social networking websites are the busiest? Do you know the busiest days and time of day? Why spend 90% of your time on a new site if less than 1% of social networking is done there? Some people love certain new websites and devote a lot of attention to them. If 80% of social networking is done on website X, where should you have a detailed, focused marketing campaign? Answer - website X.

Every artist should have an account on the five busiest social networking websites. "If you use YouTube a lot along with other social networks, then, you could easily connect it to your Facebook, Twitter and Google Reader accounts to automatically share your YouTube videos and activities on them."-Guidingtech.com. I've discovered the best days to post on social networking sites is Monday through Thursday. Wednesday is the busiest. The best time to post on free classifieds is Saturday through Monday. Monday is the busiest. You will discover which day is best based on trial and error. You can find an updated list at Alexa. You can find data on music trends at Nielsen-Music and Midem. Understand the demographics, market and interact with your fans.

(Tip #2) Understand the value of music blogs.

How did you discover new music as a teenager? My parents had their favorite DJ who broke new hits. Corporations discovered this was a great way advertise products and the role of a commercial DJ changed. A commercial radio campaign for an independent artist today is extremely difficult and expensive. During my teenage years, I looked to Kennedy on MTV's, Alternative Nation and Fab Five Feddy on Yo MTV Raps, to discover new music. This is still a popular way to discover new music but it's not through television anymore. Teenagers today discover new music on the internet; they visit their favorite blogs and websites like FameTube because the administrators have already sorted through the clutter.

I am amazed at how many independent artists overlook music blogs. A few years ago, I posted a number of videos on my personal account. A few friends, who operate blogs, saw the artist's videos and featured the artist on their blog. When the independent artist released his album on iTunes, it quickly rose to #1. I believe blogs had a lot to do this occurring. Blogs are a tool that can significantly increase your fan base and help you gain exposure.

Music blogs provide you with the opportunity to reach a lot of potential fans. Being featured on a blog is easier than you think! Take some time and learn how HYPEM.com works. Start with newer or least popular blogs first and work your way up the more popular blogs. I know A&R's that start their day by searching their favorite blog. Independent artists that are creating a buzz (e.g. Mac Miller, Chris Webby and Moufy) use blogs as part of their marketing campaign. Chris Webby has over 45 million video views and over 315,000 followers and fans on social media. Boston MC, Moufy has over 34,000 fans the most popular social media networking website. His single, Boston Lights has over 462,000 views on YouTube. During an interview with Indie Ambassador, Moufy credits blogs for the increase in his fan base and exposure.

The key to gaining more fans through a blog marketing campaign is to have great music with great video content. Only send your very best work to a blog. Your music is your resume and the album artwork is your cover letter. You would not send in a resume that is not typed, written in crayon and contains a lot of spelling and grammar mistakes.

Don't submit music that reflects badly on you and shows the blog administrator you don't value his or her time. Building relationships in this business depends on always putting your best work out. Have your music reviewed on reverbNation, SoundOut or BlakTrak FIRST! Some blogs receive over 2,000 submissions a week. Do not waste a blogger's time with music that has not been reviewed by an outside (not friends or family members) source. Blogs can either help your career or hurt it. Always submit great quality music!

Most people discover music by video (17%) so have a YouTube account with good video content! If a potential fan discovers your music on a blog (6%) and likes your music, he wants to share it on Facebook (12%) and Twitter (4%) with his friends and family (12%). Putting together a blog campaign and having a YouTube account, with good content, will address how 51% of people discover new music.

In a recent international poll conducted by Music Think Tank, people who discover music via blogs (6%) was only one percentage point behind people who discover new music via commercial radio (7%). Having your music featured on a blog can lead to your music being shared by others on social media and discovered on video websites. Don't overlook this valuable tool!

(Tip #1) Make your music easy for fans to find.

How many musicians have a different name on each of the top five social networking websites? Have you thought about how that affects building your band? Imagine potential fans, an A&R and a blogger attending a concert and hearing a hot independent. They wake up the next day and Google your name. They find hundreds of thousands of artists with a similar name. They narrow it down and find a website. There are no links to any music on YouTube or Vimeo (one of the most popular ways people discover new music). You have music there but another artist already registered under that name. You decided to use a different variation of your name.

Do you really think a potential fan is going to go through so much research? What happens when a potential fan types in your name and a thousand other artists pop up with the same name? If your music isn't easy to find, then a potential fan will just move on to something else. You have just eliminated any chance of that person becoming a fan and SHARING your music with their family and friends!

Have your music listed on all major sites under one name and provide links. When you visit a corporation's website you see a link to their page on other websites. Follow their lead and do the same. It's hard for artists to separate the art of making music and the business aspect of music industry. This is a business so promote and market your music like a business!

Article source: <http://ezinearticles.com/?The-Secret-to-Using-Social-Media-to-Build-a-Massive-Fan-Base&id=8339907>