

Five things to do before pitching your music to Spotify playlists

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Getting your music on Spotify playlists can be difficult. Let's start at the beginning and focus on the things you should have in place before you even start pitching your tracks.

Who wouldn't want to get their music on a hot Spotify playlist? It's a great way to get discovered and get your music in front of a potentially huge audience. Plus, all those streams will provide you with more revenue.

But actually getting your music on Spotify playlists can be difficult. There's no submission form for top playlists and navigating the playlist hierarchy can be confusing.

So today, let's start at the beginning and focus on the things you should have in place before you even start pitching your tracks to Spotify playlists. Think of these things as a solid foundation that will set you up for success.

1. Set up an online presence

Let's cover this right up front, you shouldn't put your blinders up and only focus on Spotify and building up Spotify revenue. In today's music industry, you need to consider Spotify as one piece of a larger career strategy.

There are a couple reasons for this:

If you just focus on Spotify and building a following there, Spotify owns all your connections and you could lose everything in the unlikely event that something happens to the streaming giant.

Spotify is not in the business of helping artists connect with their fans (even though they try to deny that fact). It's concerned with getting people listening, getting advertisers, and getting people to sign up for premium.

That means you should take some time up front to build a website for your act, create a place where fans can buy your music, set up social media pages where you can connect and communicate with your fans, and build an email list.

All of these things can serve as feeders, driving your fans to support you on Spotify, so it's a win-win to take the time to develop your fan base and your career's infrastructure.

2. Get your music on Spotify

This probably goes without saying, but if you want to get your music on playlists, you need to get it on Spotify first. CD Baby is just one of the many distributors that will get your music on Spotify.

3. Sign up for Spotify for Artists

Spotify for Artists is a free service that gives you access to additional features that can help you be more successful on Spotify. If you distribute your music through CD Baby, you'll automatically get a Spotify for Artists account.

So what do you get with a Spotify for Artists account? For one, you get verified (that means you get that blue checkmark next to your name that shows the world that this is your official Spotify page). It doesn't seem like much, but it serves as a little validation to any playlist curator who is considering your music.

Next, you get access to all kinds of analytics. This is probably the most valuable feature. You'll be able to see which of your tracks are performing best and you'll get some data on who your listeners are. These numbers can influence which tracks you pitch to independent playlist owners down the line, and you can even use listener data to plan out tours.

There's also a Playlist tab that will show you all the playlists your songs are currently on. This can give you a better idea of what kind of playlists to target when you start pitching and, if you get an awesome placement, you can share it with your fans.

Spotify for Artists integrates with Songkick and Merchbar, so you can feature your tour dates and merch right in Spotify. While this is a cool feature and can definitely help drive sales, you should have your own online presence set up to promote your gigs and products as well.

And finally, you can customize your artist profile with images, featured tracks, and more. If you're trying to make a good impression on playlist curators, it doesn't hurt to have a professional face on Spotify.

4. Promote your music on Spotify

Once you have your music on Spotify, it's time to start promoting and encouraging fans to listen to your songs on the platform. Spotify rewards artists who spend a lot of time on the platform. Plus, this will get some good data behind your songs (which will make them more appealing to playlist curators).

An easy option is to include Spotify links on your website and social media pages. You can also share the link to your artist page and encourage fans to follow you. If you're creating a social post about a certain song, include a Spotify link instead of SoundCloud. If you've recently released a new album, use some of your promotions to send fans to listen to it on Spotify.

Speaking of new releases, you will have more opportunities to send fans to Spotify if you release frequently. Try releasing singles or short EPs every couple of months to get some activity and buzz built up around your profile.

5. Create your own playlists

Another cool way to get fans over and listening to your music on Spotify is to create your own playlists. This is your chance to play the part of the DJ and create some cool mixes of your favorite songs. Throw in a few of your own songs for good measure and share them with your fans.

You can create playlists for your current song obsessions, or base them on moods or activities. Try to get creative and create really cool collections that your fans will love. As an artist, you are an influencer to your fans, and many of them will love seeing the kind of music you listen to and the music that inspires you.

Another idea is to collaborate with other musicians and bands on a playlist or two. Come up with a theme together, add in your favorite songs, include a few of your tracks, and promote it to all of your fan bases. This kind of strategy will get your music in front of a bigger audience which can get you more plays and more followers.

Bonus... 6. Reach out!

Once you've done these five things, you'll be in a much better place to start pitching your songs to Spotify playlist curators. You'll have a professional profile, some followers, and some good data behind your songs. The next step is to research independent playlists that fit with your style of music and start reaching out!

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