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MUSIC INDUSTRY SURVIVAL MANUAL

TIPS TO SELL MORE MUSIC ONLINE



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WWW.TUNECORE.COM

INTRODUCTION BY JEFF PRICE, FOUNDER, TUNECORE

With your music sitting on the shelves on the online stores available for purchase 24/7, the trick is to be discovered.



In the “old days,” music fans discovered music through commercial radio, print magazines and TV. Record labels pitched albums and bands in hopes of getting them featured. These days you no longer need the record label in order to be heard and seen where people go to discover music.

Commercial radio is being replaced by web-based radio stations like LastFM, where anyone can have their songs available to hear based on friend and “if you like this you will like that” recommendations. Print magazines have been replaced by online music and MP3 blogs. Anyone can email the blog owner (the editor) with their music. MTV has been replaced by YouTube, and anyone can upload a video to YouTube.

Online, when one person sees or hears your song, they have the ability to share it everywhere, instantly. New music discovery tools like search engines have also cropped up. Google scours the net, picking up everything from music files to blog reviews. Even digital stores like iTunes allow people to share music they like by playlists. Everyone has access to get their music distributed into the music stores as well as have it at the places music fans go to discover, share and buy music.

So how do you get discovered? Even under the “old” model, many artists who got played on the radio, MTV and were featured in Rolling Stone magazine never became popular. As a matter of fact, 98% of major record label releases failed. Why? Because people did not react to the music.

Take Nirvana’s song “Smells Like Teen Spirit.” People reacted to the song and video. If people did not like it, or could have cared less about it, all the exposure in the world wouldn’t have helped, it would never have caught on: people had to react.

This booklet will provide you with information on how to get discovered, but from there, your music has to cause a reaction in the music fan, and you, as a musician, have the unique and special talent of allowing this to happen. – Jeff Price

TIPS TO SELL MORE MUSIC ONLINE

You’re an artist, composer, performer, you make music: you used TuneCore to distribute your music into iTunes and other stores. Here are some easy ways to get discovered and sell more music.

Cover Popular Songs

Cover versions of songs sell well. Known songs have a built-in audience already. People looking for “Let It Be” or “America the Beautiful” know what they want. If you “cover” (record your own original version) of these songs you create a way to get discovered and make money. And once someone buys a song of yours they are more inclined to listen to and buy other songs you have recorded.

Record Holiday Themed Music

Music tied into or about a holiday sells well. For example, “spooky” Halloween sound effects or “scary” themed music (i.e. “Tubular Bells”, the theme song to the movie *The Exorcist*) sells enormously around Halloween. Christmas music sells really well around the Christmas season. This ties back to covers: a cover of “White Christmas” or “Jingle Bell Rock” can fund you through the rest of the year. Don’t forget other, perhaps neglected holidays throughout the calendar—there is no doubt the world needs a great Groundhog Day or Columbus Day anthem. Be sure to name your songs with easily searchable words.

Searchability

Stores like eMusic, iTunes and AmazonMP3 have millions upon millions of songs in their stores. Most customers use the “search” function in the store to find music, so take advantage of it: put words in your album, artist/band and song titles that will help you show up when people search. Are you a mariachi band? Put the word “mariachi” in your name. Is your album a collection of nature sounds? Consider words like “forest” and “natural,” and so on. This is a gray area: if your music sounds like Bob Dylan, don’t necessarily use his name, but you could use words with association, like “folk.” It’s your music, but ask yourself, what words can I use in my band name, album name and/or song name that will cause my music to appear when people search?

iTunes

iTunes is the largest seller of music in the world and sells more music than any other music store (physical or digital) in the world. Here are some tips on how to getting discovered in iTunes.

CREATE AN IMIX

An iMix is a playlist that you've chosen to publish and make available to others in the iTunes Music Store. To get your music to surface and be discovered more,

create an iMix (or many many iMixes) with a few of your own songs (say three or so) and other songs (we suggest 9 or so) by more popular artists in the same genre. These iMixes will surface at the other artist's album iTunes pages as well your own, allowing a fan of the other band to discover you.

In addition, give your iMix an interesting name (as opposed to "Cool Songs I Like"), name it something like, "Music to Break Up To," or "Songs that Morrissey Wishes He Could Write." Clever titles catch peoples' attention.

The more iMixes you seed into iTunes, the higher the probability you will be discovered.

RATE YOUR IMIX

iTunes allows anyone to rate an iMix with between zero and five stars. Have as many people as you can rate your iMix with five stars. High-rated



iMixes get more attention and end up on album pages. Check out the “iMix Notes” field. Take a few moments to write something and talk about your play list. A great description combined with a high rating will increase the odds someone will discover and check out your play list.

ALBUM REVIEWS & RATINGS

STATISTIC: Albums in iTunes with customer reviews sell 33% more than albums without them. Be sure to rate your own album 5 stars, and when you review it: that’s a great place to describe the album and the sound. If you happen to have reviews about your music (from blogs or magazines), you can re-type them here.

In addition, ask your fans and friends to write reviews—the more reviews the better! Reviews add legitimacy and influence purchases.

In your review, think about what might make someone curious about your music. For example, posting a review that says, “Dude, this rocks” will have little impact. A review that says, “ This reminds me of The Beatles if they had Jimmy Page as their lead guitar and Chris Martin backing up John Lennon,” will cause a lot more interest.

Get creative and thoughtful with what you write. Consider what would cause you to listen to a song. Also note, iTunes lets its user decide if a review was “Useful.” If you write an interesting review and then have your friends, fans and family indicate the review was useful, the review has a better chance of being the first one people see when they reach your page in iTunes.

AN EYE CATCHING ART DESIGN

The finishing touch on your music is the visual design of its package, whether you’re going to be selling online or in physical stores. A great album cover can catch someone’s eye and get them to listen. If you can’t

create your own design, hire a designer to give your music more than just a pretty cover; they can give your music the visual image that completes your project and draws people in to listen.

Collaborating with a graphic designer is as easy as talking to them about what kind of image or feeling you want people to have when they listen to your music. Working with original artwork or photos you supply, they'll give you different options to choose from, and you can work with them to come up with final art that you're happy with.

TELL A FRIEND

You can send album reviews or playlists or iMixes to



TELL A FRIEND

anyone from within iTunes via the iTunes “Tell A Friend” option. Just click on the “Tell A Friend” link in the iTunes store (located next to the album art), enter an email address and iTunes does the rest. This is a great way to communicate with fans that signed up for your email list that you have a new album or song out. It's also a great way to get more people to rate your review and/or iMix and help these to surface more.

iTunes Affiliate Program

With the free iTunes Affiliate Program, you can link and sell your own music (or anyone's else in the iTunes store) via any Web page or email. With each sale from iTunes that originates from your affiliate link, you will earn a 5% commission on all qualifying revenue generated (IMPORTANT: terms apply, so be sure to check them out). This means that off of each qualifying sale, you will get paid a percentage of the money paid to iTunes by an iTunes customer, if that customer came from your affiliate link.

In addition, the iTunes “buy” button next to your song on your own

website, blog, etc is recognizable and might add further legitimization to you as an important artist.

The affiliate program auto-generates links for you. All you have to do is place them on any Web page or within an email(s). It's a simple and very effective way to sell your music. After all, most people going to your home page or receiving your emails are already interested in your music and band.

To get started, visit this page:

<http://phobos.apple.com/WebObjects/MZSearch.woa/wa/itmsLinkMaker>.

For more information on how to become an iTunes affiliate for free and how to use the program, visit <http://www.apple.com/itunes/affiliates>.

MAKE EASY WEBLINKS TO YOUR MUSIC

iTunes has recently added a feature that makes it easier for you to easily create web links directly to your content in the iTunes Store.

You can link directly to any artist/band page using the convention:

<http://itunes.com/artistname>

and you can also link directly to albums/singles using the convention:

<http://itunes.com/artistname/album>

Here are a couple examples:

<http://itunes.com/rollingstones>

<http://itunes.com/nineinchnails/theslip>

Place these links wherever your music sits on-line.

Video

MAKE A VIDEO

You, your friend or a relative have an old video camera, probably even a digital video camera. You can even rent one for a few dollars a day in most areas. Heck use your cell phone, but MAKE A VIDEO! This can be almost anything, and the look and feel of it can be as professional or as amateur as you can afford or want. Use your imagination to find clever ways to let a minimum budget and tools work to your advantage. Turn off the video camera's mike and let your music be the soundtrack. Use free tools on your computer do the editing and synching. Use what you have, at all stages.

Most importantly, get CREATIVE. Make something that others want to see - think of videos like the Treadmill Dance by OK GO, or Star Wars kid, Mentos and Coke guys, Kelly's "Shoes" video, Chocolate Rain, Sick Puppies "Free Hugs" video, Boyce Avenue's live acoustic performances of popular songs, and more (don't know these videos, just do a quick Google search to see them).

POST YOUR VIDEO

Put it on YouTube, use TuneCore to put it on iTunes, put it on every free streaming video or torrent site that will take it. Post the links on a blog, tell your friends, put it on MySpace, and spread the word. Make sure you have a link to your music on iTunes on your YouTube page, so people can buy the music after they watch the video!

Blog

MP3 blogs can cause significant music and gig ticket sales. There are currently tens of thousands of MP3 blogs with more springing up each day. If the MP3 blog community embraces your band, you could potentially have thousands of them talking about you and providing MP3s of your songs to hundreds of thousands of music fans. What better way to get the word out than by a real grass roots campaign of music fans talking about you because

they love what you do? With the Internet, they have a vehicle to communicate with the world.

Only you can determine which blogging communities speak best to your fan base, but remember that no music exists in a vacuum: all music has a community of artists, supporters, fans, performers, composers, historians, enthusiasts and more, all of whom by now have a Web presence no matter what corner of the world they hail from. Use Google to search for MP3 blogs around your music (i.e. indie rock MP3 blog etc) then go to their webpage, find the person to email and email them.

The best way to reach blogs is to go to their websites and follow their submission policies. In many cases, contacting a blog is as simple as sending an email. There are literally tens of thousands of music blogs - here's a short list of places it might be worth your time visiting and contacting (or just visit the blog Gorilla vs. Bear and scroll down to the bottom to see the list with links:

<http://gorillavsbear.net>)

A PARTIAL LIST OF MUSIC BLOGS

Gorilla vs. Bear	Laundromatinee	Bibabidi
My Old Kentucky Blog	Mystics not Wastrels	Cause=Time
You Ain't No Picasso	Abeano	Sucka Pants
An Aquarium Drunkard	Cheap Fast Times	Fluxblog
Nothing But Green Lights	Sex on Fire	The Rising Storm
So Much Silence	Underrated	Awesome Tapes from Africa
Transmission	Undomondo	Discoteca Oceano
Hipster Runoff	Music For Robots	Brazilian Nuggets
Pinglewood	Kitsune Noir	Tunes Consumed
Motel de Moka	Attorney Street	We Shot J.R.
Yeezy	Largehearted Boy	Central Booking
Skatterbrain	Circa 45	Halz Haz a Say
Said the Gramophone	SIRIUS Blog Radio	Get Weird Turn Pro
20 Jazz Funk Greats	Brooklyn Vegan	Sasha Frere-Jones
Marathon Packs	Stereogum	Philip Sherburne
Muzzle of Bees	Chromewaves	Cannibal Cheerleader
NEON GOLD	Big Stereo	A Walking Disaster
Raven Sings the Blues	Arawa	The Grizzly LifeT-Sides

A PARTIAL LIST OF MUSIC BLOGS - CONTINUED

Disco Dust	Shake Your Fist	The Listen
IHEARTCOMIX	Scissorskick	Yeti Don't Dance
La Maladie Tropicale	Suspect Drawings	songs:illinois
Blogs are for Dogs	Sonic Itch	Swedes Please
Discobelle	Bows + Arrows	All Things Go
Analog Giant	The Rawking Refuses to Stop	FoeWeel
Good Weather For	Product Shop NYC	Where Is Helsinki?
Airstrikes	Rockouts	sixeyes
Funeral Pudding	Done Waiting	Gulf Coast Bands
I Guess I'm Floating	Filter Magazine	Muzak for Cybernetics
Music for Kids Who Can't	Moistworks	Veritas Lux Mea
Read Good	I am Fuel, You Are Friends	Can You See The Sunset...
Ultra8201	Naturalismo	Some Velvet Blog
Panda Toes	Mars Needs Guitars	Thoracic Fax Machine
Disco Delicious	The 3rd Base Line	15 Minutes To Live
Indie Interviews	Scenestars	I Rock I Roll
The Passion of the Weiss	Rachel and the CityTorr	The Armchair Novelist
Elitaste	Cable and Tweed	The Torture Garden
The Anchor Center	I Heart Music	What We All Want
The Sound of Marching Feet	etheriousity	Think Tank
Pasta Primavera	Badical Beats	Banana Nutrament
Lullabies	Palms Out	The Perm & The Skullet
Idolator	What Noisy Cats Are We	Between Thought and
Rock Insider	Who Needs Radio?	Expression
Sonic Itch	Spacelab	Catchdubs
Spinner	Information Leafblower	Houston So Real
Cultura Fina	Brooklyn Ski Club	Call Me MickeyTofu Hut
Big D little d	Take Your Medicine	Plague of Angels
Pampelmoose	Indoor Fireworks	los amigos de durutti
Missing Toof	Audio Deficit Disorder	Berkeley Place
The Futurist	Theme Park Experience	Regnyouth
Nerd Litter	The Rich Girls Are Weeping	Work For It
The Hood Internet	(Sm)all Ages	Pimps of Gore
The Pharmacy Rx	Out the Other	Hey Mercedes
Art Decade	Music For Listeners	Each Note Secure
Deaf Indie Elephants	The Test Pilot	The Big Ticket
1.618	Womenfolk	Copy, Right? (cover songs)
SixEyes	Earvolution	Beware Of The Blog
Acid Girls	Exitfare	Pitchfork
Rock & Roll Daily	More Cowbell	Prefixmag
The Rock Snob	The Camera As Pen	Insound
Dreams Of Horses		

You Can Do It

Getting discovered still takes work, but with the changes created by the internet, it has opened the doors to allow anyone who creates music to have access to distribution as well as the new TV/radio/magazine outlets. Yes, it still takes work, but there are literally thousands of examples of bands and artists succeeding under their terms, their way on their own.

Your Music

(Singles, EPs, Demos, Albums)



Distribution

tunecore.com



You can be on the
tunecore Billboard Charts **Top 25**
Albums & Singles

-  Over 17 Million Dollars Earned
-  Over 200 Releases Distributed Daily
-  Over 500,000 Songs Delivered

tunecore.com



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