

Eleven Social Networking Steps to Promote Your Music Online

Networking is one of the most important details when promoting music online. You cannot expect everyone to come to you – you must put effort into gaining a fan base. There are several different ways to network, give advice or expertise, and build your name on the web, but they require work. MySpace and Facebook are two very powerful social networking sites, especially in the music business. However, just creating a profile is not enough. You must utilize every application the social networking sites offer.

1. One way to promote your music is to join groups through these sites. With MySpace, you can look up music groups and narrow your search to a specific genre. MySpace offers over 5000 different groups related to the category of “music” and the keyword of “rock”. Similarly, over 3500 groups show with the keyword search of “pop” under the music category. If you follow one artist in particular and know a lot about them, these groups are perfect for niches too, like the 30 Seconds to Mars Fan Club group.

Likewise, Facebook has the option of searching for different groups. You can perform a search to find a group in the rock or pop genre, and join groups with many people to broaden your network. By joining and commenting in different groups, people begin to respect your opinion. You do not want to push your music on them, but rather gain a friendship within the communities and they will then promote your music through word of mouth (or viral) marketing. If communication is lacking within the groups, create a topic with an interesting title and get the communication started.

2. Besides joining groups, adding friends is another huge aspect of social networking. Adding friends must be selective, though. Do not add people just to gain virtual popularity, but rather add people because their profile hints at a preference of music in the same genre as you or your group’s genre. A punk rock band should not try to become friends with one only interested in classical music just so they have one more friend – it does little good. MySpace allows you to browse within a certain distance of a zip code to find friends within your community. Facebook also lets you to complete a search based on location or even by music preference.

3. After setting up an account, you must personalize your page. Add a background of the group on MySpace, and fill out the “about me” section with a story about the band, how you formed, your past events, and any upcoming plans. Post pictures on both MySpace and Facebook of different events and add videos through MySpaceTV or NetClips (for Facebook) onto your site (add both video taken on the road and music videos you have made). Update the sites regularly. New content draws your friends to check your page frequently.

4. Both MySpace and Facebook have a feature to add music to your site. With MySpace, you must sign-up as an artist through the network and it will give you the program to insert your MP3s onto, which you then put on your site. Facebook, on the other hand, requires you to sign-up through iLike and create an account. You then must download the iLike application onto your Facebook page, find your music, and add it to your profile. Both techniques are simple and mandatory actions to take when promoting yourself or your band through social networking sites.

5. Other good applications to take advantage of are the calendar features on these sites. Through MySpace, you can create a calendar by clicking “manage calendar” on your

profile and adding it onto your site for everyone to view. This allows you to display your upcoming events to remind people when and where. Facebook features the Jotlet application, which is downloaded onto your site and filled out by you (similar to MySpace) to display for your friends to view.

6. One additional feature in both networking sites is the ability to create blogs through your site. You should update your blog frequently and write about a specific subject, like a niche within the rock or pop genre of music. The blog needs to have a RSS feed to allow your followers to automatically receive updates when you add new blogs. In addition, you should find other people within these networks writing about similar issues and make useful comments on their site to create professional friendships. They will, in return, comment on and link to your blog generating a mutual promotion of one another.

7. The final steps to take in optimizing your social networking sites are to respond and comment. If someone agrees to be your friend, thank him or her and add a banner back to your site. Be personal, as well. Look at their site, find out their interests, and comment on similarities between you and your friend. Answer their questions promptly and comment on their profiles regarding your performance dates. If someone else browses their site and sees your comment, it might trigger them to attend. The more personal you are, the more connected to you your fans will feel.

Other social networking steps

1. Additional social networking sites include LinkedIn, MyBlogLog and Ning, all of which allow you to create or join communities based on interest. These sites host various rock or pop music communities. LinkedIn focuses on the professional side of social networking whereas the other two focus on connecting niches within their organization.

2. Another step to take is to set up a Twitter account. Twitter is a mini-blog site that allows users to write what they are doing at any moment. This is a great opportunity for rock and pop artists because people want to live the life of an artist. You can also post comments and pictures via mobile phone so people can receive updates when you are not by a computer.

3. YouTube, Flickr, and podcasts are also social network sites you must utilize as a rock or pop artist. Put every music video and home video of you and your band online through YouTube or Yahoo Video. Take and display tons of pictures on Flickr and encourage anybody to look at them. Display photos from photo shoots to tours to just goofing off so fans on the net can view them. Finally, make podcasts. Podcasts are now necessary for bands and encourage people to easily share your music with others.

4. Also, try to find sites that have allow you to post a widget. When you update something on one site, the widget automatically updates the other sites you own. For example, when you update your account through Twitter, the widget would also update your webpage blog, MySpace blog, etc. Widgets are really helpful.

Social network sites will only become successful if you apply all these techniques. Be genuine when commenting and write blogs grammatically correctly. At the same time, show your personality so people connect to you. Encourage comments and feedback in every aspect and have fun socializing!