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10 Best Practices for Bands on Facebook

- 6- Webographie -

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[<http://4.mshcdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/facebook-keyboard-360.jpg>] Hey, bands, [Facebook](#) isn't just for laughing at formerly popular kids ("Ah, that dude teaches English at our old high school now ? Sad.") whilst swilling whiskey in your tour bus anymore. It's slowly becoming a hub for fan outreach, marketing your tunes and collaboration.

Mashable reached out to a cadre of music industry experts to put together the following list of best practices for using Facebook to promote your music. After all, you want Mr. English Teacher to be impressed by your page not laughing about how you consistently misspelled your own band's name.

1. Reach Out To Other Artists

[<http://4.mshcdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/reachout.jpg>]

So you just joined Facebook and have a grand total of 50 fans (44 of which are your extended family). Well, you know how you can hook new fans by opening for another band on stage ? The same goes for Facebook.

"We have some bands that have Facebook Pages that grow really slowly, so we try to reach out to other artists who they have a relationship with, and that tends to drive those 'likes' up," says Allison Schlueter, VP of digital marketing at [Island Def Jam Music Group](#).

Ask a band whom you're tight with to post your new music video/track/album art to their wall with a link back to your Facebook Page, and remember to return the favor or, you know, you could just buy said band a beer the next time you play together.

Still, Schlueter reminds us, those initial 50 fans are pretty valuable, so don't forget them when your Page has ballooned to 75 fans. "You can have 37 million fans, but how many of those are loyal ?" Schlueter says. "Those [early adopters] are the ambassadors for the artist."

2. Take Your Fans Backstage

[<http://8.mshcdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/crowdsurfing.jpg>]

In order to make sure those ambassadors keep spreading the gospel of your gospel, make sure to give them what

they so desire : backstage access to *you* (especially the groupies, am I right ?).

"The number one thing for people to do when creating their Page is be really personal," says Meredith Chin, manager of corporate communications at Facebook. "Previously, you had to wait for your favorite musician to be on *Leno* [to find out more about him], but now you can see when they're touring, what's going on backstage, etc."

A lot of bigger musicians rely on their labels/managers/PR etc. to update their social media channels for them. If you've hit the big time, try to avoid posts of this nature, cautions Chin. Fans appreciate the extra effort.

3. Go Beyond the Music

[<http://8.mshcdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/painting.jpg>]

Yes, you are a band, and people likely enjoy your music, but they also probably like other things about you your style, your tastes, your opinions on the domestication of American wildlife, whatever.

"Make your fans want to check out what you're doing on Facebook," says Myles Grosovsky, of [Big Hassle Online Marketing](#). "I always love to hear about things that bands are into that aren't directly tied to their own work. Remember fans look up to bands. We tend to follow the bands' lead on discovering new things. They're our tastemakers."

Instead of always posting content directly related to your band, share videos, pictures and articles that you find interesting, which will, in turn, spark conversation with and among your fans.

4. Ask For Input From Fans

[<http://7.mshcdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/hands.jpg>]

One way you can really connect with your followers is to ask for their input. Chin tells us that [Keith Urban](#) used the platform to crowdsource an album cover. He posted two pictures before the release, which garnered thousands of comments and Likes.

Chin also suggests making use of [Facebook Questions](#) to reach out to fans. "It's really lightweight and makes it easy to get that feedback," she says. You can use the tool to ask yes-or-no questions ("Should we add Arkansas to our tour schedule ?") or pose multiple choice queries ("Which song title is the most evocative ?")

You can also get your fans involved by posting pictures of meet-and-greets and concerts and asking fans to tag themselves. That level of engagement also doubles as promotion for you, as tagged snaps will pop up in the news feed of your fans' friends, prompting them to check you out, too.

5. Be Visual

[<http://4.mshcdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/camera.jpg>]

As much as your fans might hang on your every word, some of them are, in fact illiterate. Just kidding (kind of). But, seriously, Facebook lets you share photos and videos, so make sure to exercise that option.

"Any time an artist does any kind of status update, include a photo, because a photo speaks volumes," says Doug Barasch, director of new media at [Verve Music/Universal Music](#). "Or include a video clip, if you have a camera."

Photos and video are much more dynamic content than just text, and fans are much more likely to comment on and "like" updates that they find compelling. For even greater ease of use, we suggest downloading apps like [Instagram](#) and PicPlz, which allow you to take awesome, dynamic snaps and easily share them on Facebook, as well as to a network of fans on those individual services.

6. Make Everything an Event

[<http://4.mshcdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/invite.jpg>]

It may seem obvious, but every time you're playing a show, you should create an event and invite your fans. "But the venue I'm playing already created an event ! Why do I need to ?" you may whine. Maybe because all of your followers might not necessarily be fans of the venue in question. Cover all your bases.

"Artists really need to take advantage of Events," says Barasch. "Any time you post an event, that shows up in your fans' news feed. And if someone RSVPs to that event, that RSVP shows up in their news feed as well."

Hot tip : We know you look much more rock 'n' roll when you litter said event invitation with asterisks and LOLcat speech (or perhaps that's just the bands in my neighborhood), but event invites of that nature are confusing and misleading. Make sure you have all the relevant information clearly stated before you add your own special flair you want people to show up, after all.

Barasch also recommends you create invites for events such as TV appearances and album releases. Obviously, your fans can't attend "My Disc Drops on May 23," but RSVPing "Yes" makes it more likely that they will, in fact, buy it when it drops.

7. Don't Just Ask For Things

[<http://7.mshcdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/gimmie.jpg>]

"Facebook can be a very important tool to build awareness around sales of music, ticket sales, merchandise, etc., but fans will tune out if they're constantly being asked to open their wallets," warns Grosovsky.

So go easy on the shilling. If you post a "buy" link to your new album at 3 p.m., it will still be there at 4 p.m. There's no need to repost it. Instead, keep up a dialogue with fans that reminds them why they love your music, which will impel them to shell out the cash for a show or merch.

Chin cites [Javier Dunn](#) as a prime example of good communication with fans. "The great thing about his page is that he responds to all of the posts on his wall," she says. "People feel very connected to him. It's the same as writing a letter to a musician and hearing back from them."

8. Don't Forget the Basics

Unless your band name is 0Ä²¼, or some other Witch House concoction, make sure to lay out all of your info band

name, bios, contact info, etc. as clearly as possible.

"One thing I find frustrating and think bands can improve on is posting their bios and their names on their Facebook," says Amy Sciarretto, from Roadrunner Records. "It's helpful for journalists needing or wanting to fact-check."

9. Offer Exclusive Content

[<http://4.mshcdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/records1.jpg>]

It's a fact : People like free things, and if you give them free things, they will "like" you more. We're not saying you should post your entire album free of charge to Facebook and offer each fan comp tickets for life, but throwing your social media followers something that they can't get anywhere else is surefire way to garner more fans (and keep the ones you have).

Barasch recommends using a "like" gate as a mechanism for distributing content like videos and downloads. If you're unfamiliar with "like" gates, they work thusly : If a fan "likes" your Page, he unlocks content. It's as easy as that.

They're also super easy to set up, which leads us to our next tip...

10. Check Out Some Tools

Yes, Facebook offers bands a lot when it comes to profiles galleries, a wall, etc. but it's becoming more and more necessary to add apps into the mix. And before you go into some long monologue about how you don't have time to set anything up because you have to remix that song/call that guy back/secure a melatrone, chill out. Apps aren't that difficult to figure out, and they don't take that long to plug in.

We recommend checking out apps like [BandPage](#), [ReverbNation](#) and [Damntherradio](#), which bring in elements like music players, events listings, merch sales, "like" gates, email list builders, etc. Most of them have a free option, so, no worries you do get to eat this month.

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