



CARTEL MANAGEMENT AUSTRALIA

### **Navigating Online Media.**

*Learn what online media can do for you & how it benefits the perception of your project.*

In our day to day communications with artists a big part of our discussion is how to create and maintain leverage for their releases. Online media (digital media) refers to any information that is broadcast to a specified audience through a screen. This includes text, audio, video, and graphics that are transmitted over the internet, for viewing on the internet.

The music industry (label and independent artists) utilises media platforms for promotional and marketing purposes, aiming to get information about themselves and new releases to their target audiences - both established fans and new fan bases - to achieve maximum product sales of music releases, concert tickets and merchandise. Media is simply a resource, it allows your music to reach an existing (and probably new) audience base that is interested in your niche / genre.

The mindset of an artist trying to get their music featured across a particular platform is two fold. Firstly the leverage you gain as an artist being able to align yourself with a reputable brand, and secondly, gaining access to a carefully curated audience the online site has nurtured since its inception. The beauty of sending your music to media outlets, apart from potentially gaining support, is the feedback you can gather from them. In our case, and for those of you who have worked with us before, we tend to push artists to value the feedback from outlets over the actual placement on them. As stated, the placement is great and will grow an audience short term but it is feedback that allows you into the mind of an editor / curator of an outlet that specialises in your niche / genre. Their knowledge of their specific niche fanbase is what you, as an artist, should look at as beneficial, as well as developing a long term relationship with the media directors / curators / editors / writers over multiple releases.

It's also important to note what online media can actually do for you as an artist. In an ideal world, it would be fantastic to get a blog interview / feature shared on social media and get an influx of streams through your digital store profiles, but in reality that is not what happens.

We suggest viewing online media as third party endorsement for music / artist projects as the best way to approach and leverage online media. For example *its X blog or online site saying Y artist is awesome, rather than Y artist saying they are awesome with no backing*. Third party endorsement leans into the idea of **social proof** whereby people copy the actions of others in an attempt to undertake behavior in a given situation. So if an artist is to share a feature written about them or their music a specific audience base is more likely to click through as it's been endorsed by a reputable media outlet.

The above endorsement won't necessarily affect streaming or overall growth of a project but can assist in building an artist narrative and can help create legitimacy. In a more technical sense the more artists are shared / posted on online forums the more it improves their SEO (search engine optimisation). This means when someone types in a specific artist name into a web browser the artist profiles are more likely to show up higher in the search bar. It can also help with legitimacy and gaining verification on your social media platforms as well as gaining working VISAs

for touring internationally. So with the above in mind, artists can make informed decisions on whether or not online features should play a specific role in the growth of their project.

Another common topic in our daily communications to artists is whether paying for online features is a smart choice? The general consensus from artists is that they should not have to pay, and although we would concur to some degree, there is certainly a position where paying for attention on online forums could be useful. For example, if an artist has very little online leverage and has a specific focus on building third party endorsement to gain leverage through a reputable site or magazine, our answer would be yes go for it (if it can fit within a budget).

When paying for features we suggest it is important to do some due diligence around their audience niche, engagement of the specific site, and whether your project audience are viewers, just to ensure that the artist project will acquire the adequate return on investment. A lot of online platforms fund their site through paid features (among other things) and will ultimately create a price based on what they can offer. For the more premium blogs, they often provide a price deck to artists which will include a breakdown of what a feature with that site will look like and do for the project. We suggest asking for a price deck and for information regarding the feature i.e. will they be sharing it across their social media channels as well as their website? If so, which ones?. Asking those questions will allow an artist to make an informed decision as to whether that specific blog would be worth the investment for the leverage they are after.

Listed below is the when, who & how of creating connections of operators in the online media space.

**Who:**

Referring back to our precious article [Media Is Leverage](#) examples of media you should be hitting up are:

- Youtube channels w/ high subscriber rate and following.
- Online magazines
- Newsletter websites
- Cultural websites / online magazines
- Syndicated Blogs (Blogs linked to record labels, events or other media)
- Online Influencers

We suggest doing your research and finding the specific person who can attend to your request. There would be no point emailing the fashion writer who doesn't deal with music at a magazine with your new single. Often these contacts can be found through the contact tab on the territory specific website. We would also suggest searching through linkedin for contacts, as that is a career based platform.

The goal of communication with specific individuals is to not only create a dialogue but to also create a relationship. Finding who to contact can often be the most frustrating part of development, but do try to be as vigilant around the right people as you possibly can.

**When:**

Firstly, and as stated above, you may not actually receive a response on your first, second, third or maybe even fourth communication to editors, and that is totally fine. In this situation we always refer back to consistency, if you are releasing consistently over a longer period of time, you will have multiple chances to connect with these editors and be able to update them, not only with new music, but also your project growth.

More specifically to a release cycle, we suggest that artists hit up online media 4 weeks prior to the release date

(assuming your music has already entered the distribution process). This allows the editors adequate time to actually come across the music, and give feedback. We also suggest a follow up 2 weeks prior to release, listing any major wins pre release or any specific leverage that may convince them to buy into the release.

**How:**

Have your music privately uploaded on SoundCloud and use that link to send to the media. Media often prefer SoundCloud links to embed on their website for functionality reasons. Along with that we do recommend sending an MP3 / WAV dropbox or Google Drive link for download just to give them all of the options if needed. It is ok to use forms to send them, but we advise artists to do research on specific links to send. Some online forums may have a submission portal, in that case we suggest you provide what is prompted. Upon release day, we strongly advise you to update all relevant media with the live spotify link along with any other leverage points of the release.

Another great way to find online media outlets is through resources such as [Submithub](#) and [Groover](#) which are essentially tools that pitch your music out to specific media within your niche. These are tools we use for almost every campaign as part of a checklist to pitch music out. There are many online blogs that get artists to submit only through resources like submithub and they are great tools to start testing your music in territories outside of Australia.

Depending on where you are in your development journey, there absolutely is a need to create leverage. Creating relationships and using the leverage of media platforms is a very effective way to help not only develop releases and artists but also events and cultural movements.