



CAN'T TEACH PASSION

Getting Playlists.

Be good at the part of the process that you are in control of.

As streaming services go in the 2020 / 2021 Australian and New Zealand market, it is the focus of almost every artist to try and get the music they are releasing onto playlists.

Let us start (as we always do) by explaining that if you are an artist that wishes to gain consistent editorial and independent playlist exposure, then you need to be on a consistent release schedule. You will not gain the results you are after by releasing one single every 6 months. Our advice to you is to create a back catalogue of music and strategise the releases to allow you to remain active across your store profiles.

Before getting into thick strategy, let's distinguish the difference between editorial, algorithmic and independent playlists as they all play a role in gaining you more streams.

Editorial:

Editorial playlists are essentially what every artist is fighting for. These playlists are usually curated by in house curators who have selective and specific tastes and it might be harder to get onto their radar. The curators should like the music you submit, but they will also be looking at the data to find great performing songs with the listeners.

Algorithmic:

These are basically playlists personalized for each user. For instance, Release Radar (Spotify specific) showcases brand new music that is released that week by a user's favorite artists. A user's favorite artists are determined based on their listening history and based on which artists they follow.

Independent:

These playlists can be created by anyone in the wider community and are often a lot easier to land for artists as they can control the tempo with which they reach out to independent curators.

Now that we all understand the difference of the above playlisting let's talk about the process that is actually landing them. The end goal for most artists is to gain consistent editorial playlisting on every release to maximise their reach to new and existing audiences. The problem here is that no artist is guaranteed placement in these playlists as it is a highly competitive market with which you (the artist) have absolutely no control over. So let's break it down from the very beginning.

1. Distribution / Initial pitch to stores.

Upload your single into distribution as early as possible. We suggest and live by a minimum of four weeks prior to any release date. This buffer allows you time to action all release strategies and it also allows yourself and the editorial team to actually ingest the music before release. Depending on the agreement with your distribution team they will generally do what is called an 'initial pitch' to the curator of each digital store (Spotify / Apple / Tidal / YouTube etc). The initial pitch is nothing more than the distribution team making the editorial team aware of the music and the date of release, nothing more, please do not pin your hopes and dreams on an initial pitch. If you are uploading through services such as DistroKid, Tubecore, CDBaby etc, an initial pitch isn't always provided unless you have a physical contact at the distribution company, and you will need to rely on your own submission process.

2. Spotify / Apple for Artists submission.

Please, please PLEASE do not take these submissions for granted. This is your only opportunity to talk directly with the specific editorial curator of your genre. If you don't take this submission seriously it will inhibit your likelihood of gaining editorial approval. Once your music has been put through distribution you will be notified in the back end of your Spotify and just recently Apple Music profile to submit for playlisting. Try to be as accurate as possible to the topic / genre / mood and have an in-depth written press release that highlights your song and you as an artist. Once this submission is complete the single gets sent to the internal curation team that decides on playlisting.

The next part of the process is where we see a lot of artists fall away. They think once the submission for editorial playlisting is done then there is nothing left to do. But that mindset leaves the success of the music up to chance without taking any sense of control. The next step is CRUCIAL for you to take control of your release and give it the best possible reach pre release.

3. Independent pitching.

If you have read previous articles from us you will know the importance of developing and maintaining industry contact lists which allow you to connect with industry professionals pre release to try and garner support. Independent playlist pitching falls under that category, and for you (the artist) it allows total control because you are in command of how many curators you hit up about your release.

Let's say for example you create a list of 500 independent curators and each of those playlists has 1000 followers. Then account for the fact that music is subjective and you may realistically only land a fraction of the amount of playlists hit up, you have still put the release in the best position possible for streaming success. If you land 20 of those 500 playlists, that's you potentially getting your song to 20,000 people.

This only works if you / your team are putting in the effort to actually find, create and maintain relationships with these playlist curators. Finding the contacts for these playlists / channels is all about doing research, generally if you cannot find an email or direct contact for a submission, the playlist may have a mirrored YouTube channel that will have a contact in the about section of their profile.

We would advise you not to pay for services that guarantee spotify addition. It is more beneficial to grow your own network over a longer period of time, rather than handballing it off to a service whose playlists may not be genuine for streaming success.

The goal is to create consistency over multiple releases.

- The more you reach out, the more chance of addition
- The more additions to independent playlists you get, the more streams and profile activity spikes you get.
- The more profile activity spike you get over a short period of time, the more likely you are to trigger algorithmic playlisting.
- Once you trigger algorithmic playlisting and your profile activity spikes consistently, the more likely you are to get in the face and push for an addition on editorial playlisting.

It is also important to note that a strong social media presence is crucial as you will need to push your 'engaged' community to your profile to listen to the music in the first place, so please ensure you are creating connections between your social media and your streaming profiles. The more you tag specific stores the more your profile activates.

We would also heavily recommend that you create **your own artist playlist linked to your profile**, which you can consistently update and push across other platforms. This ensures that you are uniform across all profiles as well as being consistent during times where you may not be releasing music. .

Every little bit of work you do counts, when it comes to navigating stores and playlisting focus, on the processes that you can control. Do that consistently and you are creating a framework for success.