



AUDIENCE FIRST - YOUR ARTISTIC STATEMENT LATER.

Your artistic statement means nothing without an audience willing to ingest it.

For independent and developing artists, the journey is often fuelled by an unwavering belief in their creations. You pour your soul into your music, convinced that each note, every lyric, carries immense potential for connection and impact. We hear it daily: "This release has the potential to reach so many people and connect," or "This will have a massive impact." While this passion is commendable and absolutely essential for any artist, it often comes with a critical flaw in its underlying mindset: most of these artists simply don't have an audience.

This isn't about diminishing the quality or depth of your work. An artist, band, or act can possess the most amazing, in-depth conceptual ideas or write music about an extremely moving topic. But if the audience and industry genuinely don't know who you are, that profound concept will not connect. It's a harsh truth, but one that needs to be acknowledged and understood to move forward effectively. Think of it this way: your artistic statement, no matter how potent, is a message in a bottle floating on a vast ocean. Without someone to find that bottle, open it, and read its contents, the message remains unseen, unread, and ultimately, unheard. The belief that great art inherently finds its audience without active effort is a misconception that can cripple even the most talented artists.

You can write the best song ever made in this world and have many expectations around what it's going to do, but great songs have had 0 streams before." This isn't a criticism of your artistry; it's a stark reminder of the reality of an oversaturated market where visibility is paramount."

- Anthony Agostino, Director of Cartel Australia

So, how do you bridge this gap between your artistic vision and an engaged audience? The answer lies in understanding that your **catalogue** is the gateway to discovery. It's not just about the one new single; it's about the bodies of work that defines you. When a new listener stumbles upon your music, what do they find? A rich catalogue provides depth and reason for them to stay. Discovery then incurs buy-in from the fanbase and once they have bought in, they are far more likely to get behind, understand, and even amplify your artistic statement.

Creating Care and Connection: Beyond the Music

Building an audience that genuinely cares isn't just about making good music; it's about fostering real connection. Here's how you can start cultivating that vital relationship:

1. **Be Consistent, Not Just Present:** It's not enough to sporadically drop music. Consistent releases, even small ones, keep you in the minds of your potential audience. Consistency also applies to your presence on platforms where your audience congregates. As Anthony Agostino emphasizes, digital campaigns are most successful when integrated into a broader strategy with strong organic outreach, custom audience targeting, and consistent media exposure. Repeat exposure across organic, paid, and real-life touchpoints fosters genuine interest and discovery, unlike simply pushing new music.
2. **Tell Your Story (Authentically):** People connect with people. Share the narrative behind your music, your inspirations, your struggles, and your triumphs. Be genuine; audiences can spot insincerity a mile away. Your artistic statement isn't just in your lyrics; it's in your journey.
3. **Engage, Don't Just Broadcast:** Social media is a two-way street. Respond to comments, ask questions, run polls, go live. Make your audience feel like they are part of your world, not just passive consumers. This interaction builds loyalty and a sense of community. Anthony Agostino highlights that many artists focus only on their own content, limiting themselves to their own profile and failing to supply data to platforms about who their audience is. He suggests actively engaging with potential audience members through **User-Generated Content (UGC)** by creating dialogue within specific niches related to your music, without promoting yourself. This feeds data to the algorithm, niches down exposed content, and creates repeat exposure.
4. **Create Experiences, Not Just Songs:** Think beyond just streaming numbers. How can you create unique experiences for your fans? This could be through exclusive content, intimate live streams, personalised merchandise, or even direct conversations. These experiences deepen the connection. True fan engagement comes from repeated exposure and access to the artist, leading to demand and a sustainable project.
5. **Understand Your Niche:** You don't need to appeal to everyone. Identify who your ideal audience is and tailor your efforts to reach them specifically. A small, highly engaged niche audience is infinitely more valuable than a vast, indifferent one. For example, when using Instagram, identify artists similar to you and explore the audio sections of their popular tracks to find videos made with those sounds. This reveals your audience, allowing for narrow and deep targeting.
6. **Collaborate Strategically:** Partnering with other artists, producers, or creatives who share a similar audience can expose your music to new ears organically. Choose

collaborations that align with your artistic vision and expand your reach authentically.

7. **Leverage User-Generated Content (UGC) for Discovery:** As mentioned, UGC is crucial. Anthony Agostino advises identifying 10-20 consistent users of similar sounds, those engaged in relevant niches, and consistent platform users from your targeted audio searches. Spend 10 minutes daily commenting on and engaging with these individuals' posts to start conversations, without spamming or promoting. This process feeds data to the algorithm, niches down exposed content, and creates repeat exposure for potential listeners.
8. **Strategic Use of Paid Ads:** Meta ads can be effective for releases when integrated into a broader strategy. If you have a budget, instead of running one broad ad, set up multiple ad sets with smaller budgets and be super specific with your targeting. Create custom audiences to retarget people who have engaged with your Instagram profile over the past year, increasing the likelihood of discovery through multiple touchpoints. However, be wary of services that inflate numbers without developing a true audience, like Playlist Push, Boost Collective, and Daily Playlist, as they are a "waste of time" for long-term artist development.

Your belief in your music is a powerful force, but it needs to be channelled strategically. Your artistic statement is indeed profound, but its resonance is directly proportional to the audience ready to absorb it. By focusing on consistent engagement, authentic storytelling, and building genuine connection, you can transform your artistic vision from a solitary pursuit into a shared, impactful experience. The work you create deserves to be heard; now, go out and build the audience ready to hear it.