

# **Playbook Guide**



## What is a Creator Playbook Guide?

In 2011, we released the Creator Playbook—the one-stop shop for best practices to help you build a loyal and engaged audience on YouTube. Since then, we've been working hard to tailor these strategies to the unique needs of our different content creators. To help, we've created a new set of resources called Playbook Guides.

Playbook Guides will provide strategies to build audiences around your content type. As with the Creator Playbook, these techniques are meant as best practices; they are not a set of rules or guaranteed tricks to make your videos successful. Any successful channel always starts with great content! Playbook Guides are now available in the following categories: Sports, Music, Education, Media Companies, and Nonprofits.

These Playbook Guides are designed to be used in conjunction with the Creator Playbook, which is the main resource for site-wide best practices. The latest version can always be found here:

### Youtube.com/playbook

Now, let's get started!

### **Playbook Guide Structure:**

- Category Strategies and Optimizations: This section addresses frequently asked questions and music partners' top concerns. We'll dive into solutions, introducing tailored optimization strategies bolstered by specific examples.
- Further Reading and Resources: This section provides a comprehensive list of resources for music partners.

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### How can I optimize my videos for better discovery?

Most people find music channels through search results, so optimizing your videos for discovery is key. When you upload a new video, make sure you've got all your metadata working for you.

#### Titles

- Put heavily searched terms first
- Lead with song title, artist name, album titles

### Tags

 Use both general and specific keywords

### Descriptions

- Place Calls to Action at the top, above the fold
- Include:
  - Popular song lyrics
  - Band members' names
  - Album release date
  - Events, concert dates, venues
  - Links to playlists, digital stores, social media

### **Thumbnails**

- Use close-ups and bright, high contrast images.
- Feature the most compelling video image
- Choose a representative image from the video

### An effective description

/m83

### Uploaded on Oct 17, 2011

Watch the new M83 video for 'Steve McQueen here: http://youtu.be/a8lqskd\_Vq8

See the second part of the 'Midnight City' series - 'Reunion' here:  $\label{eq:midness} $$ \text{http://youtu.be/DJQQrjVmQG0} $$$ 

'Midnight City' is available on the album 'Hurry Up We're Dreaming' OUT NOW:

Buy Double CD: http://glnk.it/av Buy 12" Vinyl: http://glnk.it/aw Buy on iTunes: http://glnk.it/ar

More here: http://ilovem83.com See M83 live: http://ilovem83.com/live

Directed by Fleur & Manu, this video is a tribute to Village of the Damned, Close encounters of the Third kind and other Akiras. No kids where hurt in the process! Executive production by Division

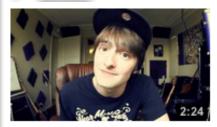
(C) 2011 M83 Recording Inc. Under exclusive license to Mute for North America and to Naïve for the rest of the world

#### **Effective thumbnails**

/ChadFuture



/davedays



Hot Problems (Dave Days R... 1,288,466 views | 8 months ago

The right channel setup and organization makes your channel more navigable for your audience, and improves discovery of your content. Remember, if you deliver content in the right way, your audience will likely tune in and watch for longer. As you select your channel format, think about your overall channel strategy, and experiment to find the format that makes sense for you. First, let's take a high-level view of channel strategy. Channels can feature uploaded videos, curated videos, or some combination of the two.

### **Example Channel Layout**

Music Label	Independent Artist	Curated Music Hub
Uploads	Uploads & Curated Content	Curated Content Only
Video	Video	Video
Video	Video	Video
Video	Video	Video
= U	ploaded Video	= Curated Video

Music content owners can experiment with different channel formats and structures, depending on their unique goals. As you select your channel layout, think about your overall channel strategy and which layout makes sense for you.

### Layout options for labels and networks

### Single channel

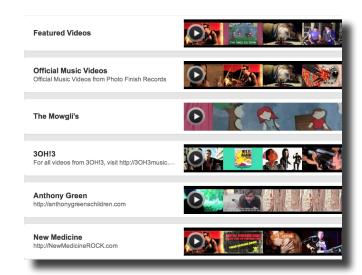
- One channel functions as the official label channel. All artist videos are uploaded in one central location.
- Benefits: Easy to cross-promote all of your artists in this format. Leverages many different fan bases at once.

### Multiple artist channels, one label channel

- Videos are uploaded to individual artist channels, then curated into the music label's hub channel. Hub playlists can feature weekly new releases, top picks, genre playlists and more.
- Benefits: Allows artist to develop tailored messaging and a strong relationship with the audience. Individual artists don't get lost amidst competing messages.

### Multiple artists on main channel

/photofinishrecords



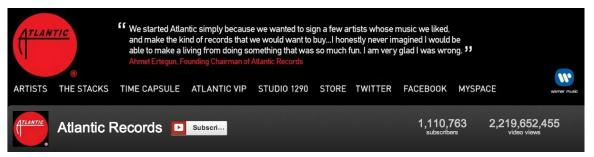


Let's take this one step further. Channel strategy can focus on a single channel, or distribute content across multiple channels. A major label, for instance, could be composed of three channels: a sub label, artist, and curated sub label.

#### **Major label channel**



#### Sub-label channel



#### **Artist channel**



#### Layout options for independent artists

### Single channel

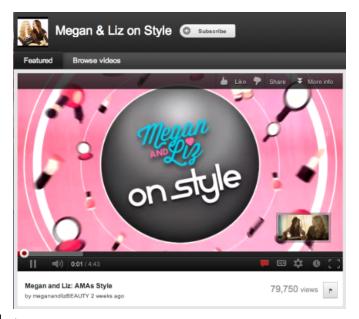
- Many indie musicians manage a single channel for all content including music videos, live performances, video blogs, interview footage and backstage content.
- Benefits: Easy to target announcements to specific groups of fans. Provides a direct line of communication with fans. It's easy to ask questions, and encourage your audience to help shape the channel and its content.

#### Multi-channel

- Some artists separate content into different channels, uploading official music videos onto a main channel, and then using secondary channels to upload other content.
- Benefit: Enables fans to find exactly what they want.

### **Multi-channel setup**

/meganandlizbeauty



### Calls to Action to 2nd Channel from the 1st channel



#### Curators

#### Single channel

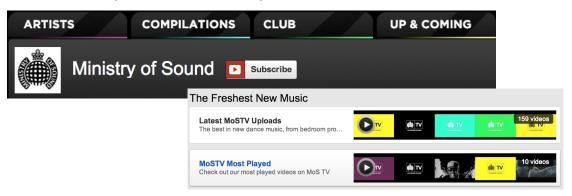
Music curators may or may not upload any original content that they own to their channels. For the most part, these channels focus on curating videos from different labels, artists and users. Many curators create best-of playlists for artists, genres, or niche interests.

#### Notes about the curator format

- Helps others discover new music; brands your channel as a hotbed for new talent discovery.
- Increases watch time on the channel by mixing original uploads with curated content.
- Capitalizes on timeliness: Create playlists for trending artists, genres, niches, live events, tent-pole cultural events, etc.

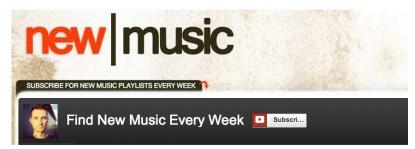
#### **Curation channel**

• Base79's Ministry of Sound's Music Discovery Channel



### A curated music channel for music enthusiasts

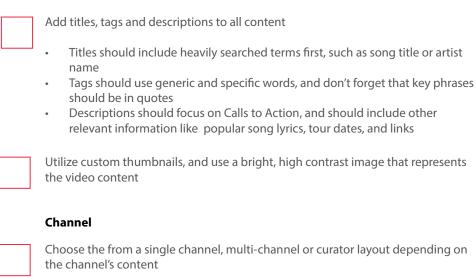
/NewMusic



# **Optimizing for Discovery**



#### Video



### How can I use YouTube to release a new album or song?

Your channel should be a central part of your song or album release strategy to build buzz and viewership and drive music purchases. Use promotional videos and your channel feed to boost audience interest before, during and after the launch.

### Create promotional and supplemental video assets

If you're releasing a new album, produce the following types of promotional video assets:

- Trailer, teaser, or promotional video for song or album
- Interviews, making-of and behind-the-scenes videos
- Album sampler. Make the video interactive by utilizing annotations and adding timecode video URLs in the description.
- Lyric videos. These audio-only videos use simple graphics to highlight the lyrics.

### Online "scavenger hunt" for music

 /oddbloodTV Yeasayer created a video for every song on their new album and seeded it around the web.



#### **Countdown series**

 <u>/TheWarnerSound</u> creates a series called The Countdown around album release.



### Optimize your channel landing page

- Point all branding/banners to the song or album
- Feature the promotional video and enable auto-play
- Promote the release date and feature preorder, purchase and listening links
- Remember to include Calls to Action

### Use your **channel** feed

- Keep the feed active just before and during the launch period to increase engagement
- Create a playlist to feature promotional launch videos and post to the feed using the "channel posts" feature
- Give your fans exclusive content: Link to unlisted urls or exclusive playlists

### **Album branding & links**

/officialflo



### **Album branding & links**

/BrunoMars

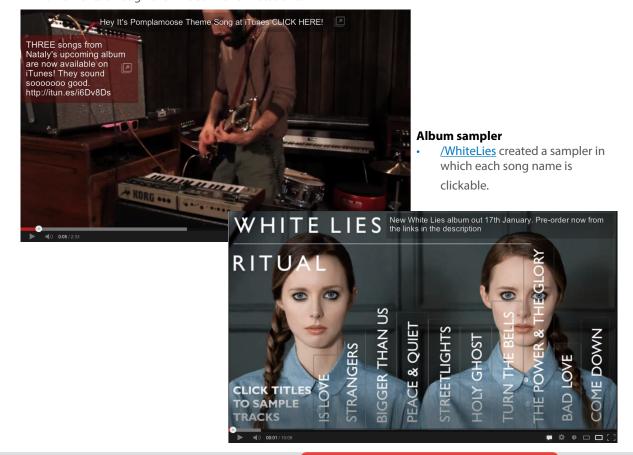


#### Use the YouTube toolset

- Utilize Merch annotations
- Create album samplers using timecoded <u>annotations</u>
- Utilize <u>InVideo Programming</u>

### **Selling music through Merch annotations:**

 /PomplamooseMusic sold a single and holiday ornaments through their video with annotations.



### **Leverage top-performing videos**

Your successful videos are a great asset. Direct viewers to new work as soon as it's posted.

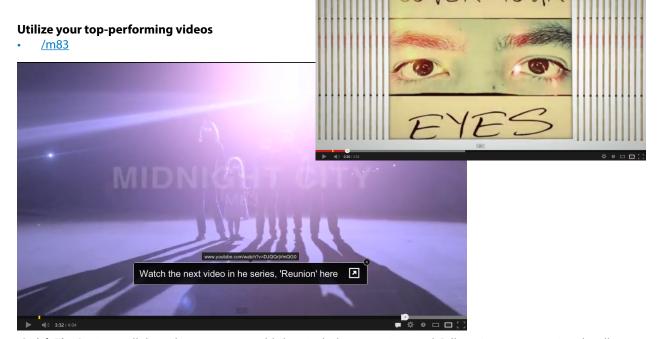
- Add annotations to top-performing videos to funnel traffic to the new video.
- Post a new video as a video response to one or your most popular videos.
- Add links in the description of top-performing library videos, pointing your viewers to new work.

### Unlock the power of the YouTube community

- Ask your fans to create remixes or covers of your songs.
- Use your social media presence to spread the word.
- Solicit comments, favorites, Likes, Shares, and subscriptions from YouTube tastemakers and artists.

### **Creative lyric videos**

 <u>/elliegoulding</u> collected photos for her lyric video, "Anything Could Happen."



Quick Tip: Optimize all the video assets you publish to include annotations and Calls to Action, promoting the album.

#### Use Data!

YouTube Analytics should be a key part of your channel's launch strategy. Use data to target your promotion efforts.

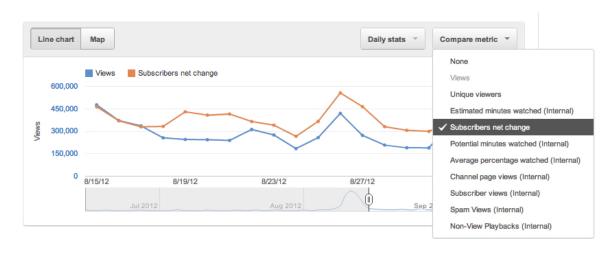
- What regions are driving significant traffic to your channel based on the demographic data?
- Use this data to determine where to hold concerts, live events, interviews, etc.
- Look at weekly viewership data or weekly subscriber growth. Are there specific days of the week when viewership peaks? If so, take advantage of these key insights, and launch when traffic has been historically high.
- Examine your traffic sources. Are there specific blogs or other sites that drive a significant amount of traffic to your videos?
- Add subtitles to reach international audiences.

### **Blog Outreach**

Think about how you can build relationships with key blogs, and integrate them into your communications strategy for new releases.

- Identify the top blogs/sites driving traffic to your videos in Analytics.
- Reach out to those blogs with embed codes for album previews, song releases etc.
- Look for new blogs that may fit your demographic, or are similar to existing blogs that drive traffic.

### YouTube Analytics - Subscriber net growth



# Releasing an Album or Song Checklist



Releas	se a Song	Rele	ease an Album
	Create a lyric video and a music video.		Create and upload promotional assets for the album: including announcements, teasers, trailers, behind-the-scenes videos,
	Annotate your top assets to drive traffic to the new video.		lyric videos and promo videos for the full album.
	Get creative! Release through a Google Hangout on Air.		Direct people from one track to the next using interactive annotations.
	Leverage your fans and YouTube community: ask fans to create remixes and/ or covers of your song.		Annotate your videos with buy links.
	Ask your audience what they think and receive instant feedback.		Create a playlist of songs from the new album.
	Get the community involved, or commenting on the next single.		Provide your fans with an exclusive window of time to purchase the album prior to the release date, using Click-to-Buy links in annotations.
			Reach out to blogs and external websites with a quick pitch about the new album release.

# Content Upload Frequency

## **Content Upload Frequency**

### How can I create new content more regularly for YouTube fans?

Creating quality music videos is not only costly and time-consuming, but it is also typically dependent on key album release dates. How can you entice your fans to keep coming back to your channel even when you don't have a new "official" music video? This is your chance to be creative—think about ways to create more content, upload more frequently and engage with your fans through your channel's activity feed.

#### Get creative!

Supplement official videos with:

- Lyric videos
- Remixed songs or b-sides
- Tutorials
- Artist video blogs
- Interviews
- Behind-the-scenes, tour footage, and makingof videos

#### Behind the scenes

/DavidChoi



### A live or acoustic version

/ VanMorrisonOfficial



### **Street performances**

/LindseyTime



## **Content Upload Frequency**

#### Activate your channel feed

You don't need to upload videos to maintain an active channel feed: Likes, comments and playlist additions are all displayed alongside new uploads.

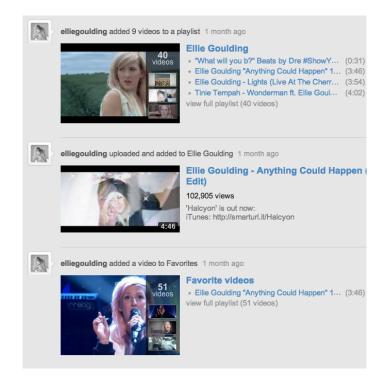
Think strategically about how you're curating content through the feed. Your curation activities should complement your content strategy to create a richer viewing experience for your audience.

- Use the feed to showcase your channel's activity across YouTube: Like, favorite, and use the "channel post" feature.
- Create playlists of your own music and music you want to support. Use the "channel post" feature to promote these playlists through the feed.

Quick Tip: Every time you broadcast your activities through the feed, you're sending a message to your audience about your channel and what it stands for. Make every audience interaction count!

#### Good use of the activity feed

/elliegoulding



# **Using the Talent**

## **Using the Talent**

### How can I use my artist or talent more effectively on YouTube?

If you're a record label, making the most of your artist's time is essential. Some call them drops, others call them pick-ups, but when you have time with your talent, be sure to record simple pieces of content that will have a big promotional impact.

### Promotional videos and extra content

- Create YouTube-specific promotional videos that are reusable as stand-alone videos or bumpers for archived content. Make them evergreen, or think ahead and record different bumpers for tent-pole cultural events.
- Always include the key Call to Action: Subscribe to the channel.
- Have the artist encourage audience participation: Ask fans questions or solicit comments and/or response videos.
- Capture casual, unscripted and behind-thescenes shots.

#### Music video, behind the scenes

/lovemspenny



#### **Artist Call to Action**

<u>/IncubusTV</u> includes a Call to Action for an upcoming tour date.



### Behind the scenes playlist

 /TaylorSwift features a "Behind the Scenes" playlist on her channel.



### Using the Talent

#### Extra content from the artist

 <u>/|FightDragonsRock</u> supplemented their channel offerings with a tutorial series on how they produce chiptune music from gadgets.

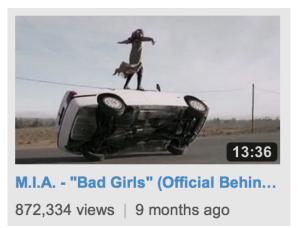




#### Extra content from the artist

• <u>/Noisey</u> maximized their time with artist MIA by shooting a music video and a behind-the-scenes video, and getting her to answer viewer questions that had been left as comments on the video.





### How can I best package music footage for longer viewing sessions?

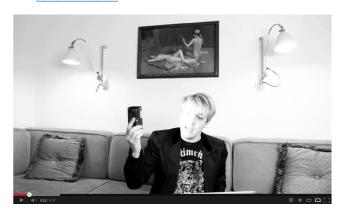
YouTube's music viewers have longer-than-average viewing sessions; music channels can and should take advantage of this. With the right strategies, you can package your music content to facilitate longer and more engaged viewing sessions.

### **Playlisting and curation**

- Utilize playlists to organize your videos across themes: Best of, Greatest Hits, or a full album playlist. If a video is in a playlist, use annotations to encourage viewers to watch the video in playlist mode.
- Broaden your appeal by creating playlists that include work by other artists.
- Curate user-generated remixes, mashups, covers and other fan videos into playlists. If fans see their videos are being curated by an artist or label, they'll be excited to create more!

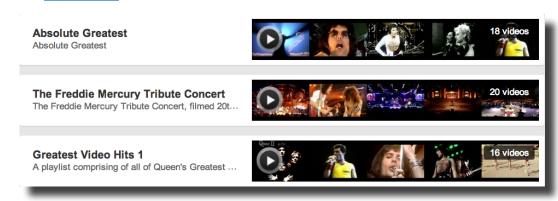
### **Artist-curated playlists**

/07Duranduran



### **Greatest Hits playlists**

/Queenofficial



#### Long-form music content

- Incorporate full concert footage, short films and music documentaries into your content strategy.
- Utilize time code URLs to help users jump to specific songs in a full concert setlist.
- Use annotations to link to specific time codes.
- Create trailers or teaser videos for your long-form content.
- Upload the full long-form video, but consider cutting the long video into shorter clips to act as stand-alone live songs.
- Use annotations and hyperlinks in the shortform version to link viewers to the full video. and use playlists to create the long viewing experience for those clips.

### Timecode URLs in Video Description

/ApprenticeA

### Uploaded on Oct 19, 2009

MY FACEBOOK: http://www.facebook.com/coreyvidal MY TWITTER: http://www.twitter.com/coreyvidal

#### TIMES:

00:45 - Moonwalk (Part 1)

03:50 - Moonwalk (Part 2)

07:37 - Moonwalk (Sideways)

10:38 - Kick

13:19 - Spin

15:36 - Lean

18:32 - Toe Freeze

20:01 - Combo

22:15 - Outro

### Turn one view into multiple views with CTAs

- Use annotations and CTAs in one video to direct traffic to more videos from your channel.
- Annotate music videos to link to complimentary content including making-of videos, uncut versions or similar music videos.
- Use 'end-cards' on your videos to recommend other content for viewers to watch next.
- If you have concert footage, direct your viewers to:
  - Backstage footage
  - Interviews
  - Upcoming concert announcements
  - Introduction and recap videos

#### **Album Playlists**

/ArmadaMusic



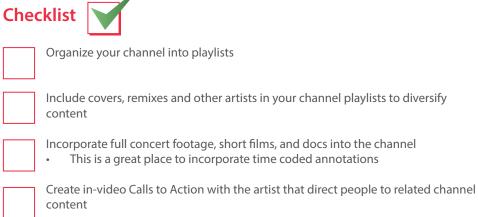
rkus Schulz - Scream (Album ...

8 videos | 4 months ago



Dash Berlin - United Destination 2...

9 videos | 4 months ago



### How do music channels and label channels cross-promote and collaborate?

Why do concerts always feature a lesser-known opening act before the headliner? Why do established artists do guest spots on brand-new artists' songs? In the music world, cross-promotions and collaborations launch new artists by introducing them to existing audiences. YouTube is no different.

#### In-video collaboration

- Collaborate with other musicians and/or YouTube channels with similar styles and audiences. Artists that tour together are good candidates for cross-promotion.
- Appear as a guest star on other channels, including non-music channels.
- Offer your musical talents to non-music channels, e.g. create another channel's theme music, or help a channel produce a music video or musical parody.
- Include CTAs for viewers to visit and subscribe to channels you support.

### **Theme Songs**

 <u>Base79's /Brettdomino</u> - U.K.-based YouTube artist Brett Domino creates a theme for Ministry of Sound.



### Collaboration between music and non-music creator

• /iamOTHER



### **Artist interviewing artist**

/TheWarnerSound



### **Cover song**

/KurtHugoSchneider



#### **Collaborations**

 <u>/einastronaut</u> - 26 different YouTube channels worked together to perform a cover of the Ghostbusters theme song



In addition to in-video collaborations, there are other, less time-intensive ways to collaborate and cross-promote with other music creators.

#### Curation

- Use the channel's activity feed to promote relevant content from other artists. Like, comment, or add a video to a playlist. This activity will be broadcast to your subscriber base.
- Use playlists to curate other content from relevant artists.

#### Curation

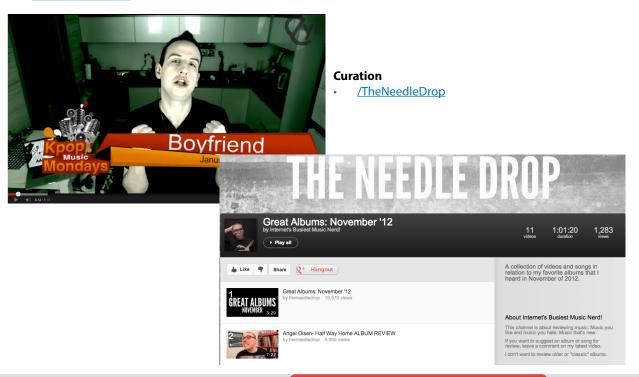
/simonandmartina

#### Social media

Leverage your social media channels—
 Google+, Facebook, and Twitter—to promote,
 follow, and Like other channels. Ask other
 channels to do this in return.

### **Channel promotion**

 Utilize the "Other Channels and Friends" module to feature channels on your landing page.



# **Engaging with Fans**

### **Engaging with Fans**

### How can I establish direct communication and interaction with my fans?

YouTube attracts millions of viewers, and it's home to millions of opinions. Think about your YouTube fans as a huge focus group, where you can proactively drive the conversation, solicit feedback, interact with and co-create with your audience!

### Involve your fans

- Give your fans an in-video shout out, and they'll be motivated to interact more.
- Invite your fans to make video responses and leave comments on your videos.
- Moderate the conversation on your channel: Respond to comments and answer your fans' questions.
- Stumped on what type of content to produce next? Ask your fans to vote in the comments for your next music video!
- Co-create with fans! Encourage them to create mashups, covers and remixes of your tracks.

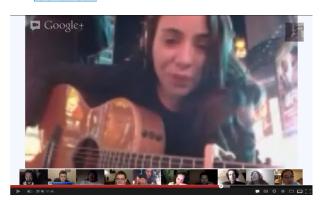
Fans, and music fans in particular, thrive on exclusivity. Your fans also want exclusive access to you!

### Offer exclusive perks

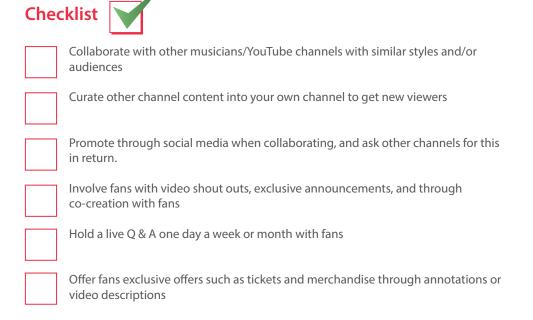
- Offer exclusive content and merchandise concert tickets, new tracks, video clips—to your fans and subscribers.
- Dedicate one day a week (or a month) to engage with your fans through comments, videos and bulletin posts.
- Curate your favorite tracks in playlists, giving your fans a glimpse into your personal taste.
- Hold a live Q&A session. Make sure your audience is aware of the live stream: Upload a video trailer and notify them about the date and time.

### **Google+ Hangout on Air**

/DariaMusk



## **Cross-promotion & Fan Engagement**



# **Further Reading & Resources**

### **Further Reading & Resources**

### **Playbook Sections**

- Calls to Action
- Maintaining the Channel Feed
- Tent-pole Programming
- Cross-promotion & Collaboration

- Metadata
- Thumbnails
- Playlists
- Annotations

### YouTube Toos / Features for Music

Getting Started as a Music Partner: goo.gl/gPgNG

Copyright Tips: goo.gl/FmxUl

**Content ID:** Online protection and rights management solution, enabling content owners to identify, monitor, and control the use of their works on YouTube. goo.ql/B4EkF and goo.ql/jTdlG

YouTube Music Chart: Provides a global, ranked list of the most popular songs on YouTube. goo.gl/LPVfM

**YouTube Music Channels:** Algorithmically-created channel with an artist's top videos from across YouTube. goo.gl/xY5Ku

### **Further Reading & Resources**

### **Example Links**

6	m83	goo.gl/HYufc
6	Chad Future	goo.gl/1YnPr
6	Dave Days	goo.gl/Ng4EU
8	Photofinishrecords	goo.gl/upPJP
9	Warner Music Group	goo.gl/22JVq
9	Atlantic Records	goo.gl/PFTGR
9	Christina Perri	goo.gl/fErgE
10	Megan and Liz Beauty	goo.gl/uLY6O
11	Ministry of Sound	goo.gl/5hsTQ
11	New Music	goo.gl/XUfJB

### Releasing an Album or Song

14	Odd Blood TV	goo.gl/aQarr
14	The Warner Sound	goo.gl/g8zod
15	Official Flo	goo.gl/y1EWa
15	Bruno Mars	goo.gl/UN0cs
16	Pomplamoose Music	goo.gl/7MxW3
16	White Lies	goo.gl/IYiN3
17	m83	goo.gl/abfa9
17	Ellie Goulding	goo.gl/QQprl

### **Content Upload Frequency**

21	David Choi	goo.gl/kFPuQ
21	Van Morrison Official	goo.gl/XV9Zb
21	Lindsey Time	goo.gl/sR3ep
22	Ellie Goulding	goo.gl/wSAe0

### **Using the Talent**

24	Christina Perri	goo.gl/Ud5dB
24	Incubus TV	goo.gl/tPeyN
24	Taylor Swift	goo.gl/tVByj
25	lFightDragonsRock	goo.gl/NaKbT
25	Noisey	goo.gl/xGeDV

### **Increasing Watch-time**

27	Queen Official	goo.gl/yaxdY
27	07DuranDuran	goo.gl/Ra5y9
28	ApprenticeA	goo.gl/vd2sx
28	Armada Music	goo.gl/3VUT6

### **Cross-promotion**

31	Brett Domino	goo.gl/0oJsQ
32	iamOTHER	goo.gl/suy8p
32	The Warner Sound	goo.gl/ytYbG
32	Kurt Hugo Schneider	goo.gl/7dYOc
32	Einastronaut	goo.gl/nSN2R
33	Simonandmartina	goo.gl/8Zjd3
33	The Needle Drop	goo.gl/XMJ7m

### **Engaging with Fans**

35 DariaMusk <u>goo.gl/2DKzL</u>

Thank you!