



The A-Z Of Music Marketing

Written by Mark Knight – Right Chord Music

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RCM
Right Chord Music

www.RightChordMusic.com

Introduction

The aim of Right Chord Music is to bring the discipline of the brand marketing world to music marketing, encouraging bands to think more like brands in their approach to marketing.

New music blog: We write with passion about the new and emerging music we love

Music marketing support: We publish articles, produce guides and maintain a database of expert music marketing suppliers to help you promote your music more effectively

Music distribution: Through our partnership with EmuBands we offer simple, yet powerful digital music service for you to sell your music online through the world's biggest download stores. Keep 100% of your royalties and receive a 10% discount when you sign up using promo code RightChordMusic

Artist management: We currently manage The Daydream Club and provide ad-hoc pay as you go management support for a host of other unsigned bands and independent artists including Blackchords

About the author:

Mark Knight continues to divide his time between bands and brands. In the past 10 years Mark has written music marketing strategy for brands including Deutsche Telekom, Gaymers Cider, Nokia, Orange, Relentless & Sony Ericsson. Mark has over 7 years experience as an artist manager and mentor. He is a regular blog contributor to The Unsigned Guide and Music Think Tank. He's spoken at the MIDEM music conference and runs music workshops for Shape Arts.

Is for Audience. You should be able to accurately describe the fans that visit your website, Facebook page or attend your gigs. Having a clear profile of your fans enables you to target your messages and make your promotional activity more focused and effective. Make use of the free insights provided by social networks, and services such as Google Analytics to track and monitor your core audience.

Is for Advocate. Advocates are influential music industry contacts that support and endorse your music. Draw up a short list of people to contact and aim to engage them with your music. Think of them as your best customers, how can you continue to reward them, and make them feel special. EG Offer them exclusive access to you, or your music.

Is for Amazing Radio. Amazing Radio is a UK, national DAB station dedicated to new, unsigned and independent artists. Upload your music to <http://amazingtunes.com/> Then if the producers like it, you could find yourself getting radio play – without the need for radio plugging.

Is for All Music Guide. Submit your artist profile & biog to All Music Guide for it to appear in iTunes <http://www.allmusic.com/about/product-submissions>

Is for BandCamp. <http://bandcamp.com/> with the continued demise of MySpace, BandCamp is a growing music destination site. BandCamp allows bands to sell their music directly to fans.

The strength of the site is the variety of options available. You can sell at any price, give fans the choice to set their own price, or even give tracks away for free in return for an email address. The site allows fans the option to download a variety of audio formats IE WAV or MP3 and you can also sell additional merchandise.

Is for Bit.ly. <http://bit.ly/> This URL shortening service allows you to track the number of clicks on each of your shortened links, allows you to track the effectiveness of Tweets or other online posts. IE Which site is driving most traffic to your online store. Bit.ly also produces a browser plugin so you don't have to login into the service each time. I have included some Bit.ly links in this document so I can actually see if anybody is reading it.

Is for Buzz. The music industry (Labels, radio stations, promoters, sync agencies, booking agents, publishers etc) want to see evidence of buzz and activity around your band. What happens if you Google your band name? If you don't dominate the first results page you have work to do.

Is for Brand. Having a clear, consistent and distinct brand identity is vital to ensure you stand out from the crowd. In simple terms this means using the same images, fonts, colours and styles across all consumer facing touch-points. This will give fans and the wider music industry confidence they have found the right band, and that you have a professional appearance. You can establish your brand identity by taking some time to think about the words, colours and themes that you and your music best convey. Good brands are consistent, so don't change your look every day. Ask yourself: Would our fans expect this, from us? If the answer is no, you are probably off brand.

Is for BBC Introducing. <http://bbc.in/flJu0Y> The BBC are always looking for new talent. Create a profile and upload your music. All uploaded tracks, are reviewed by producers, and if they like your music, they will refer it to your local BBC station. This could result in airplay or a slot on a BBC Introducing stage at a summer festival.

Is for Best Practice. Take time to see what other bands and artists are doing to promote themselves. Join their Facebook page or sign up to their mailing list to pick up creative ideas and inspiration. Here are the most popular 20 bands and artists on Facebook, can you learn anything from them? <http://bit.ly/fwm6nV>

Is for Blip FM. <http://www.Blip.FM> The site allows you to become a DJ and play tracks sourced from YouTube. Play music you like from similar sounding artists, then add your tracks to the play-list to introduce them to your music. Broadcast your track choices over Twitter to extend reach.

Is for Blogs. Getting a review or feature on a popular music blog site can provide welcome exposure and critical acclaim. Use a blog aggregator like <http://hypem.com> [See 'H'] start by searching for artists who have a similar sound to you and compile a list of blogs that are writing about these artists. Then contact these blogs directly highlighting your musical similarities with the artists they are already supporting. Provide them with links to your music enabling them to embed your music to share with their readers – provide them with a good story, which makes it easy for them to write about you. Here are some tips from Bloggers about how to cut through and get noticed: <http://bit.ly/fnWXYf>

Is for Choice. Give your fans choice. Think of yourself as a shop, how many shops do you know that just sell one product?

Choice could include: Albums, EPs, singles, in a variety of formats. Physical; CDs and vinyl, downloads including high quality Lossless Audio, WAV, MP3. Choice should include price. Consider setting a minimum price and allow fans the choice to pay what they want above this fresh-hold.

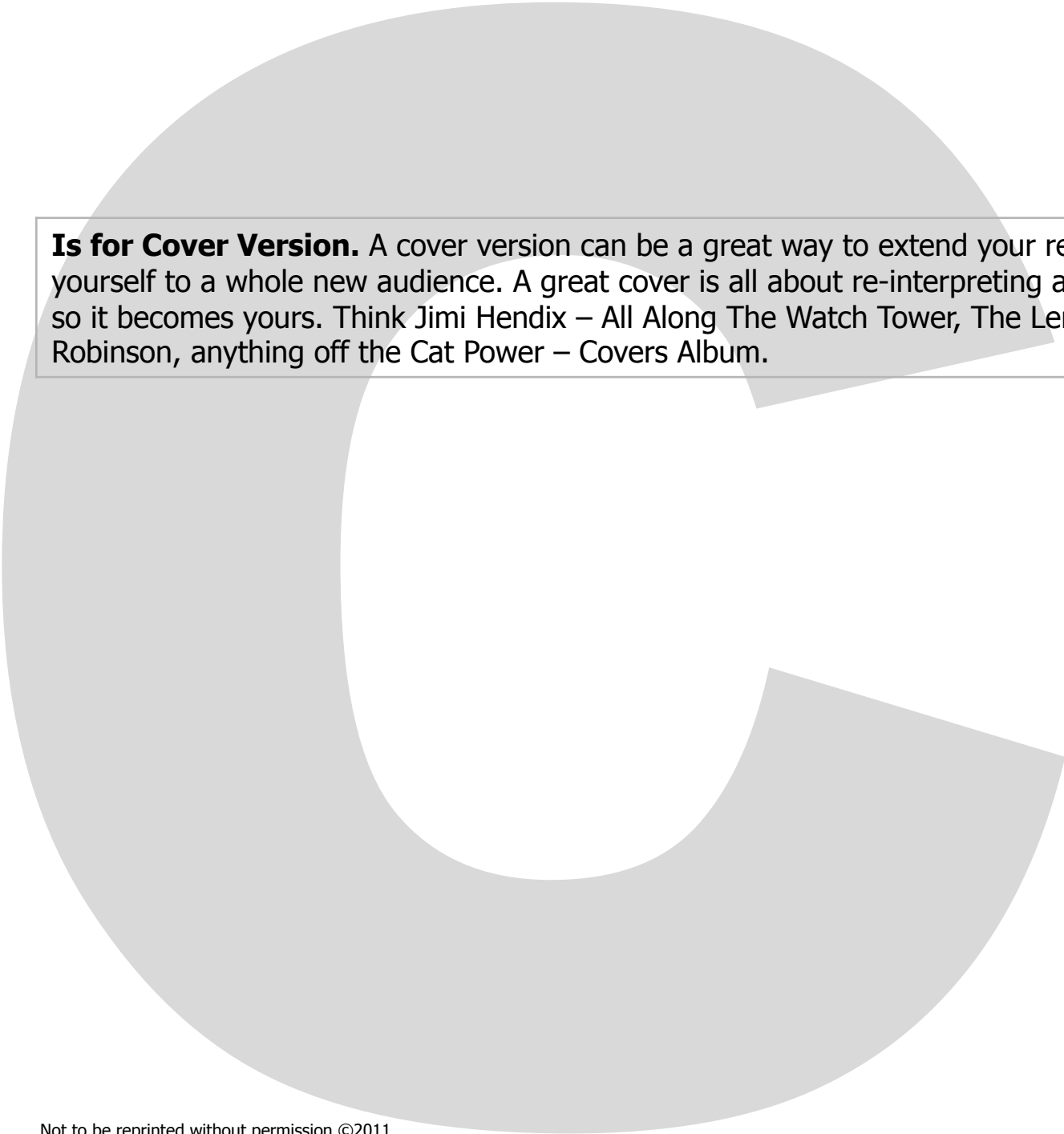
Choice can also mean t-shirts, lyrics, artwork, and limited edition prints. Or it could include experiences. EG Intimate gigs, artist meet & greets, or the chance for fans to attend a rehearsal or recording session. The sky is the limit.

Just remember there are always fans out there, who want to have the complete collection and who are willing to pay a little more to get it. Give them the option to upgrade.

Make use of services like BandCamp [See 'B'] where you can set variable pricing or even give your music away for free in return for an email address.

For an example check out <http://www.billythekidonline.com/> maybe this is going a little too far, but you get the idea! [This approach also gives you a great 'Story' see [S]

Is for Clicks. Always try to minimise the number of mouse clicks your fans have to make to buy your music. For every addition click they have to make potential buyers disappear. This means avoid using landing pages, and keep data collection forms as short as possible.



Is for Cover Version. A cover version can be a great way to extend your reach and introduce yourself to a whole new audience. A great cover is all about re-interpreting a well known song so it becomes yours. Think Jimi Hendix – All Along The Watch Tower, The Lemonheads, Mrs Robinson, anything off the Cat Power – Covers Album.

Is for Distribution. It's important fans can find and buy your music. If you don't have the support of a label, you can set up your own digital distribution. Lots of sites offer these services including us! It's easy to add your music to key digital music services and stores including iTunes, Spotify, & Amazon.

Is for DropBox. www.dropbox.com DropBox provides users with an online storage locker. A great tool for bands and managers enabling them to easily share and access content. DropBox removes the need to send emails with large attachments. The iPhone application also enables users to access content on the move.

Is for Download Cards <http://bit.ly/nYXxHc> CDBaby offer wallet friendly download cards providing a great alternative to selling CDs at your merch table. Remember not everyone likes buying CDs

Is for Engage. One of the reasons MySpace failed was the focus on collecting large numbers of Friends NOT engaging with them. It is only valuable to have 'Fans' if they a) want to be your fans, b) they are interested in what you have to say, and c) They help promote you to their friends.

This means every-time a fan connects with you on any social network – you need to acknowledge them and start a dialogue. If you don't know the names of your fans you are not working hard enough.

As a band you need to become an expert in Relationship Marketing. That means tailoring messages to the right people at the right time and recognising what they need to hear. It also means you need to reward loyalty and encourage new fans to stick with you.

The conversation should start when they befriend you it shouldn't end. See 'S' Surprise & 'D' Delight.

Is for Fan Funding. There are lots of new sites springing up but Pledge Music <http://www.pledgemusic.com/> is still one of the best. Pledge Music allows bands and artists to raise money to record an album. Fans pledge money in return for special / exclusive content and access. You can also build in a charity component to each pledge.

Is for Follower Wonk. <http://followerwonk.com/> A typical Twitter search only allows you to search names; this allows you to search user profiles. This allows you to find anyone that mentions BBC in their profile for example. It's a great tool for finding journalists and music industry contacts.

Is for Friends. As an independent artist with a limited budget it's important you utilise the resources at your disposal. Do you have friends who can: Make websites, design posters, CDs, t-shirts, take photographs, make remixes or videos? Most people will be happy to help, if it provides them with content for their own portfolio. If your video ends up becoming a viral sensation, everyone is a winner.

Is for Follow Up. Make sure every time you send an email, or contact anyone you follow up. Understand that people are busy, and while they may want to always respond to you, they just may not have time, or simply forget. A reminder may just be enough to get them to listen to your music, which could mean the difference between getting discovered and missing out.

Is for Facebook. As the world's largest social network it's influence is clearly important. Facebook pages continue to evolve, so make you stay up-to-date with all the changes and understand what they mean when it comes to marketing your band. EG Now you can use Facebook as your band, which means your marketing activity can leave the confines of your page, so go and befriend the bands you admire and write on their wall – promoting your band to their fans.

Is for Great Gigs. Before you book a gig, always try to visit the venue to watch another gig. Then make a decision whether it is worth playing there by considering the following factors:

What is the stage like? What is the sound like? Is it well promoted? Can you find any mention of the venue and previous shows online?) Is there a good crowd? Are they listening to the music? Does the venue or night attract music industry guests? How many other bands play on the bill? What is the busiest / quietest night? How much do they charge for entrance, How much do they pay you? Can you sell merchandise?

Once you are satisfied that the venue is right for you, you need to promote it to you fans to ensure they know you are playing – don't rely on the promoter or other bands to make the night a success. Anyone can play a gig, but playing a great gig is far harder but far more valuable.


Just think this is the first time people could be watching you, do they leave with the right impression?

Is for GaGa. Can you learn anything from Lady GaGa? <http://bit.ly/ihsG5I>

Is for Hype Machine. <http://hypem.com/> The Hype Machine is a music blog aggregator, which means it scans hundreds of music blog sites to discover which bands and artists are the most talked about or hyped across the blogosphere. The Hype Machine provides a useful directory of music blog sites for you to read and contact to feature your music.

Is for Influence & Interest. Your fans are interested in your music, but they are also interested in what shapes and influences you, so don't be afraid to share the music you love with them. It helps broaden your appeal and prevents you just talking about yourself all the time. It can get a little dull!

Is for (extra from) iTunes. Earn an extra 5% on your iTunes sales by signing up for LinkShare. <http://bit.ly/hFHI3J> You can also earn an additional 5% on any other purchases made by people that click your link within 3 days.



Is for Jobs. Here are 32 ways musicians can make money. <http://bit.ly/e08qbA>

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Is for Keywords. Choosing the right keywords ensures search engine optimisation and allows people to find your website efficiently.

Is for Klout. <http://klout.com/> Klout rates your influence on social media, and is rapidly becoming the standard measurement tool. It considers a number of factors including friends, number of messages, the amount of interaction or message Retweets. You can also get a clever browser plugin which adds a rating to all of your followers in Twitter, so you can understand which of them have most influence. A score over 50 is considered very good.

Is for Listen. Remember to listen to your fans and always invite their comments and involvement. Without them you don't have an income, so never forget to offer a two-way dialogue. Asking them questions is one of the best ways to help keep them engaged. Facebook have now also added a 'Question' feature to make this even easier.

Is for Location. Location based services including the login functionality on Facebook or the social network FourSquare can be used to communicate to your fans about secret gigs or other spontaneous activity.

Is for MySpace. Despite its rapid fall from grace as a sticky, engaging social network MySpace still provides artists with a guaranteed top Google search engine result. For the time being at least, ensure you have a profile, and it is updated with latest gig activity. People will still go there to find you, but these days they don't won't befriend you. It's a music destination site, not a social network.

Is for Mailing List. It is still important to collect email addresses. Use this information to send out special fan updates. Encourage sign-ups by offering additional exclusives or benefits. Ahead of a release contact your database to offer them pre-order options. It also provides you with a safely net – just imagine if your Facebook account was deleted tomorrow!

Is for Momentum. Once you have built up some promotional momentum, start looking for what comes next, or how this can momentum be maintained or extended for as long as possible. EG For a gig ensure you promote it pre, during and post. The gig doesn't end once it's been played. Thank attendees, post photos, reviews, videos, and encourage fan feedback.

Is for Networking. The best way to get ahead is to meet and befriend bands or artists you admire. Keep in contact because if those artists blow up and become big stars you may find yourself on tour with them.

Is for News alerts. Visit Google and set up 'New alerts' to track any mention of your name online <http://www.google.com/alerts>

Is for Opportunities. Effective marketing is about being in the right place at the right time with the right product. For independent artists this means constantly looking for opportunities to join the conversation, and add value. Are journalists or DJs asking for band recommendations? are promoters looking for bands? Think and look for creative angles.

Is for Objectives. Set short-term objectives to ensure you have a focus, what do you want to achieve this year? and then plan what you need to do to achieve them. At the end of the year, review them and set some more. It's also worth setting some longer-term objectives – what is the bigger vision?

Is for OneSheet. This website pulls together all of the content from your various social network profiles to provide a simple, free, one page hub for bands. Think of it as your bands CV. <http://www.onesheet.com/>

Is for Pre-order. Pre-orders are becoming a standard and almost expected option on iTunes. As an independent artist struggling to raise money, pre-orders can provide you with a quick source of upfront money to help you finish recording or maximise your marketing campaign EG finance videos etc.

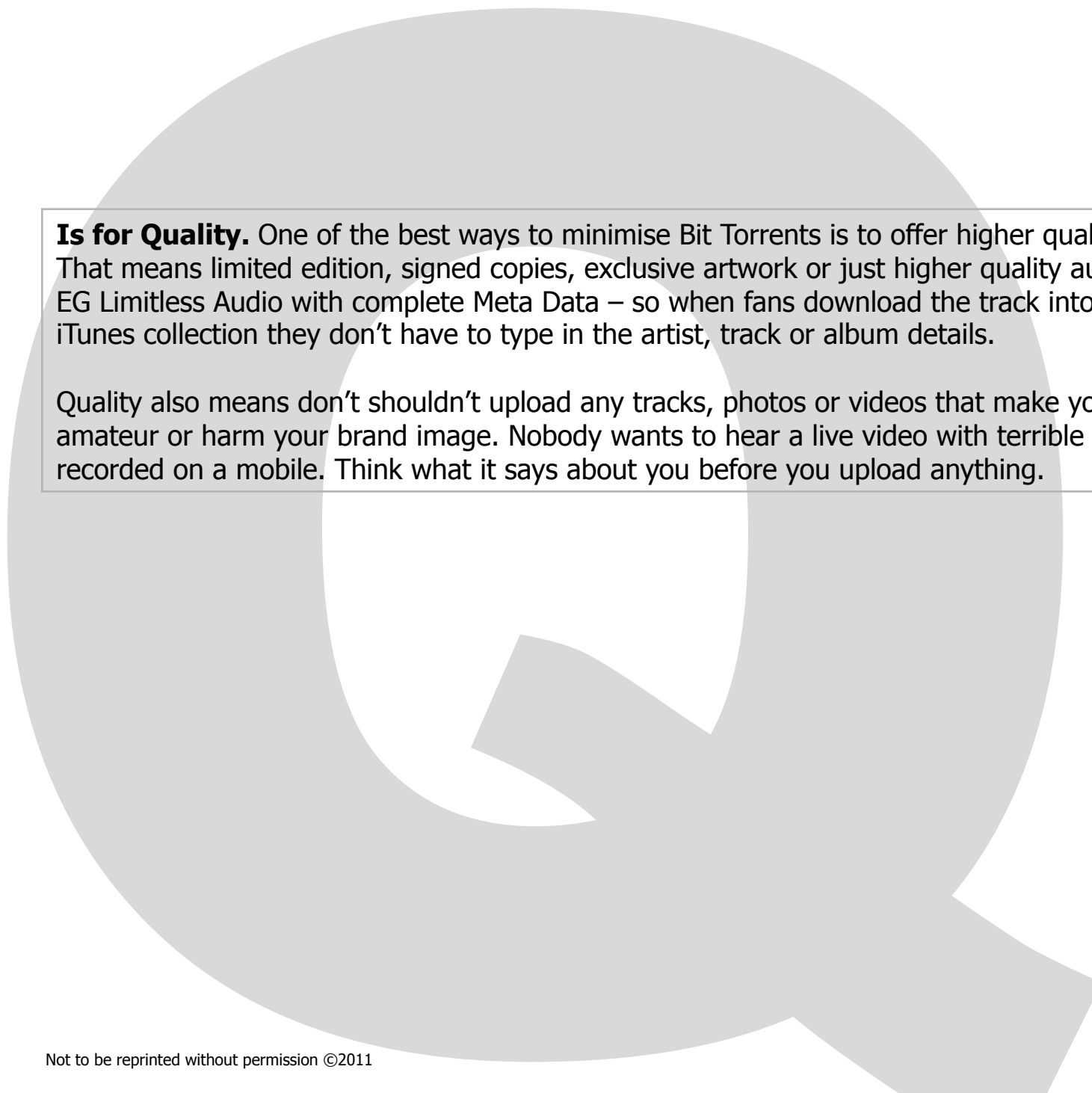
Is for Polish. Before you contact anyone in the music industry make sure you look your best. Have great photos, update all your gigs, and news items to show signs of life and ensure only your best tracks are up. You only get once chance to impress, so don't blow it. Think about what the current state of your profile pages says about you.

Is for Promote. Social networks like Facebook or Twitter provide a platform, but they don't provide the marketing solution. Ask yourself "what have I done today to tell people about my music?" The more active you are, and more compelling content you generate the more fans you will attract. Don't simply sit back and hope they come to you.

Is for Personalise. Don't just post the same updates across all of your social networks. Think about the role of each one, and provide each audience with tailored messaging. EG Fans hear news first on Twitter, & Facebook is the first place to hear about new gigs etc.

Is for Photos. Only post photos online if they are great, and communicate a strong and consistent brand image. If you don't have good photos of you, use a photo of something else. Remember journalists and blogs will not always use the photos you want. If they search online, and find a picture of you they may use it. So if you have any embarrassing or old photos remove them.

Is for PitchEngine. Create an online EPK (Electronic Press Kit) a great alternative to a press release. <http://www.pitchengine.com/>



Is for Quality. One of the best ways to minimise Bit Torrents is to offer higher quality options. That means limited edition, signed copies, exclusive artwork or just higher quality audio files EG Limitless Audio with complete Meta Data – so when fans download the track into their iTunes collection they don't have to type in the artist, track or album details.

Quality also means don't shouldn't upload any tracks, photos or videos that make you look amateur or harm your brand image. Nobody wants to hear a live video with terrible sound, recorded on a mobile. Think what it says about you before you upload anything.

Is for ReverbNation. <http://www.reverbNation.com/> ReverbNation provides a host of useful tools for independent artists. Most notably a range of widgets for Facebook. Allowing fans to play your music, share your music, buy directly from your store or sign up to your mailing list.

Is for Read. Make use of bookmark websites like Delicious or RSS feeds or Twitter to find and read marketing websites and blog posts. How can business ideas be applied to help you and your band?

Is for Story. You must have a story when you are releasing anything. That story is not just 'we are releasing a record.' What makes your release more interesting or significant than any others? Journalists, bloggers and radio stations are looking for a hook and story to latch on to.

This could be something about the lyrics or linking the release to some kind of event E.G Record Store Day, / charity campaign or even some kind of novel or interesting gig or marketing plan EG Radiohead caught the imagination just by inviting fans to choose how much they wanted to pay.

Is for Surprise. Surprise your fans to keep them engaged. When they least expect it, (EG When you reach 1,000 friends) give them something to show your appreciate their support. That could be anything from a behind the scenes photos, a personal video message, a free track, an exclusive announcement etc. Surprise provides a story, and encourage fans to talk about you.

Is for Social Share. The way we find and consume media is changing, and the number of websites we visit is decreasing. Sites like Facebook and Twitter are now increasingly becoming attention dashboards. So rather than go to news services like the BBC, we find our news through our friend on Twitter & Facebook. This means you must make the content you create easy to share. Websites like YouTube already allow you to embed videos or share links, but you must ensure you do the same on your own websites by adding Facebook 'Like' buttons or 'Share to' functionality.

Is for Sync. Placing your music in TV, Film, Computer Games or even Retail Stores can provide an additional revenue stream for artists. There are loads of dedicated Sync agencies, including Music Dealers <http://www.musicdealers.com/> Ensure the deal you have is non-exclusive, and you retain ownership of your music.

Is for SoundCloud. <http://soundcloud.com/> SoundCloud allows you to share music. Instead of sending MP3 files by email you can upload your music to SoundCloud and just send a link. It's a great tool for sending music to journalists, blogs or radio stations. The service enables you to change the access settings allowing selected users to receive a private link to download your music if required. Alternatively you can make your music publicly available. SoundCloud players can easily be shared and embedded on websites and Blogs.

Is for Strategy. You should always be thinking ahead, what happens after you release your single? What comes next? How do you continue to build momentum? Although it is important to be able to respond to opportunities, you should map out a promotional plan to support the release of every album. IE What assets do you need to promote it? [EG Videos, singles, posters, websites etc.] Which tracks are you going to release, how are you going to promote the release? Which gigs and festivals do you want to play around the release date? When do you need to contact promoters, journalists, and radio stations to ensure maximum coverage?

Is for SonicBids. <http://www.sonicbids.com/>

Apply for music festivals, or gigs online through a centralised service. In the absence of a booking agent, it can provide you with a foot in the door. You will often have to pay a small amount to register for opportunities.

Is for Social Mention. <http://www.socialmention.com/>

Monitor who is talking about you online including blogs, Twitter and even Facebook.

Is for Spreaker. <http://.www.spreaker.com>

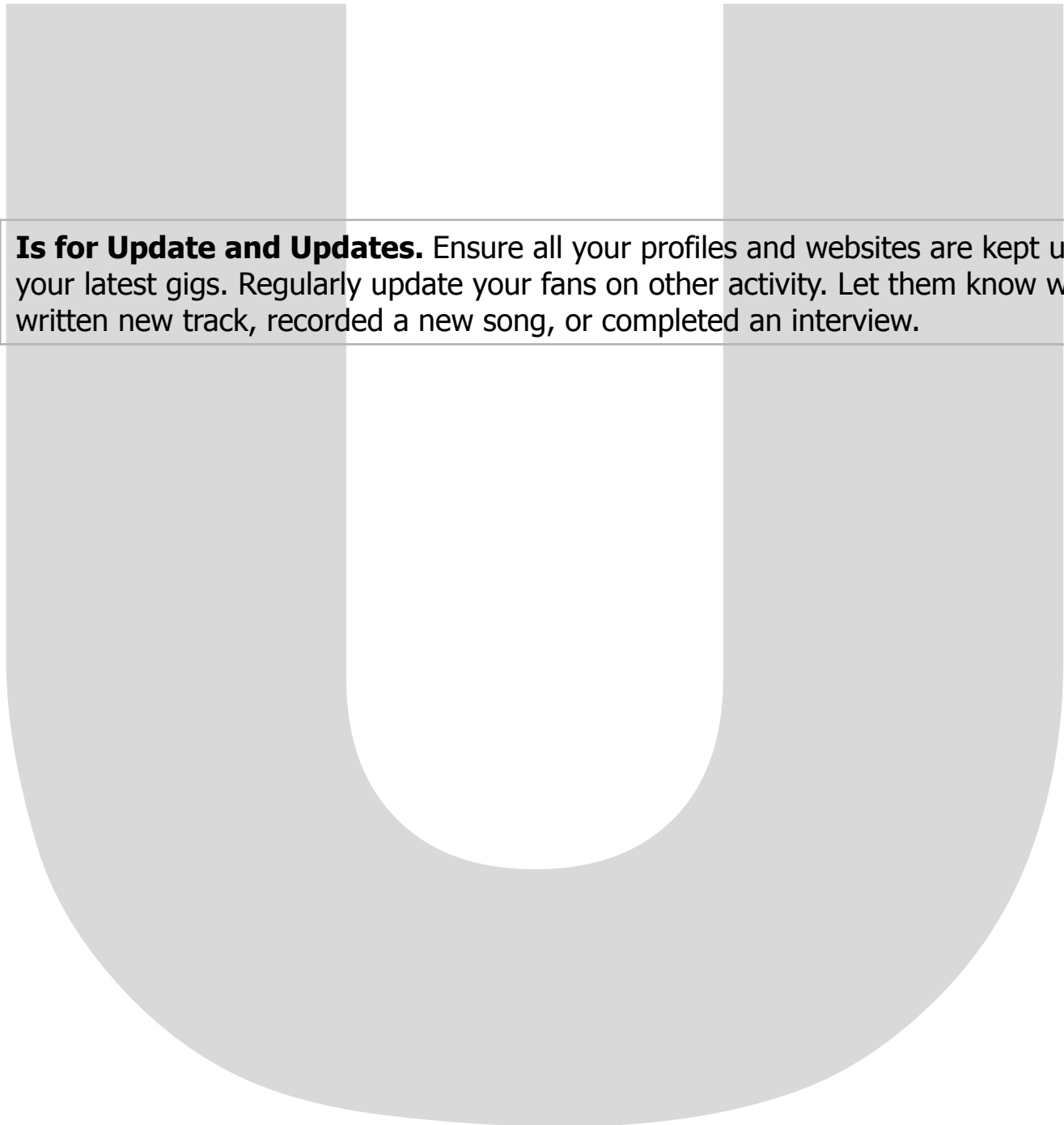
Struggling to get on radio, why not make your own radio show or Podcast and share it with the Spreaker community or beyond. The ubiquitous iPhone app also helps generate an almost radio like audience for your shows

Is for Touch-points. Make sure your music is available in all the places you would go to discover, listen and buy music. If it's not fans quickly lose interest, and will look to Bit Torrents to find what they want. Also see 'Q' Touch-points could include: Spotify, iTunes, Last.FM, YouTube, MySpace, Facebook, or even just the first page Google search results, so make sure you are there.


Is for Twitter. Twitter provides a great platform to connect with the media and specifically music industry. It can also be a fan platform, but for an independent artist the opportunity to connect directly with labels, promoters, DJs, producers, bookers, journalists and bloggers is invaluable. [See 'F' Follower Wonk]

Is for TweetDeck <http://www.tweetdeck.com/> a free Twitter application and mobile phone application. TweetDeck allows you to manage multiple accounts, quickly see: Mentions, Direct Messages and Friend Tweets on one page using its simple column layout. Best still it allows you to send longer updates, and automatically schedule Tweets to be sent while you are asleep, on tour or just away from your computer.

Is for Twilert <http://www.twilert.com> a free Twitter application that allows you to track any mentions of your band on Twitter. You can choose how often you receive email updates. You can also track the tone of mentions



Is for Update and Updates. Ensure all your profiles and websites are kept up to date with your latest gigs. Regularly update your fans on other activity. Let them know when you have written new track, recorded a new song, or completed an interview.



Is for Viral Video. Sadly there is no magic wand to transform one of your videos into an overnight sensation. But there are certainly some key ingredients in all successful videos. Viral videos normally contain at least one of the following elements: Uniqueness, Immediate hook, Simplicity, Humour or Shock.

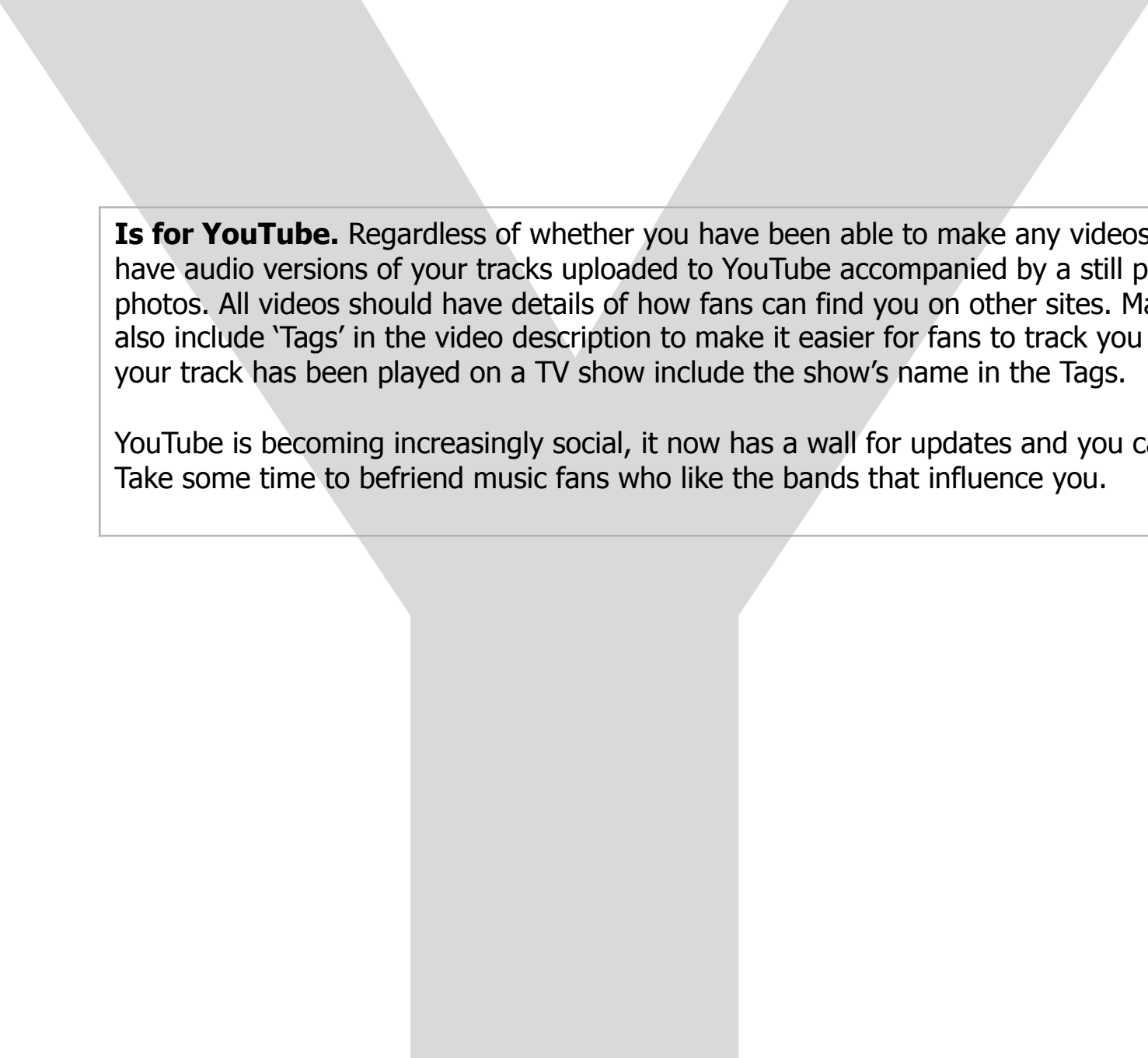
Is for WebTV. There is an increasingly number of music WebTV shows & channels that have an established audience. Playing live on one of these shows is a great way to extend your reach, and it also provides you with some new high quality film content to share with your fans. Check out Balcony TV, The Brixton Sessions, Watch Listen Tell, Band Stand Busks, and The Station Sessions etc.

Is for Wordpress. If you can't afford to create & host your own website, create your own free Wordpress blog. <http://wordpress.com/> There are tons of different themes available which enable you to create a customisable look and feel Other free blog sites include. Tumblr, and Posterous which allows you to post directly from an email.

Is for Wikipedia. Tips & tricks to create a page for your band <http://bit.ly/lKkqiG>



Is for X Factor. If all else fails apply here: <http://xfactor.itv.com/2010/>



Is for YouTube. Regardless of whether you have been able to make any videos, ensure you have audio versions of your tracks uploaded to YouTube accompanied by a still photo or photos. All videos should have details of how fans can find you on other sites. Make sure you also include 'Tags' in the video description to make it easier for fans to track you down. IE If your track has been played on a TV show include the show's name in the Tags.

YouTube is becoming increasingly social, it now has a wall for updates and you can add friends. Take some time to befriend music fans who like the bands that influence you.

Is for Zzzzz. Are you still awake?



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