



ColaJazz's mission is to grow, elevate and bolster the jazz community in and around Columbia, SC through recordings, events, education and providing an organized resource for all things jazz. We're determined to elevate our music scene.

SUBMIT YOUR EVENTS. GROW THE SCENE.
[ColaJazz.com/submit-event](https://colajazz.com/submit-event)

A FEW COLAJAZZ GOALS...

Engage musicians to post gigs on the ColaJazz calendar.

- When the calendar is full, it shows a thriving, living, active scene. This is exciting to audiences, venues and musicians.

Cross-promoting each others' shows.

Correctly tagging venues, artists and ColaJazz in posts.

While I dream of a community where we are all supporting each other, posting about each other and keeping calendar listings consistent, full and fresh, competition is good. We should still be trying to outdo each other by having the best show, the highest quality of music, etc.

From the bandstand, talk to the audience and tell them about other shows around town starting or ending with what you are doing. People are turned off by people who only talk about themselves. It is proven, people will like you more when they hear you uplifting others.

When other musicians come out and to make the hang and not to just do a drive by sit-in or show up just to play on the last 2 tunes of the night.

Respond to Facebook Event Invites even if you can't go. If you want to support that artist or venue, say you're going. Your friends see it and it helps everyone. The more people say they're going to attend your event, the more people will get excited about the event, increasing the chances that they'll share it, or RSVP themselves. Plus, your friends and fans see you're active and interested in the community.

A FEW NEEDS...

Venues can do a better job of promoting shows; e.g. postcard promotions in billfolds at restaurants and bars or a triangle table flyer; print and online ad buys; consistent social media presence; more communication and engagement with artists, etc.

Artists should have direct contact with the venue's social media person.

Cohesive Facebook posts between artists and venues such as using same artwork and language.

TIPS

Theme your events, even your weekly shows; e.g. "The music of Miles Davis"... or Valentine songs, etc. Find a hook to wrap your gig in to help encourage and maintain interest.

Engage the audience at all times and be sure they can understand you. Clearly enunciate your words from the bandstand.

Be aware of the room in which you're playing. Watch your volume and balance.

Think outside the box and see if a complimentary organization or artist would be willing to share your Facebook posts. Involve more than just your immediate music community. Don't limit yourself to be-bop jazz fans. Know someone in the orchestra? See if they'll share your post. You'll have a great chance at reaching an entirely new audience and if you're also cross-promoting other jazz shows, you become a tremendous force in growing our entire community which will resonant directly to building your success.

DON'T PROMOTE YOURSELF SO MUCH!

Are you only remembering to post updates when you have something promotional to say? “Check out my new single,” “Buy my new album,” “Watch our new video.” Yeah yeah yeah. If I’m a fan of your page, I’ll probably check out your new song or video anyway. What ELSE is going on in your world? Tell us! Maybe some of those funny or heartfelt posts you make on your personal Facebook profile could work well on your band page. Maybe you could tell your fans about some other musicians in your scene. Try sharing different kinds of content and see what works. Then it won’t seem so self-serving when you pepper in the promotional stuff.

SEPARATE YOUR FAN PAGE FROM YOUR PERSONAL PAGE

There's a difference between fan pages and personal pages, and you need both, but for different reasons. The page that represents your musical endeavors should be a fan page, where you can collect an unlimited number of likes and where you can do other things that aren't possible on personal pages. These days, people really don't mind being directed to a Facebook page that's quite obviously created for this purpose, and just because it isn't one where all of your "friends" are, that doesn't mean you can't continue to use it to interact with people. There's nothing worse than hitting a limit and asking people to like another page, confusing many of them in the process.

TIMELY CONTENT MAKES YOUR PAGE WORTH HAVING IN THEIR FEED

While you and your page certainly shouldn't try to compete with news sources, you should be discussing the same things your fans are. If some major event that your fans care about is happening – the World Cup or Beyonce announcing she is pregnant, for example – make sure you comment on it somehow. It isn't terribly important what you say (a joke, how shocked you are, etc.), as long as you're in on the discussion.

ASK YOUR FANS QUESTIONS

People like being asked their opinion, especially if they know it's really going to mean something. Trying to decide what songs to play (or in what order) at your next show? Want suggestions for where to eat in a certain city when you're playing there? Looking for great new music to help inspire you, or simply to play while you're on the road? You can ask your fans these questions and so many more. They love sharing their wisdom, and it makes them feel like they're really a part of the whole thing, not just a fan.

CHANGE UP THE KIND OF CONTENT YOU POST

Don't be the guy who just posts text all the time—it's a surefire way to be ignored, removed from a feed, or to have someone "unlike" you. Try to change it up as often as you can, with posts ranging in length, topic, and with different attachments. In the same day or week (depending on your strategy), it would be a good idea to post a question for fans, several photos, a video, links to songs or news items, and anything else you can think of. Diversity makes everything more interesting!

EFFECTIVE CONTENT UPDATES

Bands should focus on sharing four kinds of content: new music releases, upcoming events, behind the scenes candids, and glimpses into their personal, everyday life. It goes without saying that bands should share new music releases and tour dates, but don't oversaturate your Facebook page with only these kinds of posts. Now more than ever, fans want to feel personally connected to their favorite bands. They want to know where you're playing next and what you ate for breakfast. Make sure the content you share on Facebook is of a wide variety, but keep it within the realm of your artistry.

TAGGING VENUES AND FESTIVALS

Perhaps the biggest mistake made by bands is not tagging venues and festivals in their posts after being booked. When you tag any Facebook page, your post will appear on their timeline, which helps you connect to the event and possibly their built-in crowd.

UPDATE YOUR ABOUT PAGE

If you've succeeded in capturing your fans' attention in their News Feeds, you'll want to make sure that you provide them with all the information they need on your actual page. This may seem like a no-brainer, but I can't tell you how many partially-filled About pages I've seen on band profiles. You don't need to fill it excessively – you don't have to add every milestone in your life, for example – but everything someone could need should be there. A fan should never have to open another tab to find you on Twitter (the link should be there), and journalists shouldn't need to search high and low to find your publicist's email.

HIT REPLY

Don't just hold court on your Facebook page. When you post something, and your fans start commenting, talk back to them. You don't have to reply to every single person, but responding to some will encourage your fans to stay active on your page. In addition to showing them that you're a real person, every time you reply to a fan, you let all the other fans know that maybe it will be them you reply to next time. This is the kind of interaction people want.

COME UP WITH A FEW WEEKLY SERIES

I have one friend who writes a love letter and posts it on Facebook every Friday. Another friend always uses #TBT to share fun (and embarrassing photos) of himself playing music as a kid. Other people make weekly video updates for fans. It doesn't have to be complicated: gear pics, photos from the road, favorite poems, a political rant. Set a day of the week, and get it done. Your fans will come to anticipate these thematic weekly updates — and that means increased engagement.

REACH OUT TO OTHER ARTISTS

So you just joined Facebook and have a grand total of 50 fans (44 of which are your extended family). Well, you know how you can hook new fans by opening for another band on stage? The same goes for Facebook. "We have some bands that have Facebook Pages that grow really slowly, so we try to reach out to other artists who they have a relationship with, and that tends to drive those 'likes' up," says Allison Schlueter, VP of digital marketing at Island Def Jam Music Group.

Ask a band whom you're tight with to post your new music video/track/album art to their wall with a link back to your Facebook Page, and remember to return the favor — or, you know, you could just buy said band a beer the next time you play together.

Still, Schlueter reminds us, those initial 50 fans are pretty valuable, so don't forget them when your Page has ballooned to 75 fans. "You can have 37 million fans, but how many of those are loyal?" Schlueter says. "Those [early adopters] are the ambassadors for the artist."

DON'T JUST ASK FOR THINGS

"Facebook can be a very important tool to build awareness around sales of music, ticket sales, merchandise, etc., but fans will tune out if they're constantly being asked to open their wallets," warns Grosovsky.

So go easy on the shilling. If you post a "buy" link to your new album at 3 p.m., it will still be there at 4 p.m. There's no need to repost it. Instead, keep up a dialogue with fans that reminds them why they love your music, which will impel them to shell out the cash for a show or merch.

CHECK OUT SOME TOOLS

Yes, Facebook offers bands a lot when it comes to profiles — galleries, a wall, etc. — but it's becoming more and more necessary to add apps into the mix. Apps aren't that difficult to figure out, and they don't take that long to plug in.

We recommend checking out apps like BandPage, ReverbNation and Damtheradio, which bring in elements like music players, events listings, merch sales, "like" gates, email list builders, etc. Most of them have a free option, so, no worries — you do get to eat this month.

YOUTUBE OR FACEBOOK VIDEO

When posting your latest music video to Facebook the question arises — should I upload it to Facebook or YouTube? Both are free. Both have large user bases. But one is the clear home of video on the internet and that is YouTube. But the thing is, when promoting your music online the main aim is exposure. And there is no question that when posting a video to Facebook that uploading the video natively is the way to get the most organic reach. A YouTube video simply won't reach as many people. However YouTube has the advantage of being a very highly developed video archive. If someone visits your YouTube channel they will find all your videos neatly arranged and there is more scope for discovery. On Facebook, while you might reach a larger organic reach in your initial post — your video will be harder to be found. Whereas here you can see while our page appears, you are still a few clicks away from finding our videos — which will be far less organised than they are on YouTube.

My advice? Do both. There is no harm in doing both. I would argue that YouTube is the most important platform for musicians. You can upload your video for free there and then drive your fans on facebook towards it. Over time you will build a subscriber base and anyone searching google or youtube can come across your video. On Facebook they would have to be connected to someone who saw your video to come across it. My preferred approach is to post the YouTube video first and try and build the views on that. Once the video has run its course, upload it directly to Facebook and enjoy a fresh wave of excitement over your new music video. Link to the original (on YouTube) in your Facebook post.

YouTube should also only be used as an archive of your best video content whereas Facebook can include lower quality video content intended only for the platform.

RSVPS AREN'T SOLID

If 120 people say they're going to your show on Facebook, you can usually count on half of them flaking. It's just the law of Facebook Events. BUT, it's still a benefit to you that those people initially RSVP'd, because Facebook is a social environment; it's all about what seems to be buzzing. The more people that say they're going to attend your show, the more people will get excited about the event, increasing the chances that they'll share it, or RSVP themselves. Some of the "maybes" might turn into confirmed guests through this tumbling process. Ah, perception! *This is the same idea behind keeping the Colajazz.com calendar updated, active and exciting - it helps us all!

UPDATE YOUR EVENT REGULARLY

Your Facebook Event is a living organism and it needs to be fed. It has its very own wall with activity, comments, invite info, etc. Your invited guests get notified when you make updates, so don't treat the Event page like a static thing. Share videos or links to music from all the various bands on the bill; talk about your show preparations; converse with your fans who've confirmed they're "going" so they'll be more likely to actually go. You get the point. Be active! Then again, don't be hyperactive. You don't want to annoy your fans with constant reminders and updates. Maybe shoot for two or three updates a week at most.

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