

Whatta ya mean digital distribution?

Have you ever recorded a song and wondered how to get it onto Spotify or Apple Music for the world to hear? Are you thinking of recording music but don't know what your next step will be? Well that's where digital distribution can come into play, and it's actually quite simple!

STEP ONE: CHOOSE AN AGGREGATOR!

An aggregator is a service that submits your content onto multiple platforms and streaming services for you. We recommend doing a bit of research and weighing up the Pros and Cons of each, before selecting one that best suits your individual needs. Remember, an aggregator will communicate your song(s) to the public and make copies (each digital download is considered a copy), so you must grant them a licence to use your work. Make sure you read the Ts & Cs to know exactly what you are signing up for.

When choosing, it's important to consider the following factors:

- ▶ **COST** - Is there a one-off payment? Annual subscription fee? Do you have to pay for every release?
- ▶ **ROYALTIES** - Do they take a cut of your royalties and/or sales?
- ▶ **COPYRIGHT OWNERSHIP** - Make sure you retain 100% ownership of your copyright, and simply license the use of your work.
- ▶ **TERRITORY** - Do they publish worldwide? Some Aggregators may not publish to services in selected countries e.g. China.
- ▶ **LICENSE TYPE** - Make sure the license is non-exclusive, so that you can use the work elsewhere as you please.

DIGITAL DISTRIBUTION 101

- ▶ **NUMBER OF ARTISTS THROUGH ACCOUNT** - If you want to release music for different acts or bands, you may be able to do this using one account. However, extra fees may apply.
- ▶ **TIMEFRAME** - Per month? Per year? Some services offer a legacy option to keep online forever, but check if you still need to keep a paid membership for this to be valid.
- ▶ **PAYMENT OPTIONS** - How will sales and royalties be paid back to you? Payment may go directly into your account or you may have to request/withdraw the money. Some services will allow split payments to different copyright holders too.
- ▶ **ADDED EXTRAS** - Some services include a bunch of added extras in their fees, whereas some charge for every option over the bare minimum eg. Adding to Shazam. Make sure you check! Some services also offer extra support with marketing and PR packages, so if this is important to you, look for an aggregator with an Australian office.
- ▶ **WHICH STREAMING SERVICES IS BEING SUBMITTED TO?**
Spotify, Apple Music, iTunes, YouTube, Pandora, Shazam, Tidal, Instagram (stories), Amazon, Google Play, Napster, iHeartRadio, Deezer etc.

STEP TWO: GETTING TO KNOW YOUR AGGREGATOR

Once you have chosen an Aggregator, follow the prompts on their website. You will be asked a series of questions relating to your release and will need to upload the work as well as cover art.

Here is a list of commonly used Aggregators, to start off your search:

- DistroKid
- DITTO
- AWAL
- GYROStream
- TuneCore

STEP THREE: OTHER DIGITAL SERVICE PROVIDERS

Aggregators are not the only way to distribute your music online, so here are some other Digital Service Providers to look into:

- Bandcamp
- Soundcloud
- Triple J Unearthed
- YouTube
- Facebook/Instagram

Once again, it's very important to check the Ts and Cs, as many of these providers only offer a royalty free licence (you won't get any royalty payments). When uploading to these services, consider other benefits that may come from the use of that platform, for example the ability to sell merch, or the potential for radio play.

While we're on radio play, check out AMRAP's AirIT service. This free service submits your songs to community radio stations across the country: <https://airit.org.au>

Remember, driving traffic to your online distribution platform is just as important as getting it up there! For more information on how to do this, please see our **Digital Marketing Cheat Sheet!**

If you have any questions or are requiring advice, please get in touch with one of Music SA's Industry Development Coordinators. We provide free phone consultations and would love to hear from you!

Book online at: <http://www.musicsa.com.au>