

A Music Ally Primer

SOUNDCLOUD

October | 2025



IMPALA
INDEPENDENT MUSIC COMPANIES ASSOCIATION

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MARKET PRESENCE AND OVERVIEW



MARKET PRESENCE AND OVERVIEW

Global Market Share and Subscriber Base

SoundCloud is known for allowing artists to upload and share their music freely, while offering both a free tier and premium subscriptions options to its users. The platform is available in more than 180 markets worldwide.

After launching in 2007 and quickly becoming a popular platform for users and artists alike, SoundCloud began to struggle around 2015 as competitors like Spotify solidified their market share, major labels temporarily withdrew their catalogs, and copyright disputes created tension with creators.

The company signed licensing deals with major labels by 2016, but its financial challenges continued. SoundCloud started regaining momentum around 2021 and 2022 after years of struggling and restructuring. Under new CEO Michael Weissman, SoundCloud shifted towards financial stability and innovation. In 2023, Eliah Seton stepped up as CEO, continuing SoundCloud's pivot back towards tools for musicians.

While SoundCloud saw a dip in user numbers, it has since grown to an estimated 180 million

registered users in 2025 (140 million confirmed registered users in 2023). According to various sources, monthly active users are around 76 million.

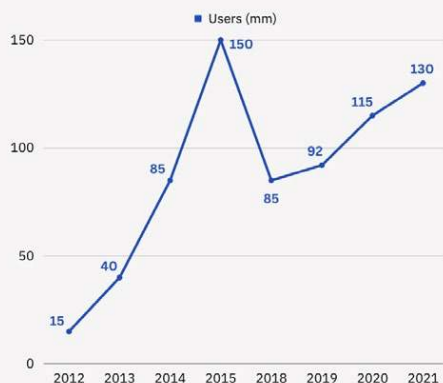
As of 2023, over 40 million music creators upload to SoundCloud - which has grown from 20 million in 2018. SoundCloud hosts 440 million tracks, making it the largest music catalog available - with 14 million new tracks being uploaded every month. Over 70% of uploads on SoundCloud are from independent creators and 85% of listening time comes from user-uploaded content - DIY artists' tracks, but also DJ sets, remixes and live recordings - with 15% coming from licensed label catalogues.

User Demographics & Listening Habits

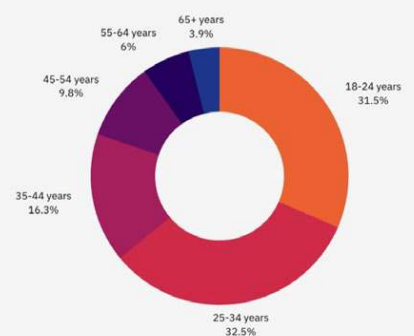
13% of SoundCloud users engage daily, with average session time rising to 35 minutes in 2025 - showing stronger listener loyalty and attention.

The U.S. leads SoundCloud's user base with 28%, followed by the UK (5.5%), Germany (5%), France (3.3%), and Canada (3.2%) - with the remaining 55% coming from the rest of the world. The SoundCloud audience consists of 63.09% males and 36.91% females, while the largest audience is aged between 18 and 24, at 32.74%.

SoundCloud Users
2012 to 2022 (mm)



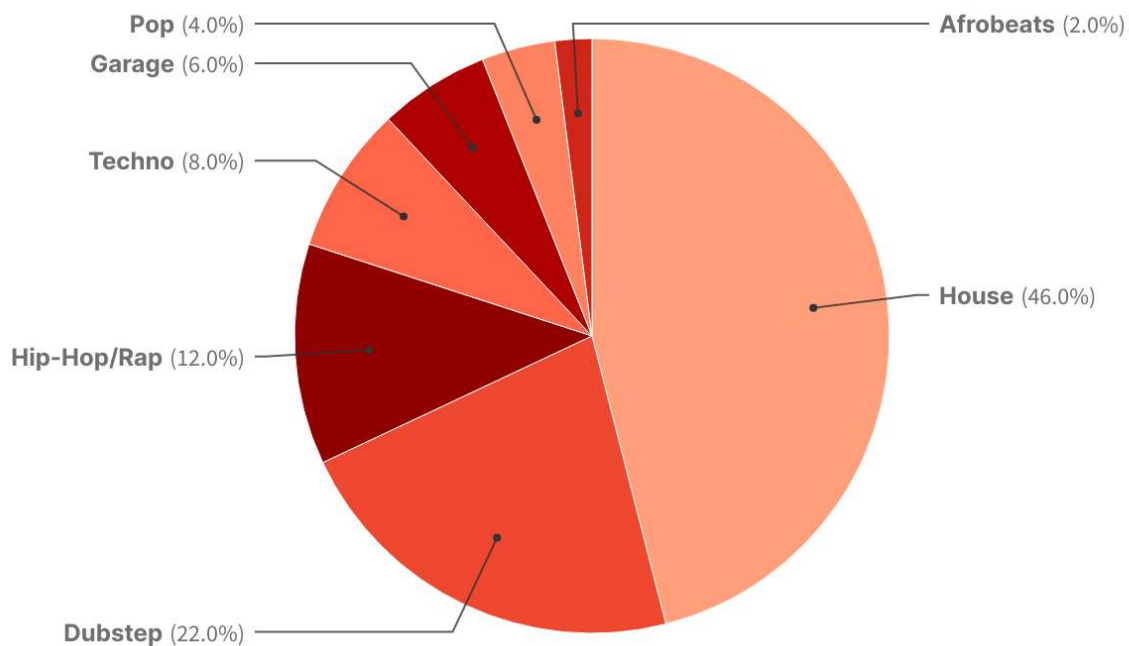
Visitors of SoundCloud
By Age (%)



MARKET PRESENCE AND OVERVIEW

Genre Breakdown

Of the top 50 trending artists on SoundCloud; Jun. 4, 2024 to Jun. 4, 2025



While Hip-Hop still holds the lead in total plays, it's worth noting the rapid growth of electronic music on SoundCloud. According to the SoundCloud Music Intelligence Report, genres like House, Dubstep, and Techno made up over 75% of the top 50 trending artists on the platform between June 2024 and June 2025 - a clear sign of electronic music's rising influence in the SoundCloud ecosystem.

Hip-Hop/Rap leads streaming in 2025 with 32% of all plays, followed by EDM at 21%, and Pop at 17%. Afrobeats saw the biggest growth, up 48% year-over-year, while Latin (up 22%) and K-pop (up 19%) also expanded rapidly. Lo-fi and Chillhop continue rising in popularity, especially among students and remote workers, now making up 6.5% of all streams.

Genre diversity is thriving, with over 2,300 unique genre tags used in uploads in just the first half of 2025, and niche styles like Dark Trap, Synthwave, and Hyperpop collectively accounting for 4.3% of streams.

Revenue and financial performance

SoundCloud's path to profitability has been a rocky one. Its problems reached a nadir in 2017 when the company abruptly axed about 40% of its staff and investment groups Temasek Holdings and the Raine Group scooped up a large stake in the then-ailing business. Since 2018, it has seen strong revenue growth and the company achieved profitability in 2023. Revenue rose from €108 million in 2018 to nearly €300 million in 2023. During this time, there was a notable emphasis on increasing

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The screenshot displays two subscription plans side-by-side. The left plan is 'SOUNDCLOUD GO' at £5.99/month*, featuring a list of benefits: Advert-free listening, Save unlimited tracks for offline listening, Access full catalogue (marked with an 'x'), and High quality audio. Below the list is a black button that says 'Start your 7-day Go free trial'. The right plan is 'SOUNDCLOUD GO+' at £10.99/month**, featuring a list of benefits: Advert-free listening, Save unlimited tracks for offline listening, Access full catalogue (marked with a 'GO+' icon), Mix tracks within select DJ apps, and High quality audio. Below the list is a black button that says 'Start your 30-day Go+ free trial'. At the bottom of the right plan, there is a small link that says 'Are you a student? Get SoundCloud Go+ for 50% off!'.

Feature	SOUNDCLOUD GO (£5.99/month*)	SOUNDCLOUD GO+ (£10.99/month**)
Advert-free listening	✓	✓
Save unlimited tracks for offline listening	✓	✓
Access full catalogue	✗	✓ (GO+)
Mix tracks within select DJ apps		✓
High quality audio	✓	✓

creator services, as well as increased revenue from users. In 2025, SoundCloud generated approximately \$485 million (≈ €451 million) in revenue, marking a 12% YoY (Year-over-Year) growth. Monetisation from creator tools and subscriptions accounts for 58% of total revenue. Advertising generated \$126 million in 2025. SoundCloud was valued at \$1 billion in 2023, double the previous valuation in 2017.

Key features and opportunities

Different Artist Tiers

SoundCloud offers a few different user tiers for artists. While the basic one is free and allows basic uploading and insights - it's the two paid tiers that have seen SoundCloud repeatedly innovate around their features. They offer features such as the ability to boost tracks to 100+ new listeners, AI mastering and advanced audience insights. You can see pricing and feature differences between Artist and Artist Pro below. One very interesting feature on Artist Pro is the ability to directly message an artist's most engaged listeners, for example, but SoundCloud continues to launch new exciting features for this tier so it's key for artists

wanting to focus on SoundCloud. As of late October 2025, SoundCloud has bundled in additional features under their new all-in-one artist subscription. They include distribution to other streaming services (with artists keeping 100% of the royalties); a 'Fan Support' button to get direct donations from fans; plus on-demand vinyl pressing, merch and artist storefronts. SoundCloud already offered most of these services - 'Fan Support' is newly out of beta, for artists in the US, and the 100% royalties on external distribution is new - but the change is bringing them into the all-in-one subscription.

Discoverability

In 2025, creators on Pro plans gained prioritised algorithm visibility, increasing their exposure by 23%. SoundCloud Artist Pro artists using in-platform promotion tools achieved a 23% higher discovery rate, while the "Fans Also Like" feature accounted for 18% of all cross-genre artist discoveries. Furthermore, over 22 million listeners use the "Discover" tab weekly to find new music. DJ sets play a big role in discovery, with more than 58,000 new mixes uploaded every week, often linking directly to original tracks and helping surface emerging artists.

SoundCloud has also recently launched new social discovery features, signalling its focus on community-driven music discovery and engagement. They include two playlist features based on the currently popular tracks of every listener's friends and favourite artists. 'Liked By Your Crew' gathers tracks that are being liked by those social connections, while 'Liked By

MARKET PRESENCE AND OVERVIEW

Playlists' is a "scrollable carousel of playlists" based on those likes.

There is also a 'Trending Trackwall' showing what's trending among each listener's community, as well as SoundCloud more widely. SoundCloud is also going to be recommending people to follow ("or people we believe you may already know") on its homepage, while a new 'Hot For You' feature will present a single track every day based on each listener's personal tastes.

Free and paid streaming

SoundCloud operates a free as well as paid tiers. On the free, ad-supported tier, only a limited catalog is available. Paid tiers such as SoundCloud Go and Go+ remove ads, unlock the full catalog (including tracks restricted to subscribers), provide higher-quality audio, and allow offline listening.

For independent labels, this distinction matters because free streams generate smaller revenues, while streams from paid users contribute to higher royalties but reach is more limited. This creates a trade-off: offering music on the free tier increases reach and discoverability, while reserving some tracks for paid listeners can boost earnings. The decision is entirely up to the rights holders or independent artists and you can use both in combination [as explained here](#). This distinction also becomes especially important in the context of Fan-Powered Royalties (see more below).

A creator-first ecosystem

One of SoundCloud's most significant innovations has been its [Fan-Powered Royalties](#)

(FPR). Unlike the pro-rata model used by most streaming platforms, FPR pays artists based on the actual listening time of their fans. This creates a fairer system where independent musicians can earn directly from their audience's engagement, rather than being diluted by superstar-heavy pools. Independent artists who monetise directly with SoundCloud are eligible for Fan-Powered Royalties. This includes artists who use SoundCloud for Artists via Artist or Artist Pro subscriptions.

Beyond royalties, SoundCloud has invested heavily in audience growth and fan connection tools. Features like First Fans and Buzzing Playlists help artists reach new listeners, while fan recognition technology allows users on Artist Pro to identify their most engaged fans and message them directly.

The company is also investing in new creator tools and monetisation opportunities. Through its assistive AI partnerships, SoundCloud is making music creation more accessible and giving artists low-barrier ways to experiment with production. On the revenue side, the SoundCloud Store enables artists to sell merch directly to fans, while the Ticketmaster partnership allows them to showcase and manage live events on the platform. Together, these developments provide musicians with more diverse and sustainable pathways to earn.

Together, these investments signal SoundCloud's positioning moving towards a creator-first ecosystem - one where discovery, fan engagement, and monetization are all built into the same platform.

MARKETING BEST PRACTICES AND STRATEGIES FOR INDIE LABELS



MARKETING BEST PRACTICES AND STRATEGIES FOR INDIE LABELS

Profile & Track Optimisation

Build Complete Profiles

Make sure to use the available profile features to your advantage to help build a connection to the artist and drive cross-platform growth. Ensure that all of your artist pages have up-to-date branding (profile image, profile header), a current bio including key information and links to other platforms. According to SoundCloud, for 15% of their users, if they come to a blank profile with no imagery or information, they won't go ahead and listen.

Optimise Track Tags

With more than 14 million recordings added to SoundCloud every month ([SoundCloud Music Intelligence Report, 2025](#)), independent musicians and labels may find it challenging to stand out from the crowd. Using tags correctly is one of the most simple yet most overlooked strategies. By guaranteeing that music appears in searches, algorithm-driven feeds, and community playlists, accurately and pertinently tagging tracks with keywords greatly improves discoverability. Tags serve as metadata on SoundCloud, providing information to the recommendation engine. While inaccurate or excessively general tags can lead to poor placement and little interaction, accurate tags assist listeners in finding music by mood, genre, or speciality style.

- **Be Niche Specific:** Over 2,300 distinct genre tags were used on SoundCloud in just the first half of 2025. This helps

tracks appear in niche searches where competition is lower but listeners are more interested.

- **Use Mood and Context Tags:**

Draw in listeners who are looking for experiences rather than merely genres; this is especially helpful for settings that are lo-fi, chillhop, or EDM.

- **Align tags with community trends:**

Paying attention to trending genres on SoundCloud (such as Afrobeats, which grew 48% year-on-year in 2025) allows labels to optimise tags around styles currently seeing spikes in listener interest.

Optimise Track Descriptions

Similar purposes are served by descriptions, which provide background information, convey an artist's vision, and even identify partnerships, inspirations, or connections to other works. Providing information about the song's origins, collaborators, release date, or inspiration strengthens the bond with listeners. To easily integrate promotion, labels can also include links (not clickable) or a call to action to repost, for instance.

Use The Spotlight Tool

The [Spotlight](#) tool in the Artist and Artist Pro subscriptions allow you to pin a track or playlist to the top of the artist's profile. This makes sure that priority songs are always easy to find and draws attention to the most important music. Artist Pro users can spotlight up to 5 tracks/playlists and Artist users can spotlight 1.



MARKETING BEST PRACTICES AND STRATEGIES FOR INDIE LABELS

Curate Playlists and EPs + Spotlight Them Strategically

On SoundCloud, artists have the opportunity to define what they want listeners to see first when coming to their profile. Therefore, it's an opportunity to showcase and drive traffic to the tracks that you want users to listen to and to use this strategically. Whether it's new music or showcasing the best of an artist's deep catalogue, by creating playlists and EPs of the music you want to highlight and putting it to the top of the profile, you can guide listeners through discovering the artist's music.

Organic Growth Features & Community Engagement

SoundCloud for Artists

Artist and Artist Pro Accounts have access to the SoundCloud for Artists dashboard which includes the ability to:

- Distribute music to other platforms
- Enable monetisation
- Gain advanced audience insights
- Pitch to Partners

Maintain a Steady Flow of Content

Don't treat SoundCloud like any other DSP - it thrives on its direct uploading feature. The more interactive an artist is on SoundCloud, the greater the results that can be achieved. Artists can keep their active listener-base engaged with a frequent stream of uploads such as:

- Demos
- Remixes

- Instrumentals
- Acapellas
- Sped up and slowed down versions
- Covers
- Audio commentary
- Track by tracks
- Interviews

This will help make the artist's SoundCloud page feel special and maintains momentum in feeds and recommendations.

Take Advantage of Unlimited Uploads (Artist Pro Feature)

Artist Pro users can upload anything they want, which lets them use a high-frequency release approach. This lets independent labels try new things and share a bigger range of music without having to worry about limits. As mentioned - this can be demos, track by tracks etc.

Involve Fans in the Creative Process

SoundCloud's social features make it easy for artists to bring fans into their journey.

By sharing works-in-progress and inviting feedback through comments or DMs, artists can transform listeners into collaborators. When fans feel their input shapes the music, they develop a deeper connection and are more likely to stay engaged for the long term.

First Fans

Unlike other platforms that require existing plays before recommending music to new listeners, SoundCloud's First Fans feature

MARKETING BEST PRACTICES AND STRATEGIES FOR INDIE LABELS

allows new uploads to immediately reach potential fans.

When you upload a public track, enable the “Amplify” or “Get Heard” setting, SoundCloud’s algorithm analyses the music you uploaded and shares it with at least 100 new users whose listening habits align with the track’s style - if early engagement through likes, plays, and saves is strong, SoundCloud can extend the reach of the track to more than one thousand listeners. This feature is only available if the track is made public, under 10 minutes but over 1 minute, uploaded or made public within the last 14 days and available to more than just Go+ subscribers.

To opt in to this feature, below any tracks banner and waveform there will be the option to amplify.

Want this track to reach more listeners?

With Artist Pro, you can get this track analyzed and recommended to the right listeners.

OFFER EXPIRES IN

12 days 11 hrs 51 mins

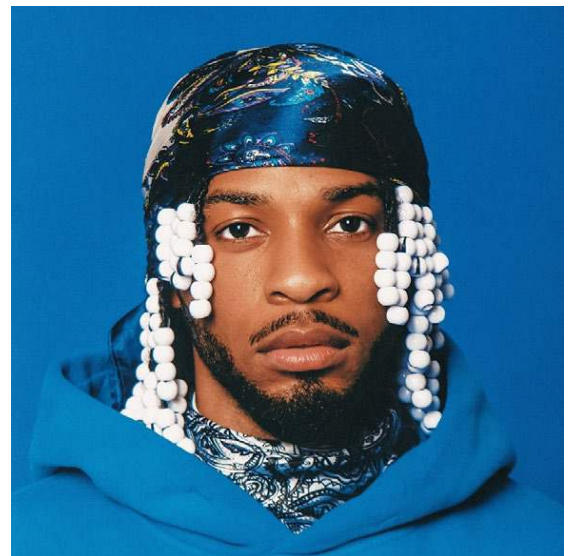
Amplify track

See how it works >

Use the Fans Tool To Nurture An Artist’s Fanbase (Artist Pro Feature)

The Fans Tool allows artists and their teams to get deeper insights into an artist’s audience. Available for Artist Pro accounts, it identifies an artist’s most engaged listeners and allows them to message them directly. This creates a personal connection between artist and fan, and is a very unique feature in the DSP

landscape. Fan rankings are based on key data points including likes, comments, shares, listening frequency, and Fan Powered Royalties. Artists can send up to fifty direct messages per day, which ensures that outreach remains intentional and genuine. The artist Armani White has used this feature strategically:



White’s team made full use of the Fans Tool to understand not only how often his tracks were streamed but also who was listening, where they were based, and how frequently they returned.

This insight allowed them to identify his most dedicated fans and connect directly with them. SoundCloud then partnered with the artist to turn these insights into a community moment. Using information from the Fans Tool, his top listeners were personally invited to an exclusive album listening event.

MARKETING BEST PRACTICES AND STRATEGIES FOR INDIE LABELS

Fan Recognition: Top & First Fans Leaderboard (Artist Pro Feature)

On top of the existing fan insights, this year SoundCloud launched their Fan Recognition feature which gives artists a way to publicly celebrate their most dedicated listeners. It takes the form of a module on artists' track pages on SoundCloud's website. The module shows a pair of charts. 'First Fans' are the listeners who played and liked the track early, ranked by their first-week streams. 'Top Fans' are the listeners who have played the track most overall, ranked by their lifetime streams of it.

This system encourages engagement and adds a playful sense of competition that motivates fans to participate more actively.

Fans must meet specific criteria to qualify, including being over 18 years old, following the artist, having a profile image and verified email and not opting out of Fan Recognition.

Encourage User-Generated Content

SoundCloud is a creative hotbed for independent DJs, producers and artists. Combined with its direct uploading feature, it's therefore a useful platform for encouraging user-generated content. User-made remixes, edits, and reinterpretations extend the life of a release and open it up to new communities. Consider encouraging the artist's audience or other artists to get creative or even run competitions. For example, Jack Garratt (Cooking Vinyl), used [Hypeddit](#) to run a remix competition where fans and users could download the stems of this new single - which also helped drive additional engagement on SoundCloud. More info [here](#).

Reposts

Reposts are one of the most effective grassroots tactics. A repost instantly exposes a track to a user's followers by placing it straight into their feed. Here are a few ways you can incentivise reposts of your artist's music:

- Ask fans directly (track description, track comments, bio)
- Download gates (e.g. Hypeddit)

FANS ⓘ

Top

First

Qualified fans who have played this track the most.

1



Orible 

29 Plays

2



Pixel Pusher

18 Plays

3



Ada G

12 Plays

4



Allbey tha doc

10 plays

5



kaykay

8 plays

MARKETING BEST PRACTICES AND STRATEGIES FOR INDIE LABELS

- Cross promotion and collaborations, repost other artists
- Promote on other socials
- DMing curators and DJs
- Third-party platforms like RepostExchange (though we recommend being careful with this and using it only sparsely)

Enabling Downloads

You can consider [enabling free downloads](#) on your track uploads or enabling paid downloads by adding a link to purchase pages like Bandcamp or iTunes in your track metadata (available on the Artist Pro plan).

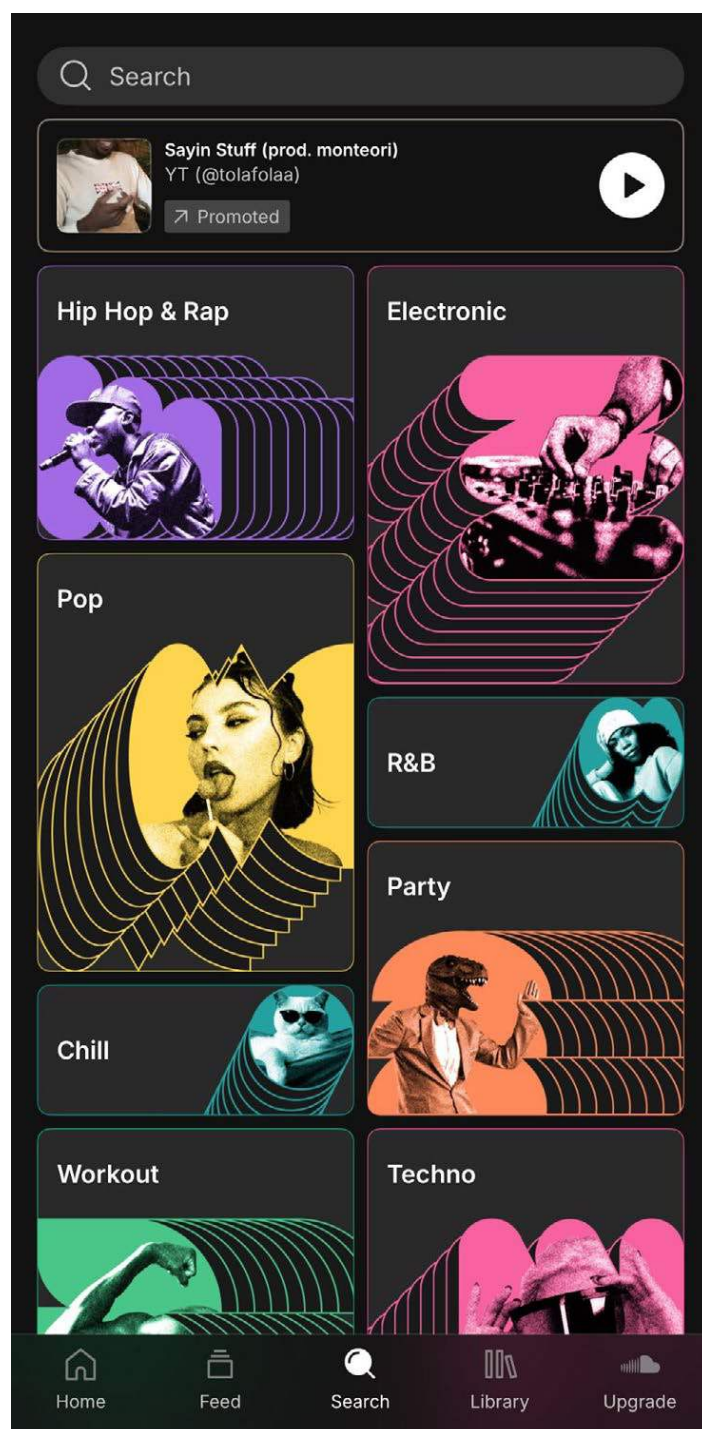
Advertising on SoundCloud (Artist Pro Feature)

SoundCloud Promote (Artist Pro Feature)

You can utilise [SoundCloud Promote](#) to advertise tracks on-platform. You'll be able to target based on demographics, locations and genre preferences. SoundCloud uses a Cost Per Thousand Impressions (CPM) strategy for promotion. Two price tiers are available on the platform:

- **Simple targeting:** For lower CPMs.
- **Advanced Targeting:** Allowing better audience segmentation results in higher CPM rates.

Promotions have a \$25 minimum spend. Users who meet the chosen targeting criteria see promoted songs at the top of the homepage and feed.



OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDIE LABELS



OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDIE LABELS

AI-powered Music Creation Tools

The latest update to SoundCloud includes a set of AI tools that let users make, edit, and record music right inside the app. The suite includes the programs [Tuney](#), [Tuttii](#), [AIBeatz](#), [ACE Studio](#), [Starmony](#) and [TwoShot](#) which can be used for remixing, writing lyrics, generating vocals, and making samples. These tools are designed so that anyone can make high-quality music, even if they don't have studio software. They work by using machine learning models that have been trained on professional stems and vocal data. This lets music creators make realistic audio components from text or sound prompts. New material can be uploaded to SoundCloud instantly or exported.

These creative tools operate alongside the existing Dolby AI Mastering feature.

This feature uses adaptive mastering algorithms to give you a professional, balanced sound profile that is specific to your artist's genre and volume preferences. Users who aren't Pro can master tracks for \$4.99 each, but Pro users get 3 free masters every month.

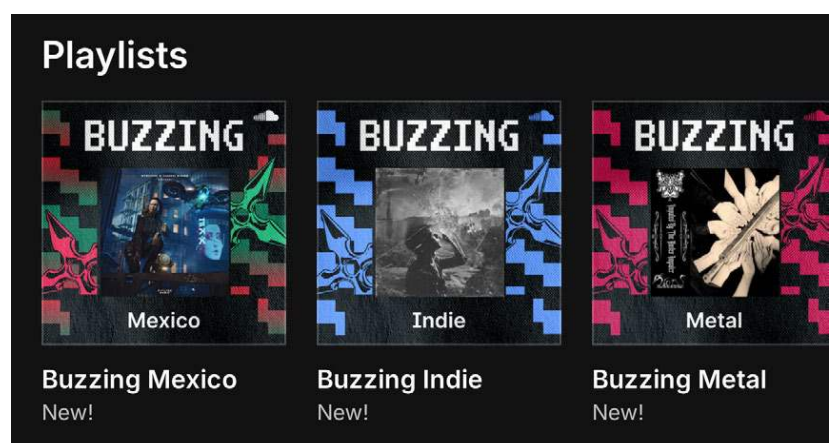
Fadr

Fadr is an AI-assisted remixing and stem-separation tool that lets artists and fans legally rework existing tracks within SoundCloud. It isolates the vocals, drums, bass and instrument layers from shared songs so that users can make new mixes or versions right away.

Record companies and artists can share stems or allow remixing, letting fans make their own versions right on the platform - and it has quickly become a powerful release marketing tool. For example, SoundCloud and Fadr collaborated with Tinashe to enable the public to remix her single "Nasty" which helped increase UGC mixes on the platform. The twist is that it's AI-assisted so it opens up this creative element to a whole range of new audiences.

Buzzing Playlists

SoundCloud has rolled out a group of playlists focused on new music. There are Buzzing Playlists for a range of genres but it's the feeder system determining which tracks are featured. It all ties into the First Fans initiative that SoundCloud launched, recommending tracks by artists in its Artist and Artist Pro tier to up to 1000 listeners who should like them.



The company is taking the highest performing tracks of those recommended - the ones that get the most likes, comments, reposts, replays and playlist adds - and curating them in the new playlists. And 'Buzzing Playlists' is, in turn, a step on the ladder towards SoundCloud's established

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDIE LABELS

editorial playlists, and ultimately its charts.

For independent labels, these playlists are an organic way to get music out there - and it's closely tied to harnessing the First Fans feature.

SoundCloud Ascending

SoundCloud's Ascending program is a curated artist development program aimed at emerging artists. Before launching in September 2024, it has been in pilot and supporting artists such as Shaboozey, Barry Can't Swim, Kenya Grace, TiaCorine, Teezo Touchdown and Odetari. This is essentially SoundCloud's equivalent of Spotify's Radar and Apple Music's Up Next, choosing an artist every month for promotion. SoundCloud says that Ascending has already proved its worth for its pilot artists. "On average, artists in Ascending see a ~60% increase in followers during their month in the program, a growth rate that's ~40% higher than in the previous month," it claimed. "Additionally, their streams nearly double during their time in the program."

The symbiotic relationship between TikTok and SoundCloud

One of the best chances for independent labels in 2025 is that TikTok and SoundCloud are becoming more and more connected. TikTok users can now save songs they find straight to their SoundCloud library with the "Add to Music App" feature - in line with other DSP integrations. TikTok reports that this integration has already contributed to over one



billion track saves across music apps globally. Our recommendations:

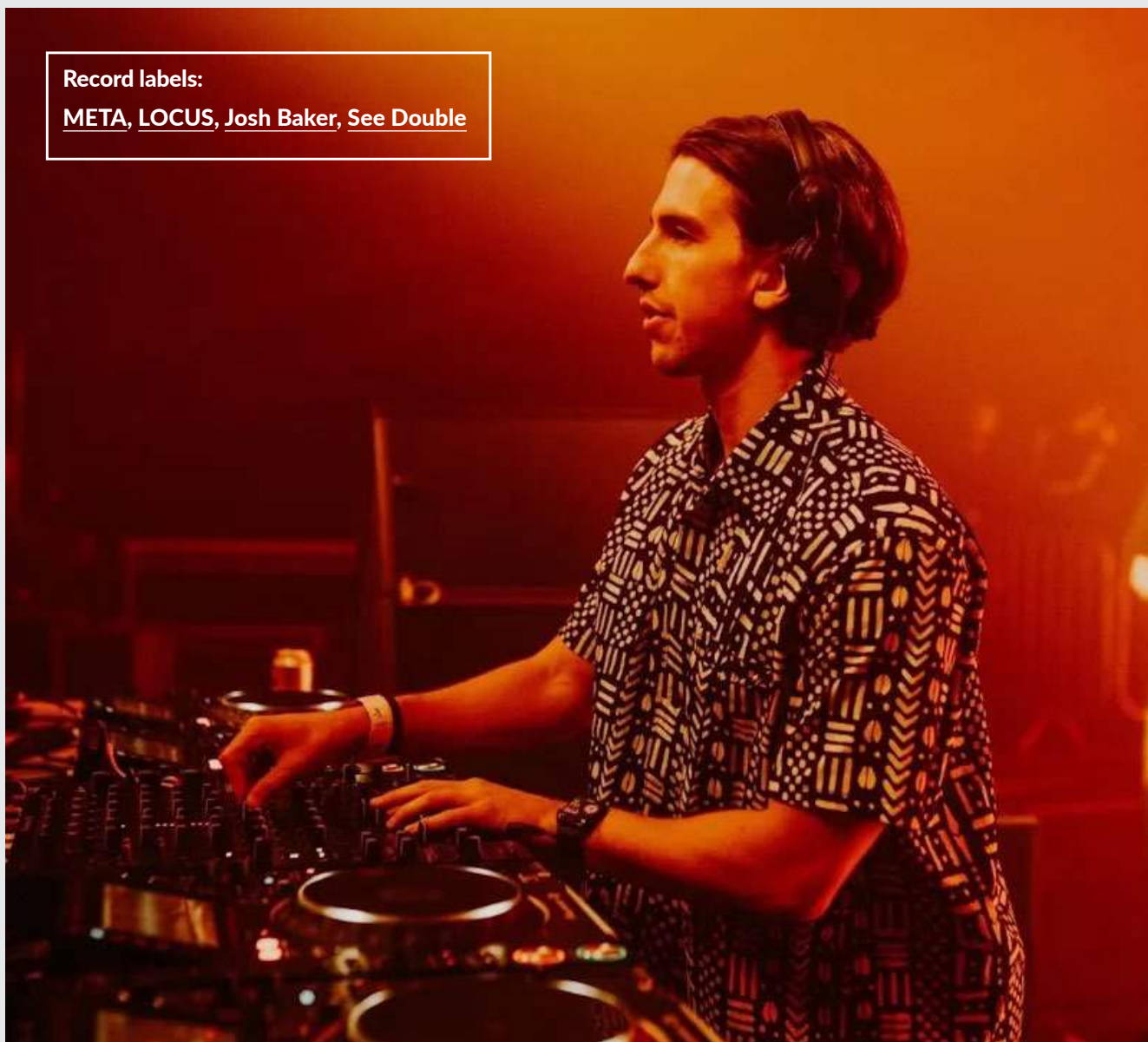
- **Get fans excited with demos first** - A lot of electronic and hip-hop artists post unfinished demos on SoundCloud and tease clips on TikTok. This builds anticipation and often drives followers on DSPs like Spotify too
- **Consider delivering the demo officially** - If you deliver the demo through the supply chain, TikTok users will be able to hit "save to SoundCloud"
- **Release more widely** - When the excitement is at its highest, put out the final version on all DSPs.



INSPIRATIONAL CASE STUDY

Record labels:

META, LOCUS, Josh Baker, See Double



Josh Baker is a British dance music producer whose career has skyrocketed thanks to his strategic use of SoundCloud. From uploading tracks in his early days to becoming [SoundCloud's Ascending Artist](#) for July 2025, Baker's journey shows how emerging artists could use the platform to reach new audiences.

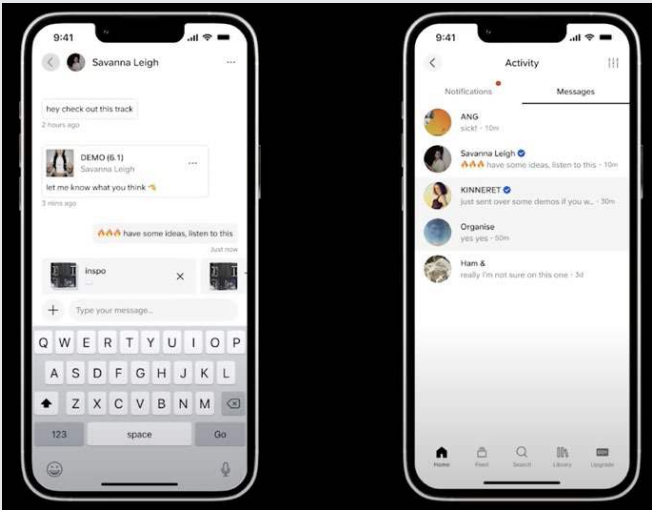
INSPIRATIONAL CASE STUDY

Josh Baker managed to almost double his followers on SoundCloud between June 5, 2024 to June 5, 2025 (from 13.5K to 37.6K followers) and appeared to be the fastest-growing SoundCloud artist in that period (Chartmetric data). In July 2025, Josh was named a SoundCloud Ascending Artist - a program designed to spotlight artists gaining organic traction.

SoundCloud as a Testing Ground

A common way artists use SoundCloud is by posting exclusives, drafts, remixes, and early ideas - mainly because it's so easy to upload. Josh followed the same approach, sharing early versions of his tracks to test the waters. Thanks to SoundCloud's algorithm, those uploads were pushed to new listeners, much like how TikTok boosts fresh content. This helped him build genuine engagement with his early audience, giving him real-time feedback and opportunities to interact directly with fans as his sound evolved.

“Sharing ideas on SoundCloud, you'll find out the honest truth - whether what you're doing is good or not”
— Josh Baker



Top Trending Artists on SoundCloud

Growth in Soundcloud followers and plays; June 4, 2024 to June 4, 2025

Chartmetric

	Artist	Genre	Followers Before	Followers After	Percentage Change of Followers
1	Josh Baker	House	13.5k	37.6k	178%
2	Capochino	Dubstep	10.9k	26.1k	140%
3	Club Angel	Garage	14.6k	34.3k	135%
4	Sherm	House	16.5k	38.1k	132%
5	MALUGI	House	23.2k	44.4k	91%
6	KIRK	Techno	12.4k	22.3k	79%
7	Mehyad	Hip-Hop/Rap	42k	75.4k	79%
8	Upper90	House	12.4k	21.4k	72%
9	FLY	Dubstep	17.2k	29.6k	72%
10	Hostage Situation	Dubstep	10.9k	18.6k	71%

Additional 40 rows not shown.

*Graph is sorted by % change of followers by default

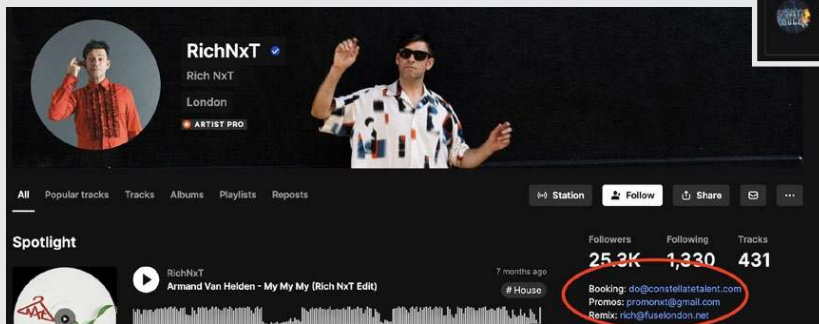


Strategic Manual Outreach

SoundCloud allows users to see contact details in the about section of artist profiles, which can be especially valuable for up-and-coming artists

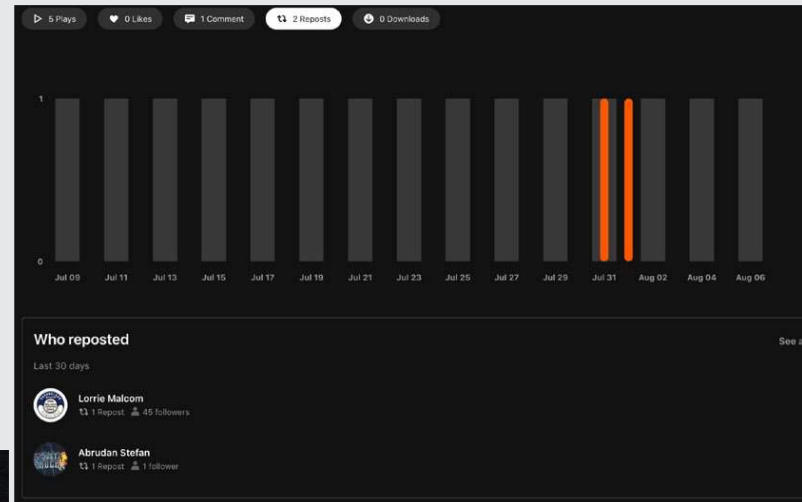
INSPIRATIONAL CASE STUDY

looking to connect. Josh used this feature to find DJs in his scene, then reached out by emailing them directly, DMing on SoundCloud, or even finding them on Facebook. He'd send private SoundCloud links to his tracks, hoping they'd play them live - a smart, direct way to build relationships and get his music heard in the right spaces.



Fan Discovery

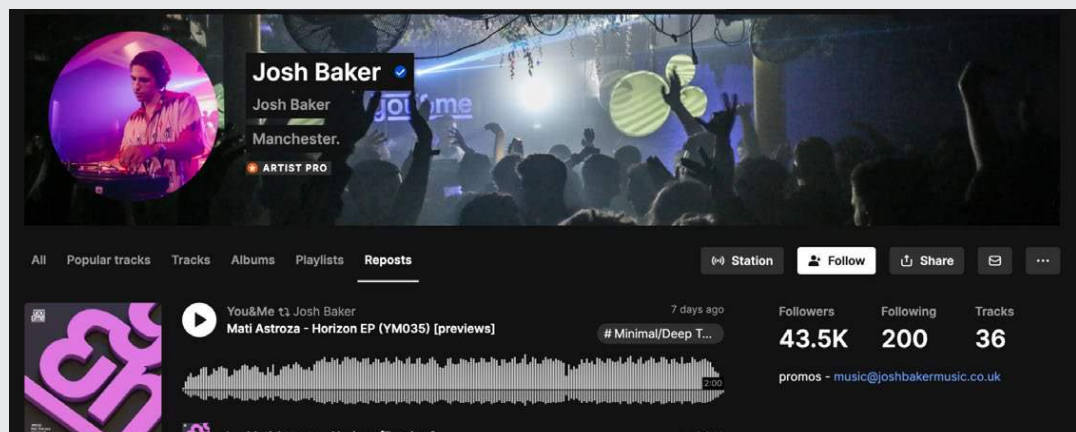
One of SoundCloud's most valuable data features is the ability to see who downloads your tracks through the Insights tab - giving artists direct insight into their listeners. Josh Baker made smart use of this by tracking who was downloading his music, then searching for those users on Instagram to connect, finding clips of them playing his tracks live, and sometimes even resharing the content or sending them exclusives. This created a feedback loop between listener



behavior and live playability, while also helping him build stronger, more personal relationships within the scene.

Using Soundcloud features for Scene Building

SoundCloud makes it easy to connect directly through DMs, which is a great way for artists to engage within their scene - but another powerful feature is the ability to repost tracks. Josh actively uses both. He regularly checks his SoundCloud inbox to discover emerging producers and uses DMs to build community and support other artists. At the same time, he reposts tracks he finds on the platform, helping to spotlight new music for his followers and strengthen the creative community around his sound.



CONCLUSION



This primer has provided independent labels with an overview of how to utilise SoundCloud as an artist discovery and revenue platform.

As pointed out throughout the primer, SoundCloud has been investing and continues to invest in a range of creator-focused tools that make it easier and more cost-efficient to create music, build an audience and engage with them. Independent labels should pay particular attention to features such as First Fans, Buzzing playlists, Fan Recognition, Fan-Powered Royalties & more.

Many of these are only available for Artist Pro users - so it's always worth considering if this tier might be a worthwhile investment.

If you work with artists in the Electronic or Hip-Hop space, it should be a no brainer to utilise SoundCloud as part of their strategy. But other genres are thriving as well - to recap Hip-Hop/Rap leads streaming in 2025 with 32% of all plays, followed by EDM at 21%, and Pop at 17%. Afrobeats saw the biggest growth, up 48% year-over-year, while Latin (up 22%) and K-pop (up 19%) also expanded rapidly.

One of the biggest opportunities on SoundCloud lies in its community aspect. It thrives on its community of DJs, producers, artists and users passionate about music discovery. Whether it's reposting music, inviting comments, or running remix campaigns - these tools can help your artists grow on SoundCloud.