

Stevie Nicks Joins Instagram: How Old Dogs are Learning New Tricks

Carrie



Did you ever think the reigning queen of rock mystery, [Stevie Nicks, would join Instagram](#)? Would you ever guess the news of a new Pink Floyd album would be [leaked through Twitter](#)? Or that Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers would [stream their new album](#) in its entirety before it was released? All three artists are preparing for the launch of new material, and they're jumping on the social media bandwagon to do so.

Stevie Nicks is the latest to join the group of rock legends getting on top of social media, having launched an [official Instagram](#) on July 23 to promote content from her [new album, 24 Karat Gold – Songs From the Vault](#). Even though it promises content will begin August 5, the currently empty account still amassed more than 11,000 followers in fewer than 48 hours.

The music business today is no stranger to social media. [Katy Perry](#) is the most followed Twitter account (even more popular than President Barack Obama). It's musicians who make up the top spots in the Twittersphere. Even when expanded to the top 100 accounts, [50 percent of those belong to recording artists](#).

But, here's the rub: [music sales are falling](#). A lot. Even digital single sales, those 99 cent \$1.29 tunes which once spelled the demise of album sales, dropped 13 percent in the first half of 2014.

The new guard of rock stars had been picking up the promotional slack; Instagramming sneak peaks of cover art, engaging with fans through Twitter, setting up Facebook presales for tours. But the new guard, it seems, is slacking. Can old dogs learn new tricks?

Amidst all the drops in sales, one sector saw a sizable boost. Old-school vinyl [saw a sales increase of 40 percent](#). And while many current artists are beginning to put out new music in both digital and LP formats (those albums can usually found at Urban Outfitters), it's important to look at how the ones who paved the way are adapting, and best

practices to continue.

Nicks likely learned a thing or two from fellow artist and collaborator [Dave Stewart](#), which is **tease fans early and often**. My mother reminisces about the five year gap between Fleetwood Mac's *Mirage* and *Tango in the Night* where fans had no idea what was happening behind the scenes. Now, fans were treated to Instagrams and video clips Stewart began sharing with his Facebook fans and Twitter followers in April.

Giving Nicks ownership of social content, however, makes sense. Not only will it reach a larger audience (she has nearly double the Facebook fans as Stewart), but it will appear more natural and fan-friendly.

Nicks's social strategy could benefit from the guidance of friend Tom Petty. He may have [proclaimed to hate social media](#) back in 2011, but the Heartbreakers sure are making good use of it these days. With 2.9 million Facebook fans and 175,000 Twitter followers, the band shows the importance of keeping fans engaged and excited for new material when between projects.

[Their latest album, Hypnotic Eye, will debut next week](#) — four years after their last album. Rather than start from scratch with social and digital promotion, the band's social pages posted regularly during the lull. Using hashtags like #TPATHursday and #FromTheVault kept fans active and engaged.

Hashtagging an upcoming project will create more buzz and makes it easier to track conversation, using #HypnoticEye whenever discussing the album on Facebook and Twitter. They even took to Facebook to announce that their [fans could stream five new songs](#) weeks before the albums release on an online Tom Petty radio.

Hopefully she can teach a thing or two to Fleetwood Mac, who could take advantage of Instagram to give fans behind-the-scenes looks at [their upcoming reunion tour](#). Here are some best practices we're eager to see the queen of rock and roll employ in the coming months.

Take advantage of Instagram video

The platform only allows videos to have a maximum length of 15 seconds, which is just enough time to give fans a snip of a song to peak interest, but short enough to avoid any early leaks.

Behind the scenes images work wonders

It's a backstage pass for those who aren't VIPs. Document the recording process — many fans are not only interested in the music, but how it was made. Take pictures at soundchecks and in rehearsals. Fans love to watch the band perform, but would gobble up any sneak peaks into backstage. Allowing them to feel like a fly on the wall will increase interest and engagement.

Utilize hashtags to boost conversation

Branding content with a hashtag allows fans to unite behind one front and promotes the product organically through social media. Think about it: there could be a million people using key terms like "new album" and "*Songs From the Vault*," but it seems scattered. Organizing all conversation around a specific hashtag, like #24Karat has greater potential to trend and boost conversation.

Finally, keep your fans updated regularly

Continuing to update social pages regularly, even when not promoting new material or a tour, keeps the page current and in your fans' feeds. [Allowing your Facebook page to become inactive is like letting it die a slow death](#). When you begin to post again, many of your fans won't even see it. Additionally, keeping fans informed on progress sustains a level of anticipation between announcement and release, rather than letting it drop in between the two. You'll find your fans will be talking about you a lot more throughout an extended time, rather than just the start and the finish.