



The Music-Preneur Mindset Podcast

EP25: Numbers That Are Ruining Your Career



You're listening to Episode 25 of the Music-Preneur Mindset Podcast.

Hey there! You're listening to Episode 25 - Numbers That Are Ruining Your Career.

I'm your host, Suz - a mindset coach to help music-preneurs build sustainable careers in music by setting clear goals and creating time management systems that enable them to work smarter, not harder.

As part of my work as an advocate, I travel to various conferences to speak on panels and host workshops that help educate musicians on what they should be focusing on in order to build their careers.

On more than one occasion a musician has asked, "How do I get enough followers to get a label to listen to me?" Have you ever wondered the same? Yea... a lot of you have.

And it makes sense. We're all taught that a musician works hard, they write good music, and then a label comes in and saves the day. But it's not reality, especially not in today's industry.

Labels are no longer the gate-keepers, your fans are, and fans are more than numbers. Instead of thinking in Likes & Follows think in people & relationships.

Whenever an artist asks me how to get more followers I ask them, "Why?" When they respond that they want to get the attention of labels I ask them, "Why?" It's ok to want to be signed, but you better have a reason worth fighting for, and not simply because you're hoping a label will solve all your problems - because it won't.

A label is a bank, a bank with a very high interest rate. It's a company to front money that they expect to make back. I'm not saying there aren't great labels out there that help artists reach new heights, but I do think creating a career solely to get their attention is an issue that should be addressed.

A career in music is a journey, and it's a long one. Labels will come and go, but your fans, hopefully, will stick with you during multiple chapters of your career; they are the ones who deserve your focus and obsession.

All too often we get hooked on a goal and forget to check back in and reflect on that goal. We get a number in our head, such as, "I need 500,000 followers in order to grab the attention of a label," and we focus so hard on that number that we lose track of what matters - the music and the fans who love and support the music.

Label or no label, as a society we've gotten used to measuring our worth by the metrics of social media - how many followers, how many subscribers, how many video views - the list goes on.

Data can be a very powerful thing. We can gather almost any information we need from the data we are able to get from most analytic tools at our disposal.

Data can tell us who our core fanbase is, what posts are most engaging, and even which songs are played all the way through.

Data enables us to make informed decisions about where we spend our ad money, where we book shows, and how often we post on social media and when.

However, when we put all of our focus on the *numbers*, especially on the wrong ones, we lose out on the human component - the reason many of us get started in our careers.

We fail to build relationships that matter.

How many times do you grab your phone to see how many likes or hearts your last post got? How many hours do you spend wondering why more people haven't signed up for your newsletter or subscribed to your YouTube Channel?

When those thoughts begin to take lead over thoughts of nurturing your relationships with existing fans or leveraging the industry connections you have to move forward towards a goal, your career suffers for it.

Numbers don't lie, but they don't tell the whole truth either.

Numbers don't tell you how a song touched someone or what someone liked best about the last photo you posted.

Numbers can't tell you when a fan feels neglected or when someone just went through the same thing you just wrote about on your blog.

Getting too wrapped up in numbers can distract you from spending time asking your fans questions, peering into their world to see what's going on and what's interesting to them, or dedicating fifteen minutes to send a personalized note to the last few people who purchased an album or t-shirt.

Do yourself a favor - start tracking your behavior. Download an app like Checky that allows you to see how many times you check your phone and other apps. The Huffington Post published a very helpful article - [These Apps Help You Realize How Much Time You Waste On Your Phone](#) - I'll link to it in the [show notes](#).

You will be stunned at how many times you look at your phone, and most of those times will be to check social media.

We all know aside from the number watching another bad habit we have is stalking our "competitors" online and foolishly comparing their stats to our own. "Why does her

post have more likes than mine?" "Why does he have so many followers?" "How did they get that many subscribers on YouTube, their videos aren't even that good!"

How many of us have fell down that rabbit hole? And how much of that time wasted actually moved our careers forward?

Exactly.

A good way to break free from the constant checking and foolish obsessing is to have a plan in place. A lot of times we surf aimlessly online because we have no clear end game.

Decide what information will serve you best right now in your journey and then list out the metrics that can tell you that information.

If you're working on building your email list you'll want to know how many people subscribed, but, more importantly, you'll want to know how many of those subscribers actually *opened* your latest email.

It's not the number of subscribers you have that matters but rather how engaged those subscribers are with what you're sending them.

If you manage to attain 10k subscribers but only 200 are opening the emails you send, then you have a pretty useless list. That's an open rate of 2%! Ideally you should aim to maintain an open rate of 20-30%. It's not easy to do, but it *is* doable.

It takes consistency and understanding what phrases and tactics work in a given subject line to get your subscribers to open the email. You also have to test out the time of day you send the email and the call to action you use {i.e. "open now!" or "click here!"}.

Different methods work for different people.

It takes consistency and a willingness to experiment to find what works for you. In order to test those things out you'll need time and energy to put towards that focus.

If you're launching a new song and you've set up Facebook ads you'll want to focus on Click Through Rates, or conversion rates, as well as Costs Per Lead. You'll want to know how much you spent for every song you sold or subscriber you obtained.

Getting clear on what you're working towards achieving and what data you'll need to measure that progress will enable you to create a healthier routine around your time spent on social media.

In [The Rock/Star Life Planner](#) we created a space each week for you to track your new followers on each of the social channels. However, we paired it with a section to plan out what you post on each channel.

The goal here is not a numbers game, but rather a way to see how what you posted affected your growth. Seeing an uptick in followers is useless if you don't try to understand why that uptick happened.

Did you happen to post something more vulnerable that week or did you post more media than usual? Were your photos bright and eye-catching or was it because you shared someone else's content?

Much like in the Planner, create a checklist of data you'd like to track and every day or at the end of every week gather that data. Also set aside time to review and reflect on that data. Tracking does you no good if you're not analyzing it - another reason to limit the amount of data you track.

You don't want to try and analyze every piece of data you have access to. You want to choose a few key metrics to tell you what's important to you at any given time.

In addition to tracking and reflecting on the data, start to make a list of action steps to take the following week in order to see growth towards your goal.

If your goal is to get more comments on your posts your action steps might be to first do some research on what prompts people to comment on posts and then to practice improving your captions.

A great place to start improving is to include a call to action in all of your captions, such as, "Comment below with your favorite guilty pleasure song." You may also want to make your calls to action or your questions binary, as in yes or no options. For example, posting an image and saying, "Could you see this as my new album cover? Type yes or no in the comments below!"

If your goal is to create a website that converts visitors into ticket buyers or album downloaders you should want to track the bounce rate of your page {the percentage of visitors who leave a website after only visiting one page} and how long visitors are staying on the page you are tracking.

A great site called [Heat Map](#) will allow you, for free, to track where on a page people are spending time. Are they scrolling? Are they reading to the end? Are they leaving after the headline? I'll leave a link to the website in the [show notes](#).

Knowing this information, if you are focused on conversions, can help you see where on your page you need to improve copy or images.

Having a few key pieces of data to track each week as well as clear action steps for improving your progress will enable you to create a routine each morning, or afternoon or evening, depending on your schedule, around social media and how much time you spend on it.

Challenge yourself not to get caught up in the vanity numbers. Don't waste time finding out who unfollowed you or who unsubscribed from your list.

In fact, do yourself a favor right after you listen to this podcast and sign into your email management software and disable the unsubscribed notifications. Either that or train yourself to do a happy dance every time someone unsubscribes.

Yes, a happy dance. It means you have less dead weight on your list!

Every time you find yourself checking how many followers someone else has, which then leads down a rabbit hole of “why them and not me” comparisons - come on, we’ve all been there - take a look at your action steps you’ve listed out for yourself and start acting on them.

Comment on a fan’s post. Shout out your new followers. Send an email to someone who’s opened your newsletter every week for the past 6 weeks, thank them for doing so, and ask what they’d like to see more of in future newsletters.

Challenge yourself to use social media as nothing more than a tool to build a sense of trust between your fans and you so that they feel motivated and inspired to continue to support you, and even inspire others to support you just the same.

Social media metrics do not define your talent or your ability to succeed in this industry. Plenty of people you’ve never heard of make a great living in this industry and have less followers than you do now. Yes, even you and the small following you’ve been beating yourself up over.

Not to sound cliché but it’s truly NOT the size of the list that matters. The engagement on that list is what matters.

Think of it this way - let’s say you were selling your album for \$10. And let’s say you wanted to make \$1000 a month in album sales. That means you’d have to sell your album to 100 people each month.

That’s 25 people each week.

That's 5 people each day of the work week.

Now that's no short order, but you don't need 500,000 followers to make that happen. You just need to focus on engaging the few hundred you have on a granular level. Make each of them feel incredibly important to you, as they should, and you'll start to see a shift.

Progress happens where we put our focus. If you focus on empty numbers and comparisons you'll get empty results.

If you focus your energy in action steps that further connection and engagement, that's what you'll get and there will be a domino effect that will bring more fans your way.

Also, as I mention in [Episode 18](#), it's important to set boundaries. This goes for data analytics as well. It is possible to have too much information. It's possible to know too much and drown in data.

Set boundaries on which data you'll look at and which steps you will take each week to grow healthy and strong relationships in this industry. After all, it's a who-you-know not how-many-you-know business.

Strong relationships will always get you farther than a sea of acquaintances.

You may need a huge fanbase to impress a few industry heads, but you don't need a huge fanbase, or approval from anyone in this industry, to have a sustainable career in music.

And always remember, a few bucks can buy you a few thousand followers - but if those followers didn't get to you by choice you'll never make those few dollars back let alone any real money from your "growing" fanbase.

In order to keep in mind what metrics to focus on vs. ignore, I've created a little worksheet that lays out what metrics you should be focusing on, especially if you're just starting out and doing this all on your own.

You can access it through a link in the show notes, www.therockstaradvocate.com/ep25.

So what do you say? Are you ready to let go of the pressure to get hundreds of thousands of followers and focus on making each of your followers feel like 1 in a million?

I sure hope so! Your fans should mean the world to you, so make sure to make them the focus of your world.

If you enjoyed what you learned today, you can access all current episodes using your preferred podcast app, including iTunes & Spotify, or by visiting www.therockstaradvocate.com/podcast.

If you're looking to get clarity on your next steps, find time to balance everything on your plate, or if you're still stuck on what metrics to focus on and which action steps to take, let's talk!

As always, feel free to email me at any time: suz@therockstaradvocate.com.

Until next time, Rockstar! Have a wonderful week and I hope to see you back here next Wednesday so we can get grounded to get rising! Take care.