

Welcome to the Screw The Record Label podcast. I'm your host Nancy Halligan, the founder of rockbition.com. This week, I want to ask the question, does your music need a niche? Do musicians need to have a niche? And the answer is a resounding, absolutely, yes, you do. The reason you do, is because if you are considering your band as a business, which you should be. Honestly, if you're doing this for a hobby, just stop playing this right now because I'm not really talking to you. I'm talking to the people who are taking their music seriously, who are learning to market because you need to learn to market your music. And in order to learn to do that, the first step is learning how to niche your music correctly. So in order to niche, we're going to look at something, a couple different things here.

The first question is, and I know some people really hate this, but who do you sound like and don't say nobody, don't say, "Oh, you know, we're so different from everybody else." No, you're not and I can't put that any clearer to you guys. Everything, it's the year 2020. There are two thousand and twenty years of ideas. So for you, to think your idea is brand spanking new and no one's ever done it before, you're being naive. Every thought that's out there has been thought of before. If you are thinking it, then chances are 99.9% sure that someone else has thought of it too. You just may not know each other. You may be on opposite sides of the world, but, or you may be hundreds of years apart. But it's not new. So get that out of your head right now. There is someone out there that you can say, if you like this band, you will like our band. There has to be someone.

So with that said, to give you an idea if I were to be doing this for my band Steel Kingdom, the three bands off that straight top of my head. I would think of would be if you like Epica, or if you like BattleBeast, or if like Amaranthe, you will like our band. We have the same style. We have the, I'm the female singer. So I do tend to gravitate towards those female singer bands to say if you like these bands you're going to like my band. And you can kind of get an idea then of what we sound like so it's not a surprise when you turn us on. Like if I were to say, "Oh if you like Madonna, you'll love us." And then you turn my band and you'll be like, "This doesn't sound like Madonna, like what are you talking about?"

You want to be able to say, you know, we're talking to rockers, or we're talking to pop people, or were talking to people who like southern rock, or were talking to people who like electronic stuff. You need to be able to kind of give them an idea of what it is, they're in for when they listen to you. You don't want it to be some big surprise. So the first thing you want to do there is come up, with a list of maybe three to five bands that you can say. If you like these bands you will like our band, that's number one. And the reason, the reason you want to do this is because once you start actually marketing and running ads whether it be on Facebook, or Instagram, or whatever. Those platforms when you're running ads allow you to target the fans of those bands. So hello, of course you want to say, " Yeah, we sound a little bit like this other band, you know, if those people like that if they're going to, they're going to like us. So it's a good way to use that information for targeting people for ads.

The second thing is, you want to make sure that if you are a band that sounds like Slipknot, that you're not marketing to people who only like Madonna or Kesha, that's not your audience, that those people do not like you, they don't want to listen to your band. I mean unless they're me, but I'm strange bird of that fashion, where I like all sorts of different music. But when you're putting in stuff into an ad function and you're trying to target people, you're not going to target fans of Madonna or Kesha, if your band sounds like Mushroomhead or Slipknot or one of those bands. You just want to be cognizant of the fact that there are some people who aren't going to like your band, and that's okay. Because you don't want to waste money trying to target those people if they're never going to spend their money with you. It's just like tossing money into the toilet at that point.

So a third way, you want to kind of niche down a little bit is, is there a specific type of maybe movie, that your fans like but fans of other styles of music don't like. For instance, I can think of a couple different bands like so, some of the bands I mentioned, maybe like Epica. I'm going to guess that there's fans of Epica that love stuff like Lord of the Rings or any type of science fiction fantasy like that. So that could be used again, as part of you're targeting to reach different people. And you want to make, you want to pick something, so like Lord of the Rings is kind of big, like a lot of people liked that. But my guess is if you're targeting fans of like prog rock, operatic type rock, a lot of the European style bands, like I would take their sound and say it's very similar to what you hear and feel when you're watching something like Lord of the Rings. Or if you're like a driving rock, or metal band, you're going to look more like the action movies. Those are the type of movies that are probably synonymous with your style of music and

there's a really easy, easy way to tell all this stuff. If you're thinking to yourself, I don't know what the hell movies my fans are watching. Ask them. Use it as a post on your, one of your pages or share about one of the movies you just watched you thought was really freaking cool and see how people respond. Anything that they post on your page is giving you insight as to what they like, what they want to see more of and you should be taking that information and writing it down, keeping it, like in a log somewhere. I take notes on the different comments I see, not just on my page, but on other peoples pages. So like when you've picked those three to five bands that you are going to say that you don't sound like but that are similar you can go to their pages and see what people are posting on their page. See how they're reacting and commenting on things. You can take that information and it's very useful information for you, to use for targeting for your ads that you're eventually going to do. You may not be doing it right now, but you need to be doing this research as you're starting out, as you're getting the information, as you're learning to post on your social media pages. All this information is eventually going to come in very handy when you go to launch and set out your music into the world. This will help you reach those people you want to make them fans beforehand because you're going to do a whole launch runway and we will go over that in a future episode.

But I really want you to be thinking about this. I'm going to have a niche worksheet for you to work from and I'm going to post it on screwtherecordlabel.com under this episode, which is episode 8. So go to screwtherecordlabel.com, find the episode. I'll have it free download on there. You can download it.

It'll be a worksheet for you to help figure this information out so that you have it handy when you need it. You don't want to be doing all this research when you're ready to launch your album. You want to have this information handy now. So go there, you can listen to the episode on my website too. You can download the transcript. If you want to read it, instead of listening to it. You can share this out. I'm going to have it on my Screw The Record Label Facebook page and on the Rockbition page.

And again, if you haven't yet, please download the app, Listen App. It's listenapp.co. You want to find Screw The Record Label and you can become part of my VIP Community with the code, ROCKBITION, R-O-C-K-B-I-T-I-O-N. It's totally free and we can chat about the episodes right inside the app. And I think it's a cool place to kind of meet up with you guys every week when I'm releasing the episodes. And we can talk about things and you can give me ideas and I can respond back. And I think it's kind of cool way to interact with you guys, rather than trying to get you over on my Facebook page which doesn't always work. And this way, you can do it right while you're listening to the episode as well. So I hope you enjoy this episode. Let me know if you have any feedback. If you have any questions, I gave you all my social media, but you can also reach me at hello@rockbition.com. I will see you guys next week. Bye.