



Fraudulent Streaming Guide

Buying fake streams and sourcing illegitimate ways of inflating your performance data is illegal. It is considered fraud as streaming is a part of the artist's financial income (and or the record label's income etc.) Mostly this is controlled effectively by streaming platforms, although scammers are always attempting new ways to exploit artists into using these methods. It is extremely important that you avoid this at all costs, as it can have lasting effects against your musical career.

This guide will show what you need to look out for and explain the negative possibilities of these actions:

Fake Playlisting

Playlisting is by far the most common way of generating fake streams. Spotify is known for being a great place for artist discovery via playlists, so it's no doubt that this platform has the biggest challenge when it comes to dealing with this problem. Often, if a playlist looks too good to be true, it probably is.

Being placed on a fake playlist is rarely the artist's intention and with this in mind, scammers have been known to add smaller artists onto fraudulent playlists in order to show quick 'growth' on the artist's numbers. After this, they will remove your music from the playlist and your numbers will appear to slow down rapidly, provoking you to attempt to get back on that playlist. The scammers then reach out to you, asking for money to put you back on that same playlist (or another one controlled by the same people).

There are legitimate websites that offer playlist submissions, but these methods are never used. 99% of the time, if there are any concrete claims of performance from using a service (e.g. you will gain 1,000 more followers and 10,000 streams) it is not a real playlist.

If you find a curator that you are not sure of, have a deeper look into the playlist and ask yourself these questions:

- **Does the playlist contain music from well known artists, as well as smaller artists?**

A playlist that has a lot of followers, whilst only featuring music from underground artists is highly unlikely. Let's be honest, a curation made solely by unknown artists will not usually be enough to draw a lot of listeners in.

- **Does the playlist creator have a real profile?**

This one isn't always a direct give away, but if the creation profile has a low amount of followers and a huge playlist following, we can assume that something is not quite right. Also look out for an anonymous account name (e.g. 'User0907787') and take note if there is no profile picture.

- **Are the playlist followers legitimate?**

Similar to the last point, if the accounts that are following the playlist look suspicious, it is an obvious give away.

- **Does any negative information come up with a *Google* search?**

People tend to talk online about these topics, so a quick search may give some further information if you are unsure of a playlist or a curator.

- **If you have already been featured on a suspicious playlist, does the performance add up?**

Take a deeper look into your analytics. Are your monthly listeners inline with your streams? Do you have a sudden increase in followers for no reason? Are the locations of the listeners in 'fake stream hotspots'?

Purchasing Fake Streams And Fake Followers

We can understand the reasons as to why someone would want to buy followers and streams, but we simply cannot agree with doing this under any circumstances. It has negative and lasting connotations that will not only affect your music career, but will also affect the label as well.

It is very unlikely that you will be able acquire fake streams without knowingly doing so, unless someone has done this on your behalf or via playlisting (as mentioned above.)

The Risks

It is usually very obvious when someone is manipulating their numbers on streaming platforms. With a quick look at an artist's page you will be able to spot the irregularities in performance. This brings us to the first point... **Your reputation.** Do you really want to be associated with falsely enhanced numbers? Nothing will make your audience or your industry peers lose respect for you quicker than this. Future opportunities will be considerably harder to secure and the negative public perception is extremely difficult to change once it has been shaped.

A more intense method that streaming platforms use is **profile blacklisting**. If you are continuously breaching the streaming guidelines, you may have your profile removed from the search option, making your page virtually impossible to find. To add to this, you may be banned from all editorial playlisting opportunities and your music can even be removed from the platform completely.

Recovering from previous use of fake streaming is also a very difficult task. **The algorithms** for streaming platforms are very complex and are constantly collecting data on your performance as an artist. This data is then used when showing your analytics. These analytics may become so distorted with fake information that they become useless, giving you no reliable information. This can be a very lengthy process to fix. In most cases it is more advisable to create a brand new profile and start again.

It goes without saying that we do not justify the use of fake streaming. **DeeVu** has previously terminated working relationships with artists that have used these methods without our knowledge of doing so. We will continue to monitor our releases for any irregularities in data.

If you are unsure of anything mentioned in this guide or if you have spotted something that doesn't look right on your artists profile(s), please get in contact with a member of the team and we can advise the best cause of action.

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Regards,

The team at DeeVu

