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SOCIAL MEDIA AND MARKETING FOR
PERFORMING ARTISTS WITH DISABILITIES

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>> LISA DAMICO: Hello, everyone, and welcome to "Social Media and Marketing for Performing Artists with Disabilities." I'm Lisa Damico, your moderator and Webinar organizer, joined by my assistant, Rachael Nease, and today's Webinar is part of a monthly series at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. This series addresses topics related to arts, disability and education.

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Before we get started, let's take a moment to ensure that everyone is familiar with the Go to Webinar control panel that you should see on the right side of your screen. If you need to leave the webinar early, you can exit out of the program by clicking on the X in the upper right corner. Make sure that you have selected telephone or mic and speakers to correspond with how you're connected to the webinar. You have the ability to submit questions using the chat pane located near the bottom of the control panel, or, if you would prefer to say the question instead of typing it, you can click on the raise your hand icon on the control panel and I will unmute your microphone. You're

also welcome to chat with the other participants in the webinar using that chat box. Your questions will come directly to me, and during the designated question and answer time at the end of the presentation, I'll relay them to our presenters.

I also want to emphasize that following the presentation, I will send out a follow-up E-mail with a link of the recording to today's presentation, a copy of the PowerPoint presentation, a handout of resources our presenters want to share and a copy of the transcript. This means you don't need to worry about frantically taking notes during the presentation.

And with that, I will turn it over to today's presenters, both former VSA International young soloist award recipients, Laurie Rubin and Justin Kauflin. Laurie and Justin!

>> LAURIE RUBIN: Thank you so much. My name is Laurie Rubin, and I am a mezzo soprano and opera singer. I am really thrilled to be here today. Social media, you know, is such an interesting thing, and just a wonderful facet of life that makes things easier and gives pretty much puts our publicity in the hands back into our hands. And allows us to have a little bit more control over fan gaining and just the image that we have. And so I'm a classical singer, but also, just recently branded with my partner as a pop duo called PureLand, and so today I'm really excited to share some of the things that I've learned, and I'm really honored to be sitting here with Justin, as well.

>> JUSTIN KAUFLIN: Hi. I'm Justin Kauflin. I am a 28-year-old jazz pianist based out of Virginia Beach, Virginia, and also very happy to be here to share some of my experiences. Just a little bit about myself, I was born with a degenerative disease which caused me to lose my sight completely by age 11, and sort of after that happened, music became something very important to me. When I got into high school, I really fell in love with jazz, and pretty much I've been doing that ever since. And probably since the early days of social media, when MySpace was available and Facebook was just starting, I was very interested in kind of -- and kind of ever since I got involved, I've been learning a lot about sort of -- mainly a lot of what not to do through the process, but it's been, you know, a great experience learning how to do that as well as learning how to be, you know, a professional musician working today. So hopefully we can give you some good tips through this webinar, through both of our experiences, and look forward to sharing it with Laurie here.

>> LAURIE RUBIN: Thank you so much.

>> LISA DAMICO: All right. Should we go to the next slide?

>> JUSTIN KAUFLIN: Yeah, so I guess sort of before we sort of explore the different networks that are most popular, I thought it would be good for us to sort of discuss some general -- maybe good habits to have while using social media and sort of applies to any of the networks that you might be using.

First kind of thing is when doing anything online, especially with social media, what you're doing is public. And I think for us as artists, maybe that's not as difficult to come to terms with, you know, we want to be public. We want to reach our fans. We want to make a connection. But it is something still to keep in mind, you know, a good rule of thumb for me is if I'm about to post something, just to kind of step forward and think, okay, well, what am I going to think about this a month from now or a year from now? And, you know, kind of keep that in mind. That way, I don't feel like I'll have any regrets later on with anything I might put online. I like to think of being on the internet as being outside, you know. We are in the public. Just a good rule of -- a good rule of thumb. And Laurie, if you wanted to talk a little bit.

>> LAURIE RUBIN: Yeah, I totally agree with what you're saying, and I feel -- you know, it's such a fine line, you know, in today's world, social media, one of the things that it's done for everybody is it's made people feel like they can relate to their fans in a much more casual way. You know, I was born in 1978, so I grew up mostly in a much more, I guess you could say a little bit more formal time, in a sense, like just a -- you know, where the way people got to know you is in newspaper articles and news features, you know, PBS was a sort of -- and still is, but at the time was much more for classical singers

and things like that. That's how you got to hear, you know, people, and so, you know, things were so much more controlled by other sources that, you know, with social media, I think what people expect is for you to be more casual. It's just sort of the nature of the beast. But it's such a fine line because, you know, even in the old days, you know, if you said something in the social media that could be misconstrued, that's sort of the thing that people would remember, and now, with social media, like, it's so much easier to say things, or in the public, because there's nobody controlling, you know, what people are seeing on TV or in print, you know, you can control what people are seeing, and your fans sort of accumulate. And so, you know, I completely agree, and I think that it's just -- it's so much in our hands that we just have to be so careful about what people are gathering, what kind of information people are gathering from us.

And so -- and I know we'll get into this later, but that's where, you know, the different social media become a little bit more confusing in terms of what people are expecting to see, and how we're going to control that.

>> JUSTIN KAUFLIN: Now, you just mentioned about taking it into your own hands. I wonder if you might want to share a little bit about your own experiences with dealing with maybe social media consultants.

>> LAURIE RUBIN: Sure. Well, in terms of social media consultants, the reason that I had hired one is because I -- like I said, I'm not -- you know, I'm not -- see, I teach, too, so I'm not the age of our students, but the generation, you know, the kids talk in social media code now, a lot of our students do, hashtag this, hashtag that, and, in fact, one of our students actually, we were teaching a music class, a music theory class, she looked at Jenny, my partner who was teaching the theory class, and said, is the treble clef the thing that looks like the hashtag? Is that the hashtag? So we're living in a time now, you know, where things have such a different context. So I thought to myself, well, we need to hire somebody because there are so many so-called algorithms and numbers games, and things we don't know about social media. There are so many things we don't know about Twitter, about what people are expecting to see. We don't know how Instagram and all of these things function so differently. So as Jenny and I were branding as this pop duo, which was so different than our classical career, we decided that that's what we were going to do to start our fan building. And so we did hire somebody, and it was somewhat of a nightmare in that it was extremely expensive, and the way we felt that we were burned is that we didn't feel like the decisions that the person made for us -- first of all, that we even feel that they actually did

work, and that the stuff that we knew already just instinctively in terms of posting, in terms of getting fans, those seemed to be working for us much better than what this social media consultant was doing, and also, we were spending a whole lot of money, you know, on certain kinds of ads, and also on, you know, trying -- you know, and the posts that they were making were actually counterproductive, much more formal, not in our voice. And so what I realized, and what I really hope to impart to you through this point, is to trust your instincts with social media because that's exactly what it is. Like I said, it puts everything in our hands, it makes it accessible, and so therefore, you can gear it to what works for you, and using your own common sense works a lot better than trying to have somebody that you hired do things for you.

And after I hired this person, I heard from other publicists and said oh, no, don't ever hire a social media consultant, you know, we have as much control of what, you know, of how many fans we get as they -- or even more than they do, because we know ourselves better than some third party. And this may not be the case for everybody. Maybe somebody else with social media consultant is wonderful, but just in general, I think that social media is something that one must do themselves. And our excuse is well, we just don't have the time. We have to be working on our art. We have to be -- we don't have time, you

know, we need somebody else to sort of help us, you know, set all this stuff up. But then, you know, one of the things that happened to us, too, is that things started to -- the way they were branding us, the way they were putting things up, wasn't the image that we wanted, you know, it wasn't how -- we didn't have control anymore, so it takes all the control out of your hands, so I strongly recommend doing things on your own as much as humanly possible.

>> JUSTIN KAUFLIN: That's definitely a great point. And kind of moving forward with that, you mentioned it's tough finding time to do it, you know, that's definitely, I think, a good excuse to say well, I should have somebody else try to do this for us, but the reality of doing social networking is that you do kind of -- when you do take it into your own hands, you have to make that effort and put in the time to get the kind of results that you want. You know, for me, you know, making posts every day is something that's not always natural, but that's something that I kind of have to consciously make an effort to do, to stay active, and to stay current with all the things that I'm doing, so making the time to do it, and also actually sitting down and taking the time to put, you know, quality content out there is definitely important.

>> LAURIE RUBIN: Sorry. And just going along with that, just thinking about it, sometimes what you think is going to actually

take time is something that you could be doing while you're otherwise doing nothing, and an example of that would just be posting something while you're waiting back stage, because people want to see that kind of stuff, they want to know what it's like behind the scenes. So the time that you put into it may be time that you're just doodling or just waiting and being nervous, and it's time that you don't even realize that you have. It doesn't have to be time where, oh, no, I have to be working on my taxes right now, or I have to be working on -- you know, this is the time I was going to set aside to write music or to practice. I mean, it can be in the times, you know, that are sort of in between all of that, and, you know, where you're a captive audience in some other way. So it doesn't have to be -- and I've learned that it's just sort of a different mindset, it's just knowing that these people -- oh, this is something that I'm doing that people would want to see, let me just take a quick photo, that kind of thing, so it's time that we can find. We can find that time where it doesn't detract from what we're doing as an artist.

>> JUSTIN KAUFLIN: Absolutely. And I guess one final point to bring up before we kind of get into the networking stuff, is talking about something that's very important to us as blind artists and people with other disabilities, is talking about the accessibility of these Web sites. And we can -- we'll actually

dive a little bit more into this, but when you're dealing with social media, if you're on Facebook or Twitter or MySpace, or any of these things, if you spent any time with them, you've noticed that one of the big disadvantages is that they're constantly updating their interface. They're constantly updating how they function, how the front page loads, even, and just one of my own experiences, I think over this past weekend, they changed something, and it seems that it was temporary, but I visited, and I was trying to read posts, and it kept on moving my cursor every time I was trying to read a post by somebody, I would end up back at the top of the page, and it was just like, this is how it is sometimes, you know, we gotta deal with -- these are big -- they're big companies now, and they make a lot of changes, kind of almost weekly. And the thing that I would want to stress is patience, and also vigilance. When things happen, even though these companies are big, they do have ways in getting in contact with them. There are ways of contacting the folks that are actually involved with accessibility. I know that with the iPhone app on Facebook, the blind community was quite loud when things weren't working, and they did respond and made changes to make it a little bit better for us. So being vocal is definitely a good thing to have because it is always changing, and sometimes for the worst, and sometimes if we're vocal, for the better.

>> LAURIE RUBIN: Absolutely.

>> JUSTIN KAUFLIN: With that said, yeah, we'll -- so, we're talking about social media, and one thing that might not come immediately to mind is something that's extremely important to me, and that is running a Web site. And I've been -- I've had a Web site I think since probably 2002, and I've learned quite a bit along the way.

And the way the Web site kind of ties into your social media marketing strategy is that for me, it is the hub. It's the center of all of my online activities. It's where I have total control over what it is that I want to get to the audience, over my image and, like Laurie was mentioning, the brand. What kind of brand is it that you're trying to present? And the Web site for me has been really integral in being able to do that, and it also allows me to send people to the different networks that I'm involved in, so I have the Facebook link so you can connect with me there, Twitter and YouTube. But it's just a really wonderful resource, and definitely worth checking out. There are free Web site services to check out. We have a resources list that we'll be sending out, but I use one that's -- I think it's 15 bucks a month, and it gives me a lot of tools to work with, so I have the bio. I have resumes. I have the press kit that people can download. But it really is a good hub. And I know Laurie, you also have a Web site as well.

>> LAURIE RUBIN: Exactly. Actually, so when we were talking earlier before we even started this webinar, the Web site that I decided to share with you is not my classical music Web site, it's the one that Jenny and I started for PureLand. PureLand is our pop duo. And it's so interesting because here, you know, as a classical singer, you know, my -- the image that I had was so different because, you know, people expect something very different. But when we went to PureLand, we branded and we got to finally do what we wanted to do, the things that you kind of think about and you dream about but you don't think would ever be you, you know, be a little bit more edgy, you know, have a grungier setting in your photographs, so the reason I wanted to show you the PureLand Web site is because we just recently did that one, and the photos were very -- were extremely important in doing that. And so when Jenny was doing our Web site, because it was pretty much her domain, and I've learned most of the things that I'm talking to you about through her, so I'll be sure to make sure that she knows that she's credited for all of this stuff, but, you know, one of the things that she does as a Web designer is make sure that the Web site is sort of like -- and as exactly how Justin described it, as our hub, but also, it's kind of like your bedroom. When you go into your bedroom, I'm sure a lot of you have posters of things that you like, or the wallpaper or the decorations, or things like that,

reflect who you are. So the Web site, not only is it your hub with all your great content, but it's your voice. It's your physical voice in a way, and so that when people are going there, they don't just say well, she's done this, she's done that, or they've done this, they've done that, it's like wow, they're really cool, I can imagine being that person. I can relate to these people, and it's sort of a way also that you can sort of discriminate -- or your fans will sort of weed themselves out, or weed themselves in to your circle, because they'll be able to relate, and maybe their image is similar to what they relate to is similar to what you're sharing with them. And so actually, sort of going forward into Web content, when -- my Web site is -- I think it's a band page -- or PureLand, I believe it's band page. And so that's one of those resources that you can customize it but it makes Web design a whole lot easier when you're using something like Band Page or even Word Press and things like that, so it's great because you don't have to spend thousands and thousands of dollars on a Web designer necessarily. Nowadays, you know, people with customize things pretty much themselves if they want to.

That said, if we were not doing this together, I probably would hire somebody because I am not a Web person. I am not technical or savvy in that way, and then moving into what you invest in at first. One of the things that is really, really important to

do, is before you even start a Web site, I think is to know what your content is, because we've made the mistake, and we've seen other people make the mistake of building a Web site, and then not having any personality to it. Not having any branding. Not having sort of an idea what the content is going to be, and that doesn't serve you in good stead. So one of the things that we invested in, even before putting the Web site up, was number one, photos. And again, you have -- you know, one of the things the photographer asked was what do you want your look to be? So that's how we decided on an image. We sent him photos of what we like, and that's how we decided on a location also, because the location is so much the mood of the photos and the positioning and all that. And there are photographers that will do that for 3- to 500 bucks, and it used to be in the old days I used to have to pay \$2,000 for a photographer, but you can actually find a very, very good one for I think in the hundreds, not so much in the thousands, but it is actually very important to find a good photographer. So look at their Web site, or if you can't see, like Justin and I, make sure that other people are looking at their photos, because you don't -- I had the really unfortunate experience of having photos taken that were pretty extensive, and they just were not professional looking, and managers that are going to your Web site, they're going to notice if your photos aren't well-taken. The image you project

is not as professional, so you always want to -- whether you have a manager or not, you want to make it look like there's a huge, big company behind you supporting you and you don't have to spend a whole lot of money to do that. Just make sure your photographer is very good. And the second thing we got was we had a logo so we went to a company called 99 designs and you bid on various designers around the world, on their logos based on a bunch of questions that you answer. So we have a PureLand logo, and, you know, logos are sometimes necessary, sometimes not, so it's not one of those things that you have to do. So photographs would be the most important thing for branding. And then the other thing is to make sure you have content of what you're doing. Gigs. If you have a Web site with an empty events calendar, you know, people might wonder about that so make sure that when you have a Web site, you have gigs, and, you know, all of these things set and everything. So it's -- I think the investment in the content is probably one of the most important things that you can have even before you start that hub because then you'll be able to have it. It's like having posters when you start to get ready for your bedroom, or you have an interior designer working on your house, that kind of thing.

>> JUSTIN KAUFLIN: Absolutely. And then in talking about making sure you have that content before you start the Web site,

once you get your Web site up, you know, if we're going to take the bedroom analogy, you have to keep it clean, and kind of maintain it. So for me, something that I learned is that keeping it up to date is really important. That home page, you want to keep that especially up to date with, like we're mentioning if you have performance dates, you definitely want to make sure those are recent, things that are happening this month. If you do any sort of blogging or newsletter type things, make sure those are up to date. I've visited Web sites before, and they might actually be up to date, but that front page might have their little like a blog stream, and, you know, I might have visited it this year, and then the last blog post is from 2012. And then my first impression is, oh, they must not be updating this, and it just kind of looks bad, and especially if you're actually trying to find work. You want to make sure people see that you're working now, you weren't working two years ago, or something like that. So keeping all of that stuff up to date. Bios is important as well, because if you have any impressive things that have happened recently that you want people to know about, you gotta make sure that stuff is all up to date, big-time.

And sort of the final thing to cover as far as the Web site is concerned is to -- because this is the center of where people are going to go, you want to start presenting what it is that

your image and your brand is, and from here on out, you want to make sure you're consistent with whatever that message is.

Whatever your brand is. It starts here. You can define it here. Like Laurie's mentioning, with the photos that you choose to put up, are you fun? You know, are you cool? What is your -- what is the vibe that you're trying to present in your Web site? And then taking that forward into all your other networks. It's a good center to kind of jump off from.

>> LAURIE RUBIN: Absolutely. And, you know, one of the examples, it's like if you were to look at, like, say, a Coca Cola bottle or something like that in one store, and then you go somewhere else and you see some other Coca Cola product and it looked totally different. It would be unsettling to you because what people look for is familiarity I think and so for example, when you get from -- and this actually will lead us right into Facebook, but when you -- let's say you have a Web site that looks one way and Facebook looks completely different, your fans are going to be very confused and caught off guard, and also if they're sharing your stuff with other people, they are going to want -- you kind of are a representation of them, too, of these other people. You sort of mirror how they are, and so you want to make sure that, you know, all the things that they're sharing share your message in the way that you want it, and again, it's all about total control.

And moving into Facebook, we -- I think one of the first things that we can talk about with Facebook is, first of all, how it works. I think one of the most amazing things about Facebook is that you can do so much. You can post things. You can post pictures. You can write notes, so essentially Facebook can work as a blog. I've written notes on Facebook that work like blog posts. You can write messages to people, personal messages, so it kind of works as a way to E-mail people privately. You can, on your wall, say how you're feeling, what you're doing, post photographs, post videos, so it can work like a V-blog, a photo blog, or it can look like -- or it can just be a random conversational post. And then people can communicate with you, and other people can see that, and it's such a -- it's a great thing, because people are sheep, I'll tell you, you know, people are sheep. But somebody comments on something, somebody else is going to want to comment and then somebody else after that will want to comment, and it's a wonderful way to sort of start this sort of viral marketing, if you will. And so I think that's what I love about Facebook. And also you can share your gigs on Facebook. So it's a wonderful, I think a great tool, and I remember thinking that, you know, when things like Facebook started to exist, and of course I jumped on the band wagon really late because I was like, oh, this just sounds like it's going to be so much work, but I remember thinking, wow, this

is -- once I did it, I got sort of addicted and then you kind of want to see what other people are doing, and therefore, that's why it's such a great way to get fans, and to also get your fans to see what you're up to. And so in terms of -- did you want to say anything more about that before we get into personal and fan pages, Justin?

>> JUSTIN KAUFLIN: No. I think we'll just jump into personal and fan.

>> LAURIE RUBIN: Cool.

>> JUSTIN KAUFLIN: So sort of as artists, we have a choice, you know, we can go with a general personal page, which is what you get when you sign up by defaults, or you can sign up for -- I believe they call it an artist page or a band page, or -- there's different categories. But basically, it's a fan page, and the biggest difference that I notice with the two different types of accounts is that with a personal page, you request, you get friends, you know, and it's sort of, you collect friends and you join that network.

With a fan page, it is -- it's mostly about getting likes, you know, branding. You're looking for people to like what you have going on. You're looking for fans. So it's sort of -- it's a slightly -- I mean, it's a different dynamic for sure. The one thing that I've learned, in having both, I ended up getting -- using both, and the reason I did that is because they

both have their advantages. For my artist, my work as a musician, the fan page, it has the "Likes," the biggest benefit for the fan page I should mention is that for me it allows you to use analytics, which Facebook provides for free, and it's a really nice tool. I get an E-mail once a week telling me about whether the "Likes" have gone up or down, what kind of reach I had with the posts that I've had that week. And the biggest help for me, probably, is that I have an iPhone, and I get notifications once in a while if I haven't posted in a while that say, you know, you might want to put a post up right now because it's been a minute, and it's good for me just to have that reminder, because sometimes I can be pretty bad at doing that, so it's a useful tool that's available because we are trying to be professional. So having the fan page with that tool can be very useful.

>> LAURIE RUBIN: Yeah, and I think one of the things that's really interesting is that this is where the lines get blurred in terms of well, what do I write on my front page? What do I write on my fan page? And I notice actually on my personal page, people start to get irritated if I write too much about all my gigs, because you can actually still like a post on a personal page, so people expect on your personal page to share pictures of your new baby or to talk about what you're irritated about and, you know, that kind of stuff, and, you know, they

kind of want -- because the thing is nowadays, people feel like they know what's going on in your life through Facebook. Like, people don't call each other on the phone anymore, it's really interesting. When someone actually calls me on the phone, it's really strange how all of a sudden I feel like, oh, I feel like now I have to switch modes and get conversational, and it makes me realize how much we depend on Facebook now because, you know, people are like, oh, I agree with you, and it's also very -- if your attention span is no longer than five seconds, which is the case nowadays, unfortunately, you can comment on somebody's post and make them feel better and then go to something else, so that's sort of the personal page.

But the thing about the fan page is that I think people -- your fans sort of expect it to act like a personal page, and we, for example, let's say we're at home one night, your fans probably would expect you to still post, even if you're not having a gig. And one example is that Jenny, my partner, follows Sara Bareilles, and she's a great song writer, but one of the things she posted was a picture of this ad -- or, no, I think it was a commercial, and it was like cake in a bag or something like that. And her response was, no! Like how gross, like cake in a bag, that's not how you make cake! You just pop it in the microwave and there you've got this fully risen cake or something, and of course all her fans were like oh, my gosh, I

agree with you, so it makes her fans feel like they're responding to her, they're dialoguing with the hugest celebrity crush, or whatever it is, you know, and so the thing about it is again it goes back to that fine line, and public and private. We always sort of have to have that persona on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, all of these things where people do feel a close connection, even if they can't really be friends with you, they like what you're doing, in addition to posting, oh, this is what gig I'm having come up and everything, you still also really have to maintain, whether it's a pseudo-personal image or a real personal image, that's why your fans are connecting with you and investing time on your Facebook page is because they feel they understand.

And then the other thing that Jenny and I are careful to do is not just post pictures of us at a concert, but we'll be sure to post pictures while we're on the road of oh, look at that gorgeous scenery, look at this. Look at that, so that people are like oh, wow, and they know what it's like to be on tour, you know, they feel like they know what it's like. And so that's sort of the thing I think people expect more. I mean, we get more "Likes" on pictures of the sushi we're eating when we're on tour than we do on the actual pictures of our being on tour.

>> JUSTIN KAUFLIN: Absolutely.

>> LAURIE RUBIN: I mean, being in concert. So yeah.

>> JUSTIN KAUFLIN: Well, for me, I have a guide dog. Her name is candy. And I could post stuff about gigs or what's going on, or anything exciting in my career, and that might get a little bit of response, but if Candy's in there somewhere, if she's in a picture, then it's through the roof. So if you have something like that, you know, it's always good to use -- people love that kind of stuff. And it's something probably just having something like that, oh, he's got a dog, and I can relate to that, I love that, and I love dogs, you know, that's how people can be, and it's nice to be able to connect with them on that level. And yeah, you're right, though, the line is a bit blurry, and just kind of using both, you know, to their advantages. And one thing I'd like to talk about, whether you have a personal or a fan page, you can create events, and it's definitely a useful tool. It's great to be able to keep people informed about gigs that you have coming up. And this is kind of a personal pet peeve of mine, but the way events work is you create it, and then it gives you a list of all your friends that you can invite. But it seems to be -- what most people do is they go down the list and they go click, click, click, click, click, click, add everybody from the list, you know, no matter whether they actually know that person or whether they know where that person lives, if that person is maybe even around the

area, so I get invited to so many gigs or concerts, or whatever, from people that are nowhere near me, you know, I'm in Virginia, I might get something in Seattle, and I say I'm obviously not going to make it to your event. And it gets so crowded, you know, I have so many events probably waiting for my response. And it just -- I think it's a little off-putting, in my own experience, and something that I've found that works, because I'm definitely a fan of creating events. You don't have to invite people like that. You don't have to go -- you actually don't have to invite anybody. What I do for my solution is that I create the event and I have all the information all there, all the pertinent stuff, the address and the time and everything, and what I do is I share it so that it shows up on my wall or on anybody else's, and then people that are friends with me or fans of mine can share it as well. But it's -- and people see it, but it's not so intrusive as getting some kind of alert, you know, whether it's an E-mail alert or something that's saying that I'm inviting you to this thing. I think it's a little less intrusive -- and at least I'm a fan of that, and I know Laurie, you mentioned that what you do is make sure you take the time to find out where people live, so when you are going to be in D.C., ask the people that are actually in D.C., and that kind of -- it's just being considerate, I think. It's nice to kind of think about not always, you know -- because we are artists

and we want to promote, but there's a fine line of getting on people's nerves, possibly. Maybe that's just --

>> LAURIE RUBIN: Yeah. And I guess the beauty of also just making sure that you share the event is that the people on your fan page will then voluntarily be like, oh, I'm in -- even though this thing is in San Francisco, and I live in L.A., I have some friends in San Francisco, so I'm going to tell them to go, so it puts it back in their hands. It's like the power of suggestion if you have it there. People want to feel like they decided that they told their friends to do it rather than if you're inviting them and you tell them to go, sharing it will be like -- you know, will sort of put it back into their hands again.

>> JUSTIN KAUFLIN: So kind of going off of that, one thing we want to do is grow a fan base and one really useful tool that Facebook provides is promotions, and these are basically you -- you're buying an ad on Facebook, basically, and I believe that you can get them -- it starts at 5 bucks, and they're useful things, and it helps you reach a larger audience who actually might be in to what you have to offer, what your music -- you know, you can specify these kind of things, you know, what kind of audience you're trying to reach. And I know you have some things to share on that, right, Laurie?

>> LAURIE RUBIN: On promotions? Yes. Interesting. One of the things that I did learn when I had the social media consultant working with us and spending our money on ads is that it can be actually really -- we ended up getting a ton of "Likes." We had started out with, let's see, maybe within the first couple of days, maybe 250 likes or something, and these were people that came from our friend pages to support our PureLand Web page, but what ended up happening with these other ads, we ended up doubling our "Likes" very quickly. One of the things I wasn't sure about is are they real "Likes?". And I just happened to click on an ad, and I was like, I don't really want this. But the thing is that because it's a numbers game, when you do ads, some of them will stick. Some of them will stay, and they would have been people that would never have known you otherwise, and they're super cheap, so sometimes for just a few dollars a day, you get some really great sort of outreach -- not outreach, but you get a little bit more disability, so it's just -- it's a crap shoot, you know, but the thing is that for the money that you're spending on ads, you definitely are getting your bang for your buck, I think.

>> JUSTIN KAUFLIN: It's definitely worth trying out for sure.

>> LAURIE RUBIN: Yeah.

>> JUSTIN KAUFLIN: All right. Let's wrap up Facebook. Now we're going to talk about Twitter, which I think the both of

us -- let me just say Twitter is definitely a different sort of landscape than Facebook. Where Facebook kind of covers a lot of ground, you can do a lot, like Laurie was mentioning, Twitter is something that's -- I feel like its focus is on brevity. It's a way for you to maybe reach people, but they have a lot of rules. Or the main rule is 140 characters or less. So you have maybe two sentences to get what you want to get across. And I think because of that, it developed its own kind of ecosystem and it can be intimidating to try to get in to Twitter because it sort of has its own lingo. Everything has to be short, so it's very unique. I personally, I like to use it, but more as a consumer. I post things, but I find it a very good tool for keeping up with what's going on, what's trending, what people are talking about, and because you can choose who you want to follow, your stream is very unique to you, which is -- I think is very useful.

The best tools that Twitter has to offer, in talking about dos and don'ts with Twitter is that they're right there. There's a retweet button every time you see a tweet, and there's a favorite button. That's like saying I like it, you know, basically on Facebook. And those two buttons I find to be very useful. When you retweet something, it's basically like sharing it if you're on Facebook. You share a post. You're just re-posting for your followers to see, and it's good to do that

when you're trying to grow an audience on Twitter because the person you were tweeting will probably appreciate it. It's sort of like I'll scratch your back, hopefully you'll scratch mine, if I have something good to say. But it sort of helps you engage in that Twitter universe, if you see something that you like, definitely retweet it, and be active in that way, and it helps because sometimes I don't have anything to say, so if I see somebody else saying something useful, I'll just re-tweet it, and I'm being active.

And the last thing is hashtags. We mentioned this earlier.

It's basically a way to contextualize your tweet. So I just flew back from New York this morning and had a pretty unpleasant flying experience, so something that I could share is like just about missed my connection because I was waiting for the airport assistants. And then you see hashtag travel pains or something like that, something to contextualize it and if you're creative, people might latch on, and that hashtag might trend, and that can help you find followers as well. Now, Laurie, I know you have some don'ts, right?

>> LAURIE RUBIN: I do. And this is so funny. You know, you would think with a social media consultant, you would learn all the things to do, and I did learn a few, I won't lie, but one of the things that I learned was don'ts, and what was happening. So let me just tell you a little bit about PureLand. Our first

single is called "The Girl I Am," and it was written about a personal account of bullying and the naysayers I had in my life as a youngster, as an eighth grader. And the thing was that what we thought would be a great idea to sort of start getting fans and start getting known is to start sort of an anti-bullying campaign through this video. Let the video be sort of a place the community could come to, and sort of relate, because we had -- in the video, there's six scenarios of bullying in this video, and in fact, one of our friends said oh, my gosh, I was three of those scenarios in high school, so we thought, you know, this would be great. But there are a ton of celebrities that do anti-bullying work as outreach in their careers, including Lady Gaga, Ellen DeGeneres, Lance Bass, Katy Perry, Demi Lovato, and there's a bunch of anti-bullying efforts, so one of the things our social media person said is Twitter, that's how you get celebrities to know about you, you do it through Twitter, and I kind of suspected that that might not be the case, just because there is so much noise on social media now, there is so much -- because anybody can post anything at any time, and it's very hard to get your voice heard because everybody else is posting. But what she decided to do was to post on our behalf to celebrities to let them know about the video. But the problem is when you do that, all of your followers see that. So, for example, Katy Perry, we love what

you do, anti-bullying efforts, so here's our video so all of your followers are starting to feel like you're spamming other people to get fans, and this is how we were supposed to getting on the radar of other people, so number one, I felt like Jenny and I were cringing every day when we saw these posts, but at first we were letting it go because we thought well, the social media person knows what she's doing, but we were just seeing fewer and fewer likes on posts because it was just really spammy. And number two, I don't think it really attracted any celebrities' attention because first of all a lot of those people that have gate keepers that are tweeting on their behalf so the celebrities may never even see these posts, and I hate to say it, but sometimes even the celebrities don't even realize they're doing anti-bullying stuff, this is their marketing team doing it for them so I felt like that was completely fruitless and useless efforts to tweet celebrities. The one time I think that celebrity tweets are helpful is if you actually have a personal experience, or a personal feeling about a celebrity. For example, Ellen Paige did a wonderful human rights campaign speech and came out of the closet, basically, and was talking about basically bullying. She was talking about how she was bullied by the industry, by Hollywood, by not being able to come out. She finally came out, and I personally thought she was brave, there were so many people that wouldn't do that so I went

on our PureLand page, and I tagged Ellen's page and did a couple of hashtags, like human rights campaign and things like that, and brave, or whatever the hashtags were. But the thing about that was it came across so much more genuine, because I felt it. I cried when she spoke, and I said that on Twitter, and it wasn't one of these, you know, spammy posts to somebody like Katy Perry, who I don't really even know, but I think the genuineness with which you post really reads to your fans and they can also see if you're really desperately trying to become viral. Everything has to be very subtle. And the thing is, becoming viral is something that your fans want to feel like they contributed to. They're the ones who made you viral. They don't want it to come across like you're hiring this gorilla marketing team to make you viral. It's always very important to make your fans feel like they're the ones in control of your success. And so that's my big don't, is whatever you do, make sure that the tweets you're doing are completely genuine. And then you may actually get the attention of the celebrity on the off chance you do, whether or not you do, at least you're making your fans feel that what you're posting is meant to be there.

>> JUSTIN KAUFLIN: Absolutely.

>> LISA DAMICO: We have about ten minutes left, so maybe we can move quickly through the last slide so we still have time for questions.

>> JUSTIN KAUFLIN: Yeah, so that's Twitter in a nutshell. One thing I'm very excited to talk about is YouTube. I personally love YouTube. It's a great -- you know, it's just a great platform, and I'm sure you're familiar with it. If not, it's a video uploading service, so it's pretty much a free-for-all, everybody's uploading all kinds of content. For artists, it's great because you can upload live footage from a gig. You can upload backstage footage, you know, before a concert, or if you're on the road, you can upload videos from that. Also, you can upload, you know, I have a CD that I'll be recording in the next few months, and I'm going to be filling a lot so that I can upload sort of promotional materials for the CD, showing us in the studio. There's a lot of good uses, and the first kind of tip that we have to give is to upload frequently. Get in the habit of thinking of different things that you might be able to upload. And like I say, you know, the examples I gave, and one really good reason to upload is my own personal experience with YouTube is that you're not totally in control of what videos are on YouTube of you. I do -- in the last few years, I did a lot of local gigs, and they're not really gigs that I would really want to post on YouTube, but some people thought it would be a good idea to post videos of me playing, like -- to be honest, I might be half asleep playing solo piano and they were big fans of it for whatever reason, I couldn't say why, but there's

videos on YouTube, and it's not very easy to get them taken down, so my whole response to that is if I make more of my own videos, maybe that video will disappear off the front page. So definitely good to upload, you know, frequently. And with that said, take a little bit of time to make sure that what you're uploading is quality. There's really no excuses to put up crummy videos nowadays. We have a lot of great equipment that we can use to upload good quality things. My experience is with the iPhone, but I mean, I can take a video of a big that I'm on, and then there's an app called iMovie which allows me to edit that movie just a little bit. You can clip out things that you think are just time-wasters, and just that little thing of editing it a little bit makes a big difference in how your video is coming across. And not every video has to be completely professional and sound amazing but it's good to kind of keep that in mind because there is a lot of stuff on YouTube. You want to make sure that people aren't going to overlook your video because it is poorly done.

We want to talk about --

>> LAURIE RUBIN: Sure. Exactly. Yeah, so I think the other thing that we've discovered, in doing our video, "The Girl I Am" is ad words and tag lines, so when you post a video, what we did was we had purchased some ads because we wanted to get our video out there. What we made the mistake of doing at first is just

generalizing the ad so that we ended up having these ads from Indonesia, and people who, when they click on it didn't really mean to click on it because it wasn't really what they were interested in. So then what we did was we made sure to add anti-bullying tag words, stop the bullying, all sorts of different things and then the other thing that we did was we sort of geared our ads towards English-speaking countries and, you know, people who would really get it culturally. So England, Canada, the U.S., that kind of thing, and you may have videos where you want to reach other people, so I think it's really important to, when you're doing this, is to strategize what kinds of ads that you want and then our views became a lot more targeted, and we started realizing that we got more likes. If you have, like, 100,000 views and seven likes, something is not going right with your ads and people are going to sort of see that, but if you have 100,000 views and 300 likes, then you realize that your ads are doing what they're supposed to and the people are actually liking the video because it's something that they really wanted to see, so targeting your ads and putting the tag lines is actually very important.

>> JUSTIN KAUFLIN: And also one really quick thing that I'd like to add to that. For me as a jazz pianist, what I might do is actually say, obviously jazz, piano, trio, and then I might do some artists that I am a fan of, you know, I might put Keith

Jarrett, artists that are really well-known, and be related to those, in that it's a similar thing. That's also something to keep in mind when you're creating ad words or tag lines.

>> LAURIE RUBIN: Right.

>> JUSTIN KAUFLIN: And I guess the last thing we want to do with YouTube is when you upload these things to YouTube, it gives you something to post on your other networks. If I post a video on YouTube, it's so easy to share it on Facebook, and it's a good way to kind of cross pollenate maybe, reach all your fans, and kind of maybe bring fans from Facebook over to YouTube, or vice versa. You know, it's very useful. For me it gives me something to post about, which is good. But very useful to kind of consider meshing them together.

>> LISA DAMICO: All right. Thank you, Laurie and Justin. Now we are going to open it up for questions. So I would encourage all of our webinar attendees to type in your question, or you can click on the raise your hand button and I'll let you ask your question.

While I give you time for that, we had a few that came in in the registration process. Our first question is, should performers who work in multiple disciplines, and I think Laurie this might -- I know you also make jewelry, so you might have especially an opinion on this, but should performers who work in

multiple disciplines have different pages or spaces for each discipline?

>> LAURIE RUBIN: Oh, that's a good question. I think actually the most important thing to have different is your Web site. So, for example, or -- or links -- or different pages, at least, on your Web site. One of the things I have, I have, on my classical music page, I have a link to some jewelry that I make, but I also have a link to where people can buy it, so that's my other Web page, which is the lrlook.com, which is my jewelry page, so yeah, I do think it's really important to have separate Web sites for different things. I guess the other thing that you could -- I guess -- it could start to get really complicated if you have multiple Facebook accounts. I think that would be a lot to manage, so I think one of the things that you could do on Facebook is if you're really serious about several different businesses, you could have several different pages. Otherwise, you could, you know, tell people to go to your various different Web sites. But I think that where you want to have different -- different branding is in your different Web sites. So I have the Laurie Rubin page. I have my LR Look jewelry page and then Jenny and I have our PureLand page, and so -- and the cool thing about that is on each of your pages, you're going to drive different kinds of people to them because more people who are interested in jewelry may not necessarily be interested in

music. But then if they see that you're a musician, they might actually then link -- go from a link to one page to another, so I think that that is -- it is important to have all your links for your other businesses on each other's pages.

>> LISA DAMICO: Okay. Our next -- that was great, Laurie, thank you. Our next question comes from Christopher. This is a two-part question. When starting out, what is the best way to gain fans and get your name out? And what is the best way if you have some small networks to be able to get them to help you gain fans and grow your business? And this is from Christopher who is a photographer.

>> JUSTIN KAUFLIN: I think what you're starting out, you start with the people that you know. This is kind of in my own experience, as far as like with Facebook, for example. I start with the people that are my friends, you know, you invite them to "like" your page, if that's what you're starting. Something that I feel is very helpful is the "Share" feature. The people that are closest with you will be probably the most likely to share things, and that is a really quick way to reach a much larger audience. It balloons from there. That's kind of how things can become viral. And if you have something you feel proud of sharing, you get the people around you from your own circle, if you have, you know, just a circle of ten people, all those ten people have a few hundred friends apiece, then you're

already -- the viewership, you know, can go up exponentially. So I feel like the "Share" button is our best friend when we're trying to grow, grow an audience.

>> LISA DAMICO: Something else that I think we talked about when we did the rehearsal earlier this week was that you all both said you want to make it really easy for the press to find your materials on the Web site. So I think --

>> JUSTIN KAUFLIN: Oh, absolutely. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Whatever you have that's any kind of quotes, or like when Laurie was talking about when you want to collect -- you want to make sure you have your content ready. For me, the thing that I learned is I had a promoter look at my Web site and she goes, yeah, I'm looking at your Web site and I see that you have quotes but I don't know who any of these people are. And so me kind of changing up things and making sure that I had things that they knew about made it very easy for them, not only that, but I have everything really clearly laid out. So if somebody wants to write something about me, I want to make it super easy for them to be able to do that. So, you know, I have the bio easily downloadable, or the resume, or, you know, like a one-page press release kind of thing. Definitely ease of access for sure.

>> LISA DAMICO: So I have a question, this is sort of indirectly related. How is it -- what is the best way to reach

and include this audience of performing artists with disabilities? I don't know if either of you are part of any kind of Facebook group, or, you know, some type of group like that? I think if people -- if people are performing artists themselves, that they want to connect. Do you have any suggestions?

>> LAURIE RUBIN: I just thought of something because it was something that I meant to say earlier, but one of the first things is we were talking about accessibility of different social media sites but one of the really, really important things is to stay consistent with our messages, to make sure that our Web sites are accessible, and I know that sounds like a duh, but the thing is, when I first started, my first Web site, because of my -- you know, my whole visual -- my feeling that the visual is important, even to the blind person, I had Jenny make me a Wix site and at first these were flash, and I wanted that so badly because I knew that people were expecting my Web site, you know, because I was blind. They were not expecting it to be a visual. But I really wanted to have a visual layout, and unfortunately I totally alienated the blind community when I did that. And I didn't mean to, but I just really wanted it to be -- I was so eager to appeal to sighted viewers because I didn't want people to just assume I would just have blind viewers, so I went the complete other way and I got a

lot of angry mail about that so one thing is do not alienate the people who especially are part of your circle because those are going to be a really important fan base. If you're blind, a lot of blind people are going to want to relate to you because they're going to think of you as a role model so make sure you have an accessible site, and now my site is much more accessible, I think.

And secondly, one of the things that I did, and this is not something that I think everybody can or wants to do, I wrote a book. My memoir came out in 2012, it's called "Do you dream in color, insights from a girl without sight." So my goal again was to reach out to sighted people and share what it's like to be blind because so many people were so fearful of it, and it was kind of getting in the way of being hired sometimes. It was getting in the way of people being able to relate to me because they just thought of me as this isolated person. So writing that book actually, what it ended up doing is it ended up getting me a whole lot of wonderful blind fans. Because the book got -- it was in talking format. It was in Braille, you know, a lot of blind people -- I made sure also through PR to contact blind visually impaired, all kinds of publications that they would go to. My publicist is really good about that. So I think that one of the things that you can do is make sure that you are, 2 when you're doing your publicity, whether you're

doing it yourself or you're having somebody else do it is make sure they reach all the target audience you are. I'm blind, I'm Jewish, I'm a lesbian, it's like let's make sure that we reach all of the sort of demographics of the communities that you belong to, and so, for example, look for Matilda Ziegler magazine, the Young and Alive or the Braille Monitor and make sure you get reviews in these sorts of publications and that will help you. I don't really have too many disability Web sites that I belong to. I used to belong to a guide dog list online, and that actually helped me with getting blind folks to come to my events and things like that. And then I do belong to Jewish and blind people -- Jewish and blind group on Facebook, merely out of interest. But yeah, I think that that's really important is to make sure that sometimes you do join those groups, or that you actually just publicity-wise make sure that you're reaching the target audience of who you are, basically.

>> JUSTIN KAUFLIN: Very quickly, if -- for the person asking the question, you're already at one good location if you're with VSA. This is a community that is -- the goal is reaching out to people with disabilities, and working on that. So this is a great start for sure. And I think finding one place like this and then branching out from there is always a good way to do it.

>> LISA DAMICO: Thank you for that, Justin. We'll have to put you on some more webinars. The VSA plug. I love it.

Well, with that, I am going to wrap it up. I would like to ask you, our webinar participants, to stay on for just a moment more. We have a short evaluation survey that will open when you close the window, and we certainly value you and take into account all of your feedback.

And thank you for joining us. Thank you so much for Laurie -- to Laurie and Justin. I've loved learning all about your social media journey, and more about your work. And with that, I will thank you.

If anyone needs to contact me with questions or comments, feel free to E-mail me at LVDamico@Kennedy-center.org and you can visit our Facebook page at [VSAInternational](#). So thank you.

Good-bye!

(Webinar concluded)