

Reels, hashtags and music

Why your reach looks healthy while the shop stays quiet, and why the audio keeps getting muted. The two rules nobody explains until you have broken them.

The short version

Short video is the one part of social media still worth a specialist retailer's time, and it comes with two traps that nobody warns you about. The first quietly wastes your effort. The second can get your posts pulled and, if you keep doing it, your account restricted.

THE TWO TRAPS

Hashtags. The obvious tags — the ones about hi-fi — are global. They deliver an audience thousands of miles away who will never visit your shop, while making the reach number look wonderful.

Music. A business account may not use most commercial music. Use a chart track and the audio gets muted, the post gets removed, or the account gets a strike.

Why your reach looks good and the shop stays empty

Put **#hifi**, **#audiophile** and **#soundsystem** on a reel and it will travel. It will also travel almost entirely to people in other countries, because those tags are enormous and have no geography in them. The view count climbs, the follower count climbs a little, and not one person who saw it can drive to you.

This is worse than useless, because it teaches you the wrong lesson. The post looks like a success, so you make more like it, and the audience drifts further from anyone who could become a customer. Eventually the account is followed largely by people who cannot buy from you, which then depresses the reach of the posts aimed at people who can.

A formula that works

Five tags, no more, in this shape — arrived at the hard way, after a year of the global ones:

- **One brand tag.** The manufacturer whose product is in the video. People do follow brands, and brands do notice.
- **One UK-interest tag.** Something with the country in it, or a UK-specific interest term. This is the tag doing the geographic filtering.
- **Three local tags.** Your town, your county, and something local and non-hi-fi — the city's own tag, a local business tag, a regional one. These are small, and that is the point.

A shop in Norwich, posting a turntable: the brand, one UK tag, then Norwich, Norfolk and a local business tag. Reach will fall. Enquiries will not.

GEOTAG EVERY POST

Add the location to the post itself — the shop, or the town. This does more geographic work than any hashtag, and it is the thing most often forgotten. If you later put money behind a post, **set the audience to your region** rather than accepting the default, which will happily spend your budget worldwide.

The music rules, which nobody explains

This is the one that causes real damage, because the platform lets you make the mistake before it tells you off.

A business account does not get the same music library as a personal account. Personal accounts can put almost any popular track on a video. Business accounts get a restricted, licensed-for-commercial-use library, and it does not contain most of the music you actually want.

What happens when you use a track you should not

- The audio is silently **muted** — often only in some countries, so it still sounds fine to you and to nobody else.
- The post is **removed**, sometimes weeks later, taking its comments and views with it.
- Repeat instances put a **strike** against the account. Enough strikes and you lose features, or the account.

There is a particular irony for our trade: a shop demonstrating loudspeakers is more likely than most to put real music on a video, and more likely than most to be caught doing it.

What to do instead

- **Use the commercial library** the platform gives your business account. It is duller than you would like. It is also safe.
- **Use the room's own sound.** A reel of a turntable with the actual needle drop and the actual room is more convincing than anything you could dub on, and it is yours. This is the option most shops overlook and it suits us better than it suits almost any other trade.
- **Use a licensed stock-music service** if you want something more polished. They are inexpensive and the licence covers commercial use.
- **Talk over it.** Voice is exempt from all of this, and a knowledgeable thirty seconds about why a component sounds the way it does is worth more than a backing track.

IF A POST HAS ALREADY BEEN PULLED

Do not repost the same video with the same audio — that is how a single mistake becomes a pattern. Replace the audio, then repost. And check your older posts: muted audio is easy to miss because it plays normally on the phone that uploaded it.

What is actually worth filming

The trade's instinct is to film the product. The product already has better footage than you can make, produced by the manufacturer. What you have that they do not is the room, the setting-up, and somebody who knows what they are talking about.

- **Unboxing and setting up** something expensive. Slow, unglamorous, oddly compelling.
- **A comparison** — two amplifiers, the same track, your honest description of the difference.
- **A problem solved** — an awkward room, a bad speaker position, what you did about it.
- **The shop itself**, on a quiet morning. People want to know what walking in feels like before they do it.
- **Part-exchange and used stock** as it arrives. This consistently outperforms everything else and almost nobody posts it.

How often, and for how long

One a week, kept up, beats five in a fortnight and then nothing. Thirty to forty-five seconds is plenty. Film it on the phone you already have, in daylight, with the shop tidy — guide 04 covers the rest, and the same rules apply to video as to photographs.

Judge it on enquiries and on people mentioning it when they walk in, not on views. A reel seen by four hundred people in your county is worth more than one seen by forty thousand people who will never be within two hundred miles of you.

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06 LinkedIn for retailers — the other platform, and why it is for the trade rather than for customers.

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