Blog Tips, Guidelines, & Terms

What's the goal?

To provide teaching, performance, and practice solutions and support to the music community.

Who's the audience?

Music educators (classroom and private), professional and hobbyist musicians, and music students.

What's my topic?

When choosing a topic to write about, it's best to focus on actionable solutions. Questions to consider when developing a blog topic:

- What's a current issue music teachers are facing, and what are some creative, practical solutions?
- What's a valuable lesson I've learned in my experience as a musician or music teacher that others might benefit from?
- What are some music or teaching "hacks" or strategies I've discovered or developed?
- What's a skill or topic that musicians typically struggle with (in general or for my instrument) that I have solutions for?
- What are some greater social issues that intersect with music education, and how can teachers navigate these topics in their classrooms?
- How can I affirm, inspire, inform, or educate other teachers and students?
- How have I used MakeMusic Cloud, Sight Reading Studio, Finale, or Fons to accomplish certain teaching or practice goals?

Generally, these questions exist within various contexts of music education and practice, including repertoire selection, performance preparation, student engagement, Social and Emotional Learning, diversity and inclusivity, self-care, budget, advocacy, and more. **Get inspired**!

What's the format?

When writing a blog article, think quality > quantity. The structure should follow a standard introduction, body, and conclusion format. While it's important to include as much useful information as possible, keep in mind that detail should not sacrifice the overall flow and readability. Adding section headers throughout the body of the article to break up text, categorize ideas, and move the reader along is strongly encouraged.

When mapping out ideas, consider these various types of articles to help organize the presentation of information:

- Lists ("**3 Ways to Encourage Better Sound Quality from your Brass Players**")
- Step-by-step guides: ("**6 Simple Steps for Starting Your Music Booster Organization**")
- "How to…" posts: ("**How Did You Practice This?**")
- "What is…" posts ("**Developing the Skill of Audiation**")

If you choose to include visuals in your post, please include Google Drive links to images within the blog document you upload. **You must have permission to use any visual that you include, and visual assets that include students or children will not be considered without explicit parental permission**. The inclusion of visuals is not guaranteed and will be incorporated at the discretion of the MakeMusic marketing team.

Blog title
- Length: about 60-70 characters max (use this tool to see a preview of your title on Google).
- The title should sell the content (not a product) and be descriptive of what your article is about.
- Include main keywords near the beginning of the title if possible.
- Test your title: is this something you would click on or read?

Article body
- Length: about 1,000-2,100 words. Much longer articles may need to be split into multiple parts.
- Use single spaces after sentences.
- Utilize Oxford commas.
- Limit the amount of fully capitalized words for emphasis. Use italics instead.
- Use headings to separate sections/topics and guide readers along. Consider transition words in the body text to keep the reader engaged.

Visuals
- You can include additional visual references throughout the article where necessary/relevant.
  - Images/photos (please "quality-check" photos)
  - Sample worksheets or pages from method books
  - Videos
  - Infographics
- Name files with titles that accurately reflect the content (consider keywords). Use hyphens to separate words, NOT underscores.

Author section
- Bio length: about 50-75 words.
- This is a good place to include a link to your personal website.
- Provide a high-quality headshot that will fit into a 150x150 px circle.

External linking
- Include links to article(s) on your website, social pages, etc., and encourage further sharing with your audiences.
- Has this piece of content been used elsewhere in the past, is it being repurposed? If so, do we have permission to use this article from the original source? How would the original source like to be credited/linked?

What's the process?

The first step is to agree on a topic for your article and write a first draft. Once you submit the draft, a MakeMusic Marketing Representative will review it and be in touch with you via email to discuss details around any potential edits and the anticipated timing of posting and sharing the article if it is chosen to be featured. Please note that submitting an article does not guarantee a feature on the blog.

If your article is selected to be featured, the MakeMusic representative will send you any necessary invoices or materials. They will also send you a link to the article once it's published and ask for any social media accounts you would like tagged in our posts promoting the blog.

By submitting your blog content to MakeMusic, you grant MakeMusic a gratis exclusive worldwide license to such content for 90 days from when it is posted on our website(s). This duration enables MakeMusic to maximize exposure for such content through its various channels, including but not limited to social media, e-mails, print and/or digital advertorials, ebooks, and/or various types of microcontent in an effort to amplify and support your content while furthering MakeMusic's reputation as an authority on music education.

Please note that while blog authors retain all rights to the blog content submitted to MakeMusic if you choose to repurpose your content, we strongly suggest using derivatives of the work that link back to the content in full on our site (rather than creating an exact copy of the piece) to avoid creating duplicate content and issues with SEO. After said 90 days, if you choose to crosspost or reprint your content elsewhere, please include the line "This piece originally appeared on the MakeMusic blog" and include a link back to the original post on MakeMusic.com/blog.