

SOCIAL MEDIA REACH & VISIBILITY

Understanding Reach, Restrictions & Visibility:

A guide for LGBTQIA+ artists, creators, producers and community groups.

Social media can be a powerful way to connect with audiences, promote events, build community and share stories. Many artists, performers, community groups and organisations (in 2025/2026) have concerns about reduced reach, content restrictions or "shadowbanning".

There are some practical steps (based on our experience only) you can take to monitor visibility & reach and aim to protect your content and your profile from falling victim to changing algorithms and "moderator" breaches.

• WHAT IS A "SHADOWBAN"?

People often use the term to describe situations where:

- Posts receive unusually low reach or engagement
- Content is not appearing in recommendations
- Accounts are harder to find in search
- Content appears to be shown to fewer people than usual

Sometimes this is caused by moderation actions. Sometimes it is the result of platform changes, audience behaviour, or changes to social media algorithms.

• CHECK YOUR ACCOUNT STATUS

Instagram and Facebook provide tools that show whether your account or content has been restricted.

Check for:

- Removed content
- Recommendation restrictions
- Reduced discoverability
- Features that have been disabled

Tip - If your account status is clear, it is less likely that your account has been formally restricted.

• CREATE CONTENT THAT IS EASY TO UNDERSTAND

Help platforms understand what your content is about by:

- Writing clear captions
- Providing context for images and videos
- Using accurate descriptions
- Including captions on videos
- Using alt text where possible

Tip - Accessible content is often easier for both people and platforms to understand.

• BE AWARE OF CONTENT THAT MAY TRIGGER AUTOMATED MODERATION

Many LGBTQIA+ artists and organisations discuss topics that are important, educational, artistic or community-focused. However, automated moderation systems do not always understand context.

Take extra care when posting:

- Nudity or implied nudity
- Sexual health content
- Explicit sexual language
- Drag, burlesque or fetish-related content
- Graphic descriptions (mostly around violence or discrimination)
- Reclaimed slurs or hate speech, even when discussed in an educational context

This does not mean avoiding these topics. It simply means being aware that some content may receive additional scrutiny from automated systems.

• FOCUS ON MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT

Social media platforms generally prioritise content that people actively engage with.

Strong engagement signals include:

- Shares
- Saves
- Comments
- Direct messages
- Story shares

Tip - Encouraging genuine conversation is often more effective than focusing on likes alone.

• DON'T RELY ON A SINGLE POST

Most followers will not see every post you publish.

If you are promoting an event, program, exhibition or community activity:

- Post more than once
- Use Stories and Reels
- Encourage collaborators to share content
- Include information in newsletters
- Ask partner organisations to help amplify your message

Tip - Repetition helps people see and remember information.

• PROTECT YOUR ACCOUNT

Good account security can help prevent access issues and disruptions.

We recommend:

- Turning on two-factor authentication
- Using a strong, unique password
- Reviewing who has administrator access
- Keeping recovery details up to date

• WATCH OUT FOR SCAMS

Many artists and community organisations receive fake messages claiming to be from Meta.

Be cautious of messages that:

- Claim your account is about to be deleted
- Demand immediate action
- Ask you to verify your account through a link
- Request login details

Tip - Always check notifications through the official Instagram or Facebook app.

• WHAT TO DO IF YOU THINK YOUR ACCOUNT HAS BEEN RESTRICTED

If you are concerned about your reach or visibility:

1. Check your Account Status.
2. Review any recent moderation notices.
3. Appeal incorrect content removals or restrictions.
4. Compare your recent performance with previous months.
5. Ask your audience if they are seeing your content.
6. Continue posting consistently.
7. Focus on building engagement and community connections.

• BUILD CONNECTIONS BEYOND SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is an important tool, but it should not be your only way of reaching people.

Consider building:

- An email database
- A website
- Community partnerships
- Mailing lists
- Real-world networks and relationships

Tip - The strongest communities are built across multiple channels.

• COMMUNITY AMPLIFICATION MATTERS

One of the most effective ways to increase visibility is through community support. Sharing posts, recommending events, tagging friends and promoting the work of others helps strengthen the visibility of LGBTQIA+ artists, organisations and community groups. Community has always been one of our greatest strengths.

QUICK CHECKLIST

Before you publish:

- Is my caption clear and easy to understand?
- Have I provided context for the content?
- Is the content accessible?
- Am I encouraging genuine engagement?
- Have I checked for content that may trigger automated moderation?
- Am I directing people to a website, ticket link or mailing list?
- Am I creating content for my community, not just the algorithm?