

# Linking to the iTunes Music Store



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## iTunes Store External Documentation

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## Document Revision History

The following table describes the changes to this document.

Date	Version	Notes
2009/10/27	1.1	Initial release.
2009/12/07	1.2	Add "Common Errors" & "Pseudocode" sections, and Appendix for Country Codes

## Linking to the iTunes Music Store

### Introduction

This document gives an overview of how to deal with creating and using links to the iTunes Music Store, providing a good experience for your users, and ensuring you receive your affiliate bounty.

### I. Two Types of iTunes URLs...

#### (1) Clean URLs **New**

Clean URLs are intended to give iTunes customers an indication of the content they will see once they click on a link. They are shorter and more user-friendly than the older style of URLs. Currently only artist, album, video, and app links support this style, but more will follow.

#### Examples

- <http://itunes.apple.com/us/artist/blind-pilot/id284309952>
- <http://itunes.apple.com/es/album/3-rounds-a-sound/id284309952?i=318683645>
- <http://itunes.apple.com/fr/artist/plastic-bertrand/id78609223>
- <http://itunes.apple.com/us/album/id267826054>
- <http://itunes.apple.com/gb/artist/id78609223>
- <http://itunes.apple.com/de/album/u2-joshua-tree/id267826054>
- <http://itunes.apple.com/fr/album/joshua-tree/id267826054>
- <http://itunes.apple.com/it/album/id267826054>

#### Clean URLs Deconstructed

Let's examine an example URL, exploded into its constituent parts. This is for U2's "Bullet the Blue Sky" on The Joshua Tree:  
<http://itunes.apple.com/us/album/joshua-tree/id267826054?i=267826366>

Description	Protocol	Host	Country Code	Action	Description	Primary ID	Query String
Example	http://	itunes.apple.com	/us	/album	/joshua-tree	/id267826054	?i=267826366
Notes			[ISO-2A]		Human-readable description	No "=" sign	Contains affiliate data and other information

Default Value			us		Optional		
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In some cases, the descriptive portion of the URL path will be removed altogether, with the id directly following the action portion. For example: <http://itunes.apple.com/us/album/id267826054?i=267826366> .

## Country Codes and Content Availability

If you are dealing with a URL which does not have a country code (for example, most EPF URLs are not tied to a country), you should insert one that is appropriate for your users. The country code will serve as a hint to the iTunes Store that the content being requested is available in that country's storefront – if the content is not available in the user's storefront, iTunes will prompt the user to switch storefronts to view the requested content.

The country code will also serve as a hint for the default language of the page requested when the user's preferred language is unknown.

If no country code exists on the URL, iTunes will default to the US storefront.

## (2) WebObjects URLs

These URLs have been around since the inception of the iTunes Store and are still supported. The preferred host for these URLs is now "itunes.apple.com", but "phobos.apple.com" links are still supported.

As noted above, only artist, album, video, and app links support the new 'Clean URL' style. Other types will continue to use the WebObjects Style URLs.

### Examples

- <http://itunes.apple.com/WebObjects/MZStore.woa/wa/viewAlbum?i=315611467&id=315611219&s=143441>
- <http://itunes.apple.com/WebObjects/MZStore.woa/wa/viewArtist?id=954266>
- <http://phobos.apple.com/WebObjects/MZStore.woa/wa/viewArtist?id=954266>

## The Origin-Storefront Parameter

The "s", or "origin-storefront ID" parameter is the analogue to the country-code in the Clean URL format, and should be used similarly. "s", however, must be a **storefront ID** (such as 143441 for the US, or 143462 for Japan). A complete listing of countries and their storefront IDs is available in the appendix to this document.

## II. Affiliate Parameters on an iTunes URL

Setting the affiliate parameters correctly on URLs is key to ensuring your users' purchases will bounty.

### Basic URL Concepts

A URL on the web is composed as follows:

Example	<a href="http://">http://</a>	<a href="http://itunes.apple.com">itunes.apple.com</a>	<a href="http://itunes.apple.com/us/album/joshua-tree/id267826054">/us/album/joshua-tree/id267826054</a>	<a href="http://itunes.apple.com/us/album/joshua-tree/id267826054?i=267826366">?i=267826366</a>
Example	<a href="http://">http://</a>	<a href="http://itunes.apple.com">itunes.apple.com</a>	<a href="http://itunes.apple.com/WebObjects/MZStore.woa/wa/viewArtist">/WebObjects/MZStore.woa/wa/viewArtist</a>	<a href="http://itunes.apple.com/WebObjects/MZStore.woa/wa/viewArtist?i=315611467&amp;id=315611219&amp;s=143441">?i=315611467&amp;id=315611219&amp;s=143441</a>
Description	Protocol	Host	Path	Query String

The query string is preceded by the question mark '?', and is composed of key-value pairs, which are separated by the ampersand character '&'. A key in a query string is often called a query parameter, and is separated from the value by the equals sign '='.

### Examples:

- Short query string: `?id=12345`
- Compound query string: `?id=12345&name=Mark&cc=us`

The following are invalid URLs:

- **BAD** Query strings begins with '&' instead of '?': <http://itunes.apple.com/path/to/resource&id=12345&name=Mark> **BAD**
- **BAD** Multiple '?'s: <http://itunes.apple.com/path/to/resource?id=12345?name=Mark> **BAD**

## iTunes-specific Concepts

This information applies to both the new and old style of URL.

## Partner ID

The partnerId is a numeric query parameter that identifies a high level partner to the iTunes store. For example, LinkShare is partnerId=30, TradeDoubler is partnerId=2003, and DGM is partnerId=1002.

## Affiliate Token

The affiliate token, or affToken, is an alphanumeric string less than 50 characters long that is most commonly used to identify a publisher within an affiliate program. It may also contain other information such as clicktime and/or campaign tracking data. This format is generally defined by the affiliate program you are working with; contact them for more information.

The affToken goes by different names in the various affiliate programs; these names are case-sensitive:

Linkshare	siteID
TradeDoubler	tduid
DGM	affToken

## WebDeveloperId

The WebDeveloperId, or wddl, is an integer identifier for partners who generate iTunes Web iMixes(tm). It is used **instead of** the partnerId and affToken, not in conjunction with it. The wddl maps a single id to multiple affiliate publisher accounts in different countries, and thus allows for a single iTunes url to be used worldwide.

## III. Manually Attaching Affiliate Parameters

Many of the tools provided by iTunes and your affiliate program will manage the URL creation process for you – iTunes LinkMaker, the iTunes RSS Generator, and the iTunes Search API will pre-affiliate the URLs it generates if you click to the service itself via URL on your affiliate account page.

If you do need to create a URL manually, here are the steps:

1. Take a given iTunes Store URL: <http://itunes.apple.com/fr/artist/plastic-bertrand/id78609223>
2. Check for a "?" in the URL, which indicates that a query string already exists
3. Attach the partnerId of your affiliate using the correct separator character ('&' or '?'), for example, LinkShare:  
<http://itunes.apple.com/fr/artist/plastic-bertrand/id78609223?partnerId=30>
4. Attach your affToken (which for LinkShare is siteID):  
<http://itunes.apple.com/fr/artist/plastic-bertrand/id78609223?partnerId=30&siteID=ABCDEF123>

## Pseudocode

```
String url = "http://itunes.apple.com/fr/artist/plastic-bertrand/id78609223";  
## OR String url = "http:  
//itunes.apple.com/WebObjects/MZStore.woa/wa/viewTVSeason?id=342568008&s=143441";  
  
String myPartnerId = "30";  
String myAffTokenName = "siteID";  
String myAffToken = "ABCDEF123";  
  
String separator = "?";  
if (url contains "?") { separator = "&"; }  
url = url + separator + "partnerId=" + myPartnerId + "&" + myAffTokenName + "=" + myAffToken;  
  
## End result should be: http:  
//itunes.apple.com/fr/artist/plastic-bertrand/id78609223?partnerId=30&siteID= ABCDEF123
```

## Common Errors

We've found in problem reports and in real-world web links that many partners are failing to check for question mark in the URL, and blindly using "&" (or occasionally "?") to attach query parameters. This produces URLs such as this:

1. **BAD:** <http://itunes.apple.com/fr/artist/plastic-bertrand/id78609223&partnerId=30&siteID=ABCDEF123>
2. **BAD:**

<http://itunes.apple.com/WebObjects/MZStore.woa/wa/viewTVSeason?id=342568008&s=143441?partnerId=30&siteID=ABCDEFGH123>

In Example 1 above, there is no "?" at all, and in the second, there are two. Both of these URLs will fail to create a bounty! In most cases, URLs created without regard for an existing question mark will also cause an error dialog or other bad experience that will be irritating to your users.

## More Information

- iTunes Affiliate Program: <http://apple.com/itunes/affiliate>
- Launching MusicStore/AppStore from an iPhone app: <https://developer.apple.com/iphone/library/qa/qa2008/qa1629.html>

## Appendix: Country Codes and Storefront IDs

Country Name	Code	Storefront ID
Argentina	ar	143505
Australia	au	143460
Austria	at	143445
Belgium	be	143446
Brazil	br	143503
Canada	ca	143455
Chile	cl	143483
China	cn	143465
Colombia	co	143501
Costa Rica	cr	143495
Croatia	hr	143494
Czech Republic	cz	143489
Denmark	dk	143458
Dominican Rep.	do	143508
Ecuador	ec	143509
Egypt	eg	143516
El Salvador	sv	143506
Estonia	ee	143518
Finland	fi	143447
France	fr	143442
Germany	de	143443
Greece	gr	143448
Guatemala	gt	143504
Honduras	hn	143510
Hong Kong	hk	143463
Hungary	hu	143482
India	in	143467
Indonesia	id	143476
Ireland	ie	143449
Israel	il	143491

Italy	it	143450
Jamaica	jm	143511
Japan	jp	143462
Kazakstan	kz	143517
Korea, Republic Of	kr	143466
Kuwait	kw	143493
Latvia	lv	143519
Lebanon	lb	143497
Lithuania	lt	143520
Luxembourg	lu	143451
Macau	mo	143515
Malaysia	my	143473
Malta	mt	143521
Mexico	mx	143468
Moldova, Republic Of	md	143523
Netherlands	nl	143452
New Zealand	nz	143461
Nicaragua	ni	143512
Norway	no	143457
Pakistan	pk	143477
Panama	pa	143485
Paraguay	py	143513
Peru	pe	143507
Philippines	ph	143474
Poland	pl	143478
Portugal	pt	143453
Qatar	qa	143498
Romania	ro	143487
Russia	ru	143469
Saudi Arabia	sa	143479
Singapore	sg	143464
Slovakia	sk	143496
Slovenia	si	143499
South Africa	za	143472
Spain	es	143454
Sri Lanka	lk	143486
Sweden	se	143456
Switzerland	ch	143459
Taiwan	tw	143470

Thailand	th	143475
Turkey	tr	143480
United Arab Emirates	ae	143481
United Kingdom	gb	143444
United States	us	143441
Uruguay	uy	143514
Venezuela	ve	143502
Vietnam	vn	143471