

# Introduction to the Music Industry



**Instructor:** Dr. J. Martin Lett, Esq.

The business of music is a global multi-billion dollar industry comprised of a relatively small amount of individuals creating the music and several other people behind the scenes responsible for the ongoing operation of the business itself: working at record labels, distribution companies, publishing companies, recording studios and serving in the areas of artist management, promotion, music production, and legal counsel. The objective of this course is to help you further your career in the business of music by helping you gain an understanding of the entire music industry.



This online course is completely virtual, meaning that all course work (100%) will be conducted online and we will never physically meet. The course is also delivered asynchronously; for the most part, you will be able to work on assignments to fit your own personal schedule during the week. However, online courses are not independent study courses. The course consists of interactive course activities and quizzes, discussion boards,

audio and video presentations, sample assignments, online chats and personalized feedback on student work.



**Upon successful completion of this course, the student will:**

## **Lesson 1: The Building Block of the Music Business- Overview of the Music Business and this Course; Copyright.**

- Acquire a clear understanding of copyright terminology—how copyright terms are defined and used.
- Learn which authors' and composers' rights are protected under the copyright statute.
- Gain an understanding of what is meant by "fair use" of copyrights.
- Learn the copyrighting process and what is required in respect to copyright "formalities."
- Understand the "work made for hire" doctrine and how it works in the marketplace.
- Discover how copyrights can be transferred, assigned, recaptured, and terminated.
- Understand that the music business is a system composed of subsystems, each of which submits to rational analysis.
- Learn how a song gets through "the maze" - how it travels through the system to the bank.
- Grasp the significance of the "information age" and how to deal with it today.
- Understand that the music business is largely based on the star system - that only individuals with strong talent and motivation can expect to persuade others to invest in their potential for commercial success.

- Understand that no performer today can hope to gain or sustain success without a fully staffed support system.
- Learn the four factors contributing to the success of those who “win” in the music business.

## **Lesson 2: Professional Songwriting and Music Publishing**

- Define the songwriter’s market.
- Discover a writer’s publishing options—what kinds of deal are available.
- Learn how to evaluate publishers’ competence and integrity.
- Identify a songwriter’s sources for potential income.
- Gain awareness of the events usually necessary for a good song to achieve success in the marketplace.
- Discover how an unknown songwriter might break in and establish a professional career.
- Acquire an understanding of how music publishing companies are structured and how they function today.
- Learn how a publisher selects, and then promotes, new material.
- Gain an understanding of the essential elements of a songwriters publishing contract.
- Identify a publisher’s potential income sources.



## **Lesson 3: Artist Representatives: Agents, Managers, and Attorneys Resources and Associations**

- Learn what a talent agent does and how the agent’s activities are regulated.
- Gain an understanding of the role of the artists’ personal manager and how the manager’s activities are regulated.
- Acquire awareness of the services performed by the music business attorney and how the attorney is selected, retained, compensated, and discharged.
- Gain awareness of the importance of a good working relationship between an artist and manager.
- Acquire understanding of a workable financial relationship between a manager and client.
- Examine the role of the manager in producing the artist’s act.
- Learn effective ways a manager can advance a client’s career and maximize income.

## **Lesson 4: Unions, Guilds, and Artist Recording Contracts**

- Learn about the major unions and guilds in the arts and entertainment fields—how they are constituted and how they function.
- Learn the basic elements in a recording contract.
- Be able to distinguish between royalty artist issues and non-royalty artist issues.
- Understand union involvement in the process and the standing agreements that the AFM and AFTRA have with record companies.

## **Lesson 5: Record Production and Concert Production**

- Learn what a record producer does and the important elements of a production deal.
- Understand the five stages of record production.
- Learn about production budgeting and how producers get paid.
- Gain an awareness of recording studio design, types of studios, and how to select a studio.

- Learn terms basic to the recording and mastering process.
- Gain awareness of alternative ways concerts may be sponsored, financed.
- Learn realistic concert budgeting.
- Acquire understanding of how contracts may be negotiated with artists, talent agents, venue managers, and service companies.
- Discover effective concert promotion techniques.
- Learn production planning and methods of back-timing.

### **Lesson 6: Exam**



### **Lesson 7: The Recording Industry and Record Promotion, Distribution, and Retailing**

- Gain awareness of the history of the record industry and how it came to its present condition.
- Learn how record companies function.
- Become aware of the damage inflicted on record companies and other copyright owners by record piracy, counterfeiting, bootlegging, and illegal downloading.
- Learn the importance of creating a marketing plan for merchandising a new record release.
- Gain understanding of record promotion techniques.
- Become knowledgeable about record distribution.
- Examine the role of NARM —how it serves its members and the music industry.

### **Lesson 8: Record Markets and The Digital Age**

- Become knowledgeable about record market research and how this research is used.
- Learn about the record charts—how they are compiled and their impact.
- Identify record market segments through analysis of stylistic preferences and the science of demographics.
- Learn of the technological paradigm shift into the digital world and the way it has altered how music is created, distributed, and consumed.
- Gain Knowledge of the legal battleground issues in the age of digital music.
- Gain awareness of how the business has changed for record companies and the implications of this new environment for recording artists.



### **Lesson 9: Music Licensing**

- Learn that licensing is the process through which copyright ownership is controlled and made profitable.
- Discover how licensing agencies function how they collect and disburse royalties paid for music performances.
- Examine the similarities and differences among ASCAP, BMI, and SESAC.
- Gain awareness of the different kinds of music use licenses, particularly mechanical and synchronization licenses.

### **Lesson 10: Music for TV, Film, and Advertising**

- Gain awareness of how music and the television industry have evolved together to bring entertainment to American homes.
- Learn how short-form videos are produced, from the planning stage through postproduction.
- Gain knowledge of the organization and jobs in telecommunications.
- Distinguish between the various forms of media delivery in the telecommunications industry.
- Become knowledgeable about motion picture music history and changing musical styles.
- Learn how music for film is created, recorded, and synchronized to events on the screen.
- Gain awareness of how musicians and technicians are used in the motion picture music field.
- Gain an understanding of how music is created and produced for broadcasting to sell goods and services.
- Study the role of the advertising agency in producing music for broadcast advertising.
- Learn the special vocabulary used by individuals working in the broadcasting and advertising industries.
- Become knowledgeable about artists' unions and their attempts to control payments to their members who work in broadcast advertising.



### **Lesson 11: Careers and Entrepreneurship**

- Maximize awareness of the dozens of career options available in the music business to individuals possessing talent and ambition.
- Learn the different stages a prudent person should go through in planning and developing a career.
- Analyze the precise nature of particular careers, how one may qualify and prepare for them, then focus on the prospects for employment.
- Learn about the process of starting a business and the forms it can take.
- Awareness of the financial and marketing tools that are part of a successful business plan.
- Knowledge of organizational concepts used for planning ahead and for motivating employees in your new business.
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### **Lesson 12: Final Exam**



This course outline is for planning purposes only and will be used as a general guideline to the expectations of the course. The syllabus will be issued on the first day of class.