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DTronic Sound Inc. - Quick Start Music Release Guide

Music Societies in the United States:

Summary: Listed below are a handful of U.S. music societies I utilize for distribution, and for royalty collection. You may choose to use or affiliate with the below services, or research additional societies & services (that are not listed below) based on your needs.

1. Public Performance Royalties (Publishing):

- a. I am registered as both a Publisher & Writer on ASCAP - You can create both accounts for one fee here! <https://ome.ascap.com>
- b. This is not the only U.S society: BMI, SESAC, and GMR are also PROs "Performing Rights Organizations" in the United States. Societies additionally exist around the world.
- c. Registering as both a writer & publisher will increase your ability to collect all publishing, performance royalties (both publisher's and writer's share). It additionally increases your ability to collect your mechanical royalties which I will discuss below.

2. Mechanical Royalties (Publishing):

- a. In the United States, in some instances, you will need a publisher's account to collect mechanical royalties (for this reason I recommend making a publisher's account with your PRO, in addition to your writer's account).
- b. There are many Mechanical societies in the U.S. that distribute & collect different types of mechanical royalties.
 - I'm registered with Harry Fox Agency [\[https://www.harryfox.com/#/hfa-affiliate\]](https://www.harryfox.com/#/hfa-affiliate) & The Music Licensing Collective [\[https://www.themlc.com/membership\]](https://www.themlc.com/membership).
 - Should you choose to use Harry Fox Agency, currently any registrations I submit to Harry Fox are published in The Music Licensing Collective's database.

Conclusion (Publishing): For both of the above royalties (#1 & #2) - there are also "administrative services" that take a % of royalties or charge a fee (i.e. Songtrust - <https://www.songtrust.com/>) in exchange for providing you publishing services (including but not limited to) registering compositions and collective publishing royalties. I personally elected to register my compositions independently and collect the full % possible.



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3. Distribution / Digital Sales. (Master):

- a. There are many Distributors in the U.S., that in exchange for a fee and/or %, will provide your music to all platforms as well as collect any digital sales money made from the sale of the master recording.
- b. I currently use Distro Kid [<https://distrokid.com>], which also offers automatic payment splits to other distro kid users on master splits. Should you choose to affiliate, I can send you an email with a 50% off coupon.

4. Master Performance Royalties (Master):

- a. There is only one society in the U.S. - Sound Exchange for master performance royalties [<https://www.soundexchange.com>], you can register both as an owner of sound recordings, and as a performer "featured artist".
- b. I register my master recordings with "Sound Exchange" which collects and pays master performance royalties [50% to the owner of the master recording(s), 45% to the featured artist(s)]. Each royalty portion is registered individually on Sound Exchange, based on 100% (i.e. I register, and collect 100% of the master recording performance royalties as an owner of master recordings).

5. US ISRCs:

- a. Get registered to assign your own ISRC (International Standard Recording Codes) to your master recordings - <https://usisrc.org/applications/steps.html>.
- b. Your distributor will provide these codes; however, you can enjoy the convenience of assigning them yourself in advance of a music release or for early registration.



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Music Release Prep:

Summary: Workflow to distribute and register music.

1. Create Accounts:

- a. Get registered with and learn about publishing, master rights, and distribution societies & services in your territory, and any international services (if applicable).
- b. You will need a released master recording to be able to create and edit accounts on music streaming services (i.e. you will need to distribute music first through your distributor to a service such as Spotify or Apple Music before you can create and edit an account).
- c. There are only a few streaming platforms that support direct uploading without a distributor (Soundcloud <https://soundcloud.com/> , Bandcamp - <https://bandcamp.com/>).
- d. You may choose to “quietly” release a recording on your distributor (release but not promote) to create your accounts in advance of releasing a recording you will promote.

2. Obtain final Master(s) - recordings that will be distributed.

- a. **Format:** 24Bit 44.1 Wav file format is the format requested by most distributors.
16Bit 44.1 Wav is CD format.



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- b. Print any alternative masters and stems:
 - i. A few popular alternatives are “Instrumental” with vocals removed for background usage in licensing, and TV Track (vocals lowered or removed to create a live backing track for the artist to perform to).
 - ii. Music companies (i.e. record labels, music publishers, music libraries) may request additional alternate versions (i.e. 15 second version) or alternate formats (i.e. 24Bit 48K Wav for film/TV).
 - iii. Stems – simple groups to archive and recreate the mix session without the need for software, recall of settings. Keep it simple and group instruments (i.e. Drums, Bass, FX, Guitars, Lead Vocals, Background Vocals).
- 3. Finalize contract agreements, copyright ownership, and splits:**
- a. Finalize any agreements/splits/copyright ownership between all parties who contributed to the composition(s) & master recording(s) before proceeding.
 - b. Account for both copyrights when determining ownership, and allocation of royalties/monies: Two copyrights - 100% of the music composition, and 100% of the master recording.
- 4. Album Artwork / Promo Visuals:**
- a. Have album artwork ready before proceeding to next steps.
 - b. 3000 X 3000 in size for distributor.



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- c. 1080 X 1080 for Instagram post.
- d. You can use Canva <https://www.canva.com> to make edits.

5. Write Label Copy (meta data & credits):

- a. Use iTunes “Get Info”, Spotify Credits, Tidal Credits, or your distributor’s upload form to gather basic meta data and credit categories.
- b. Create a spread sheet based on these categories and fill in all meta data information for the music you plan to release.
- c. Assign ISRC codes to your masters if you have them.
- d. You may choose to tag MP3 files with meta data for sharing / pitching – I use “Meta” to tag files <https://www.nightbirdsevolve.com/meta/>
 - i. MP3 files retain meta data, wav files do not.
 - ii. Please note distributors typically do not read meta data from your files - you will still need to manually provide your distributor with all music meta data.

6. Upload your wav files to your Distributor:

- a. Make sure to copy and paste information from your label copy spreadsheet to avoid manual errors. (i.e. copy and paste your artist name from the spreadsheet your distributors spreadsheet to avoid typing it incorrectly)



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- b. After completing your distributor's upload form:
 - i. Write down your UPC code (i.e. bar code for sale of your recordings).
 - ii. Write down any ISRCs your distributor assigned to your recordings (skip if you provided your own ISRCs to your distributor).
- 7. Pitch your release for playlisting:**
- a. <https://artists.spotify.com/> - you will need to have a Spotify for artist account, and at least 7 days of time before your release to pitch a song for a playlist. You can only pitch one release at a time.
- 8. Register your music composition on your PRO to collect publishing performance royalties and receive an ISWC code:**
- a. You can register multiple ISRCs (masters) of the same compositions under one registration / ISWC (i.e. If both the instrumental & vocal version, two different recordings (2 ISRCs), share the same composers & composition, list all ISRCs and song titles in the registration form – all ISRCs / song titles will be assigned 1 ISWC.
 - b. Provide ISRCs in registration if asked - for data accuracy.
 - c. The ISWC code may take a few weeks to appear.



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9. Register your music composition on mechanical societies to collect mechanical

royalties:

- a. You can register multiple ISRCs (masters) of the same compositions under one registration / ISWC. Provide the ISRCs & ISWC in registration if asked - for data accuracy.
- b. Both Harry Fox Agency and The Music Licensing Collective offer “bulk upload” features for registering multiple compositions at once.

10. Register your master recording for master recording royalties on Sound Exchange:

- a. Remember although this royalty represents 50% total percentage, you will submit the registration for this portion based on 100%.
- b. There is a bulk upload spread sheet if registering multiple recordings.
- c. Have your UPC code and label copy spreadsheet available in addition to your ISRCs.

11. Claim artist performer royalties on Sound Exchange:

- a. The master recording will need to have been registered before any artist royalties can be claimed.
- b. Remember although this royalty portion represents 45% total percentage, you submit your claim to royalties based on 100%. Shares are split equally between artists if multiple.



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12. Relax breathe! Rinse repeat for your next release!

Thanks for reading! Additional questions / looking for guidance on the above process - email

“dtronicsoundinc@gmail.com” to book a consult!

All the best,

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