



The fifth edition of the Nordic Music Trade Mission to the US took place digitally between the 9th and 18th of November 2020.

For this edition we had the pleasure of meeting among others **Sindee Levin, an experienced lawyer, and music publishing administrator**, who presented the essentials of licensing in the U.S., focusing on sync and score music. The session included all the basics you need to know about sync licensing business, contracts as well as collecting income. In addition to this, Sindee also shed light on the recent developments in U.S. copyright law.

If you for some reason missed this webinar, don't worry! Because lucky for you, a summary of the webinar has been made by **Sindee Levin** and you can go through it right here:

SEE YOUR MUSIC ON SCREEN

With changes in the music business and the current COVID crisis, more people are looking

for sources to showcase their music.

What is a synchronization license? Commonly known as a “synch” license. It is music that is synchronized to a picture.

The music and words that are synchronized with film, television, or commercial is a publishing right. Every use of music will always have a sync license.

Master rights are the recording rights of a song. It could be the original recording or a ‘cover’ version.

OWNERSHIP OF RIGHTS

Who owns the song is most important. If there are co-writers there should be some document that outlines who owns what share. When a song is licensed each ‘owner’ will have their own license. If there are any disputes it will most likely “kill” the deal. The same issues come up with master rights in terms of ownership.

HOW DOES IT WORK

How do you place your music?

- American sub-publisher who pitches your song,
- Music Supervisor may find your music on various platforms like Spotify, YouTube Music, Amazon, Apple Music,
- You submitted your song to a music supervisor, and
- Licensing Companies represent your songs, and they pitch for you.

Avoid paying upfront fees (money) for placements. Avoid re-titling of songs.

THEY LIKE YOUR SONG - WHAT'S NEXT

You will be contacted unless you have American representation. A synch request will have:

- Name of the program,
- Usage e.g. background vocal (BV),
- Timing,
- Territory,
- Term, and

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- Suggested fee.
- MFN or “most favored nations” means the same terms as others. Once the basics are agreed upon a formal agreement will be sent. Accuracy is the vital – proper spelling of your name, IPI number, and PRO. Payment is 60-90 days, and a W-8 tax form is needed.

Always ask for a cue sheet, which is a road map for royalty payment. Currently, CISAC and publishers are working on the coordination of cue sheets.

HOW MUCH WILL I BE PAID

Songs used in The Voice, America’s Got Talent, etc. have a rate card based on time and usage. There are many programs needing music, the licensing fees are still low unless one has a top song.

NORDIC COUNTRIES VS THE UNITED STATES

Differences when licensing:

- U.S. licenses in perpetuity for films and many television programs. Nordic countries license for a term.
- U.S. asks for all rights (Television programs will usually not ask for theatrical release). Nordic Countries do not ask for all rights.
- U.S. Songwriters generally have their own publishing company. Most Nordic songwriters do not have their own publishing company.

ADDITIONAL ROYALTIES

When a program is aired on television monies are paid to PRO’s. The cue sheet will be the road map for who and how much one is paid. The difference in business style may create problems.

STIM, TEOSTO, TONO, KODA all have reciprocal agreements with ASCAP and BMI, so royalties can be collected through the local societies. Both ASCAP and BMI, allow foreigners to join their societies, which is another way for collection

HOW COVID HAS IMPACTED LICENSING

From mx.d.dk: Synchronization Licensing in the United States

The pandemic has created a World that none of us could have anticipated. The music business has been dramatically impacted. The major studios have stopped production on major films. There are more platforms with substantial programming needing music. The fees have stayed low and the payment time has become slower and slower.

In 2021 with many productions stalled there should be a greater need for music.