

Online Music Publishing Educational Framework

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Abstract

This paper is a supplemental overview of the Online Music Publishing Educational Framework which is a digital module designed to introduce Music Business students to the fundamentals of music publishing. With the music industry increasingly reliant on digital platforms, it is critical that students wanting to dive into the music world understand how song copyrights, royalties, and overall publishing structures operate. This framework is intended to provide a clear and engaging entry point for students to build foundational knowledge in music publishing. This paper outlines the purpose, learning outcomes, and implementation strategy for incorporating the module into an academic setting, with the goal of improving the preparedness of students entering the music business.

Introduction

In recent years, the music industry has experienced rapid growth and transformation due to digital distribution, streaming platforms, and evolving intellectual property regulations. Due to this, music publishing has become an even more essential sector of the industry for music professionals to grasp. Despite its importance, many undergraduate music business programs lack classes and resources that demystify publishing for early learners. This thesis, The Online Music Publishing Framework, seeks to bridge that gap through an introductory online module that presents key publishing concepts. These modules will be student-friendly and in a visual format. The first module, created as a mockup, introduces students to the core functions of music

publishing and its role in the lifecycle of a song. This paper provides the academic context for the project by outlining the learning goals, instructional foundation, and a proposed implementation plan for the university and faculty.

Learning Objectives

The primary goal of this educational framework is to ensure that students come away with fundamental understanding of the music publishing landscape. To achieve this, the first module has been developed with the following learning objectives. The module is designed to introduce the essential concept of music publishing and explains its role within the larger structure of the music industry. It guides students in identifying the main types of royalties, including performance royalties, mechanical royalties, and synchronization royalties, while also expanding the processes through which each is collected. The content further explains the responsibilities of key players in the field. The key players highlighted are music publishing companies, performance rights organizations, and major labels/ records. In addition, students gain insight into various types of publishing sectors that will be discussed in later modules. To support comprehension and encourage engagement, the module incorporates relevant industry terminology, interactive pages, and knowledge check activities that reinforce the material in a meaningful way.

Along with the introductory module, which is presented in Appendix A, there will be six other modules that go in deeper into the subjects of music publishing.

The second module, the labels and publisher's module, helps students distinguish between roles of record labels and publishing companies. Students explore how these entities differ in terms of rights management, artist relationships, and revenue generation. The goal is to understand their distinct functions and how decisions in one domain affect the other.

The third module, the performance rights organizations (PROs) module, provides a detailed exploration of how organizations like ASCAP, BMI, SESAC, and their international counterpart's function. Students will learn how works are registered, how usage is tracked, and how royalties are distributed. This module shows the transparent and accurate flow of performance income.

In the fourth module, the copyright module, students will learn about the legal systems of the publishing business. This includes understanding the difference between sound recordings and musical compositions, the process of copyright registration, the duration and scope of protection, and the implications of infringement in both physical and digital contexts.

The fifth module, the licensing module, introduces students to various types of music licenses, including synchronization, mechanical, and print. The module walks students through the steps of obtaining licenses, interpreting agreements, and assessing how licensing can support or limit artistic and commercial goals. In these modules I will be including case studies to help demonstrate the impact of licensing.

In the sixth module, the income tracking module, the students will be exposed to the tools and practices publishers use to monitor royalty flows. The students will

understand the importance of data accuracy, metadata quality, global collection systems, and royalty audits. This module prepares students to think operationally and analytically within the publishing teams.

The seventh and final module, the royalty's module, serves as a capstone that integrates all the knowledge from the previous modules. Students will gain a thorough understanding of different royalty types and paths. There will be sample statements and real- world financial models to help solidify the student's ability to analyze and interpret royalty flows.

These modules not only provide a strong theoretical foundation but also develop the student's professional readiness through interactive content, critical reflection, and real- world application. By the end of the modules, learners are equipped with the language and practical skills to contribute to the music publishing industry.

Methodology

To develop an effective and engaging online educational framework for teaching the fundamentals of music publishing, I employed a multi- step qualitative method grounded in both academic and experiential sources

First, I conducted a content analysis of three foundational texts on music publishing. These books include *All you need to know about the music business*, *Plain & simple guide to music publishing*, and *Music money and success: The insider's guide to making money in the music business*. I selected key concepts and terminology I felt

was essential for student comprehension based on my review of the material and my understanding of the learning needs of undergraduate music business students at The University of Tennessee. My selection criteria were guided by my professional experience and mentors in the music industry. With my experience, I was provided with insight into which areas of music publishing are most relevant and commonly encountered in professional settings, helping me prioritize certain topics such as royalties, licensing, and copyright.

Using this curated content, I designed educational modules through Canva drawing inspiration from the formatting and structural conventions of the K@TE learning system, which is a platform used for asynchronous training at The University of Tennessee. I chose Canva specifically because I did not have access to the amount of funding that would be required to build out a robust educational framework. However, I still wanted to create a professional and visually coherent mockup of what a functional and engaging online experience could look like. Canva allowed for flexible design and the ability to visually communicate the structure and flow of the proposed curriculum without the need for advanced e- learning software. The module that is built focuses on clarity, visual engagement, and accessibility for students new to the industry.

To enhance the modules' relevance and application, I incorporated original graphs and visual aids based on real world and current data from the music publishing sector. These data visuals were created to support deeper comprehension and to simulate the kind of analytical thinking expected in the industry.

This methodology allowed me to blend academic rigor, industry relevance, and instructional design principles to create a practical and pedagogically sound educational resource.

Implementation Plan

To integrate this framework into the music business curriculum, the module will be made available as a flexible, online learning supplement that can be used independently or as part of a broader music publishing course. The online nature of the modules makes it adaptable for both in person and remote learning environments. Which will optimize its utility across different institutional formats. Professors can assign the modules as asynchronous pre- lecture material, allowing students to absorb foundational concepts before attending class. Additionally, these modules can be embedded in existing management systems such as Canvas. Another use for these modules could be for the music industry club at the university. They could give access to students and present them with a certificate after completion.

The framework can also serve as a preparatory resource for students beginning internships in the publishing industry. For programs that offer experiential learning opportunities with publishing companies or performance rights organizations, these modules provide essential context to help students transition into the workplace with confidence and knowledge.

The goal for the educational framework package is to include the educational content, a faculty guide detailing suggested usage, pacing, assessment methods, and

optional quiz materials for measuring students' comprehension. The intent is to create a resource that is easy for instructors to integrate into their existing curriculum.

Conclusion

The Online Music Publishing Educational Framework is designed to provide a modern, student- friendly approach to learning the fundamentals of music publishing. With its clear objectives, visual design, and flexible delivery method, it fills a much-needed gap in music business education, especially at The University of Tennessee. This Framework not only supports academic understanding but also strengthens students' real-world preparedness as they enter careers in the music industry. As the music industry continues to evolve, tools like this framework will be essential in equipping the next generation of music professionals with the knowledge they need to succeed.

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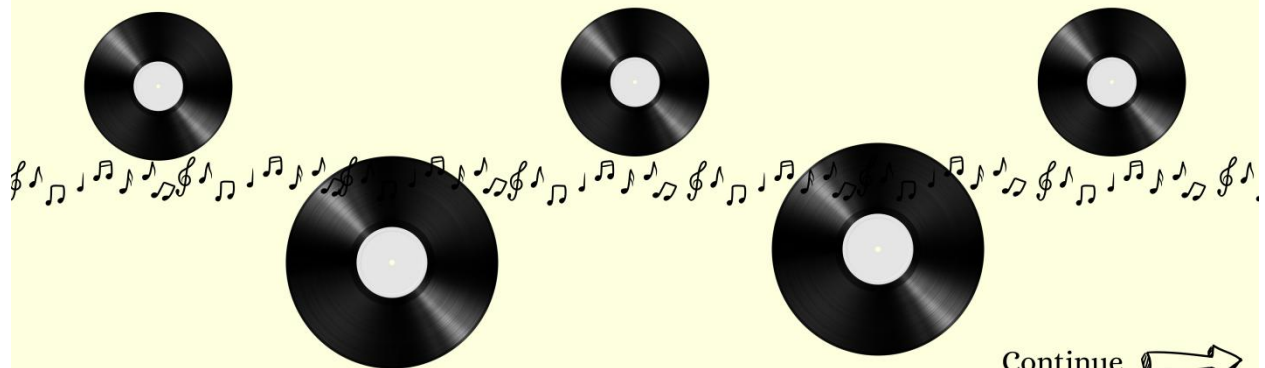
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Appendix A

Welcome

Music Publishing Modules for UTK Music Business Students



Continue 

1 Introduction

2 Labels and Publishers

3 Performance Rights
Organizations

4 Copyright

5 Licensing

6 Income Tracking

7 Royalties



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What is a label and who are the
key players?



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