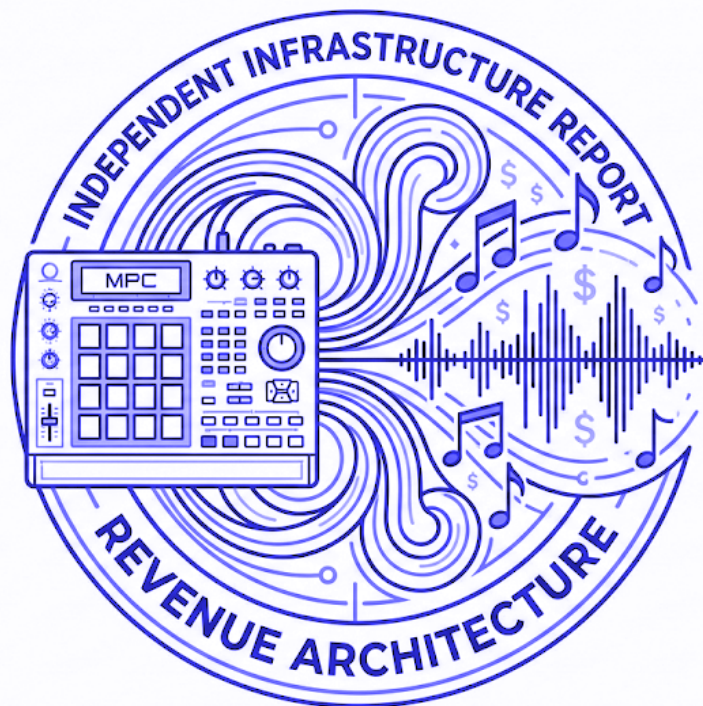


INDEPENDENT INFRASTRUCTURE REPORT



REVENUE ARCHITECTURE

& DISTRIBUTION INTELLIGENCE FOR MASTER OWNERS.

INTRODUCTION

Let's be honest about the state of the industry. The modern music business has tricked an entire generation of artists into thinking that "Success" equals "Streams." They have you chasing viral moments and playlist placements, hiding the fact that streaming is statistically the lowest-paying revenue source available to you.

They have you chasing viral moments and playlist placements, hiding the fact that streaming is statistically the lowest-paying revenue source available to you. If you are trying to build a career on \$0.003 per stream, you aren't building a business; you are volunteering for a tech company.

To build a sustainable career, you must stop thinking like an employee of Spotify and start thinking like a Media Company. A Media Company doesn't just "upload songs." They own assets, they control their supply chain, and they license their intellectual property.

This report is an internal audit of the tools, strategies, and revenue architectures you can use to build high-value catalogs. We are going to look at the logistics of who handles your files, how to squeeze revenue out of every copyright you own, and the assets you need to have ready before you even think about releasing music.

This is your guide. Read it, study it, and execute it.

DISTRIBUTION INTELLIGENCE

CHOOSING YOUR DIGITAL SUPPLY CHAIN

Choosing a distributor is not about picking the cheapest option; it is a strategic decision about your business model. Do you need speed? Do you need advances? Do you need physical distribution? Let's break down the major players so you can make an educated choice.

Symphonic: If you are looking for a partner rather than just a utility, Symphonic is a heavyweight. They are selective—they don't just let anyone in—which keeps their reputation high with DSPs (Digital Service Providers). They excel in "Client Services," meaning if you have traction, you can actually get a human on the phone to discuss marketing strategies and playlist pitching. This is the "Label-Ready" option.

EVEN.biz: This platform is completely rewriting the rules of digital retail by putting the "transaction" before the "stream." Unlike traditional distributors that flood DSPs with content for pennies, EVEN operates on an exclusive, application-only model that restores dignity to the purchase process. Their standout feature is a "Pay-What-You-Want" mechanism with a set floor price, allowing superfans to directly support you at a value they choose rather than one dictated by an algorithm. The power of this model was proven when independent mogul LaRussell utilized the platform to sell his album directly to fans, resulting in a single transaction where an NBA star **purchased the project for \$11,001**—a feat that would require nearly 3 million streams to replicate on Spotify. If you have a dedicated fanbase ready to invest in your work, EVEN is the premier marketplace to capture that value.

Amuse: Amuse has disrupted the game with their financial model. They offer a "Fast Forward" feature, which is essentially an automated royalty advance system. If their algorithm sees that your tracks are gaining consistent traction, they will offer you up to six months of your future royalties upfront. This is massive for independent artists who need liquidity to reinvest in marketing or production without signing a predatory record deal.

Ditto Music: Coming out of the UK, Ditto has a reputation for breaking unsigned acts. They are famous for getting the first unsigned band into the UK Top 40. Their strength lies in their "Record Label in a Box" thinking. They offer competitive pricing and great support for artists who are trying to start their own imprint.

UnitedMasters: Steve Stoute built UnitedMasters with a very specific goal: connecting artists to brands. They treat music as a vehicle for culture. Their platform is designed to help artists land sync deals and partnerships with massive brands like the NBA, ESPN, and Apple. If your music has that "Stadium" or "Commercial" sound, this is the pipeline you want to be in.

TuneCore: The "Old Guard" of the industry. TuneCore is reliable, standardized, and massive. Their biggest strength is their Publishing Administration arm. They make it very easy to collect your songwriter royalties alongside your streaming royalties. While they used to be expensive, they have updated their pricing models to be competitive. They are the safe, corporate choice.

CD Baby: One of the few distributors that understands the physical world still exists. CD Baby is unique because they handle physical distribution for

Vinyl and CDs. If you make music for an older demographic (Jazz, Americana, Blues) or a collector-heavy genre (Underground Hip Hop) where fans actually buy physical discs, CD Baby is likely your best bet.

DistroKid: The volume king. DistroKid is built for the "SoundCloud Generation" who wants to drop a song every week. It is fast and handles volume better than anyone else. However, because it is so accessible, the customer service can be practically non-existent. You are trading support for speed and after a while can see annual fees add up.



REVENUE ARCHITECTURE

6 WAYS TO EARN INCOME BEYOND STREAMING

Stop waiting for a viral moment. Here is how you generate cash flow while you build your catalog.

1. Custom Songwriting & Ghostwriting There is a massive market of people who want to say something but don't know how to rhyme. I'm not just talking about writing for other rappers (though that is lucrative). I'm talking about the consumer market. Platforms like **Fiverr, Upwork, and AirGigs** are full of people looking for "Birthday Dedication Songs," "Custom Anniversary Covers," or jingles for their podcast. You can charge \$200-\$500 for a simple acoustic recording that takes you an hour to make.

2. Sync Licensing (TV, Film, Games) You do not need a fanbase to get a sync placement; you just need high-quality audio that conveys a specific mood. Music Supervisors are constantly hunting for independent music because it's cheaper and easier to clear than major label songs. Start by researching "Music Libraries" (not Supervisors directly) that specialize in your genre. Aim to contact 3-5 libraries a week. If you get into a good library, your track could be earning money in the background for years.

Need a starting point? Scan the QR code below for a list of music libraries you can research and reach out to today:



3. The Local Circuit (Live Performance) Don't wait to be booked. Be your own promoter. Reach out to local bars, coffee shops, and small venues in your area. Here's the trick: don't ask for a headline gig. Find the bands/artists that are already drawing 50-100 people and ask for a supporting slot. You bring 10 friends, they bring their crowd, and you siphon their fanbase. Always show up with a QR code ready that links to your email list sign-up.

4. Corporate Events This is the hidden goldmine for musicians, honestly. Dive bars pay in drink tickets; Corporate America pays in checks (\$\$\$). Companies always have budgets for holiday parties, galas, and networking events. Contact your local Chamber of Commerce or look up event planners in your city. If you can perform 45 minutes of crowd-pleasing covers mixed with a few of your originals, you can easily command \$500 to \$5,000 a night. The audience might be wearing suits, but the check clears just the same.

5. Educational Workshops Monetize your technical knowledge. If you know how to mix vocals, book your own tours, or market on a specific platform like Instagram, there are thousands of artists behind you who would pay to learn that skill. You don't need to be a guru. **You just need to be two steps ahead of the person you are teaching**, and there are always new artists ready to learn from their peers. Record a simple video series or offer 1-on-1 coaching calls.

6. High-Value Merchandise Print-on-demand T-shirts are low margin and boring. Think about "Superfan" items. Create framed prints of your best lyrics. Design a custom deck of playing cards with your album art. If you

have a long history, compile a digital "Process Book" showing your old tour photos, discarded lyrics, and studio notes. Fans love the "behind the scenes" access and will pay a premium for it.

MONETIZING YOUR LYRICS

Your written words generate royalties just like your audio files. But more importantly, lyrics are a discovery tool.

Imagine a fan hears your song in a loud bar. They catch one line of the hook and type it into Google. If you haven't set up your lyric infrastructure, they find nothing. If you have, they find your song, your video, and your profile. Here is the stack you need to control all of this:

Musixmatch Pro This is the engine behind Spotify, Apple Music, and Instagram Stories. If you want your fans to share your lyrics on their IG stories, you need to be verified here. You can manually sync the text so it scrolls perfectly in time with the beat.

Genius This is the culture hub. While they don't pay you directly, having a Verified Artist page is critical for SEO (Search Engine Optimization). It allows you to annotate your own lyrics, explaining the double entendres and the meaning behind the song. It controls the narrative of your art.

LyricFind This powers the lyrics you see in Google Search results and on smart devices like Amazon Alexa. Joining their Verified Artist Program ensures that when someone asks Alexa "Who sings these lyrics?", the answer is *You*.

The .LRC File This is the professional standard file format for time-synced lyrics. While many platforms let you tap along to sync, having your own library of .LRC files allows you to upload perfectly timed data directly to distributors that support it. It is a level of professionalism that separates the

hobbyists from the pros.

If you're a client of Charlie Hayz, you have access to a custom .LRC file generator within your Artist Portal on the website.

THE MARKETING STACK

TOOLS FOR AMPLIFICATION

Marketing isn't magic; it is a routine. It is a set of tools used to move a stranger from "Unaware" to "Fan". These are some tools I recommend to automate that process without having to invest in a 3rd party agency or learning complex Meta ads technicalities.

You can successfully create your own independent marketing ecosystem for your music and then will never have to pay anyone else to promote your brand.

VAMPR Think of this as the LinkedIn for Musicians. It is location-based, helping you find collaborators, producers, and industry professionals in your specific city. Use this to build your local network before you try to conquer the world.

SHOW.CO This is an ad platform specifically designed for music. Use this when you want to run a "Pre-Save" campaign for Spotify or drive views to a new YouTube video. It integrates with the major platforms to track conversions accurately.

TONEDEN If you have ever tried to run a Facebook or Instagram ad and felt overwhelmed by the "Ads Manager," ToneDen is the solution. It automates the audience targeting, finding people who sound like your current fans. It is far superior to the "Boost Post" button on Instagram, which is usually a waste of money.

FEATURE.FM The industry standard for "Smart Links." Never send a fan a direct Spotify link; send them a Smart Link that allows them to choose their preferred service (Apple, Tidal, YouTube). More importantly, Feature.fm allows you to collect emails and retarget those fans later.

ASSET DIVERSIFICATION

THE MASTER DELIVERABLES LIST

When you finish a track, your work isn't done. If you only render one WAV file, you are leaving opportunities on the table. A Music Supervisor might love your song but need an instrumental version for a dialogue scene. A radio PD might love the track but can't play it because the intro is too long.

Here is the mandatory deliverables list for every Master you own:

- **The Album Master:** The original, full-length vision.
 - **The Radio Edit:** Short intro, no cursing, under 3:40 runtime.
 - **The Extended Mix:** Extended intro/outro for DJs to mix. (Crucial for Club/Dance genres).
 - **The Instrumental:** No vocals. Required for Sync Licensing and background placement.
 - **The Acapella:** Vocals only. Critical for remix contests and sampling.
 - **The Performance Mix:** Instrumental plus backing vocals and ad-libs. This is what you perform live with so you aren't just doing karaoke, but you have support on the chorus.
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MASTER EQUITY

ALTERNATIVE REVENUE STREAMS

Most artists only collect streaming royalties and maybe some ASCAP checks. As a Master Owner, you are the landlord of your audio. You are entitled to collect rent from everyone who lives in your house.

Neighboring Rights (SoundExchange) This is the most common missed check. ASCAP and BMI pay the *songwriter*. SoundExchange pays the *Master Owner* and the *Featured Artist*. This covers "Non-Interactive" streams like SiriusXM, Pandora, and Cable TV music channels. For many artists, this check is bigger than their Spotify earnings.

**Important* - When registering your songs with SoundExchange, you have to register TWICE.*

1. Once as a rights holder.

Wait at least one week...

2. Then again as a performer.

Each registration will yield separate streams of revenue for you. Don't miss out!

Micro-Sync & Sampling (Tracklib) Instead of letting people sample you illegally or worrying about clearing samples yourself, platforms like Tracklib allow you to upload your music for other producers to sample legally. You get an upfront fee plus a percentage of *their* new song. It turns your old catalog into raw material for new revenue.

YouTube Content ID This is different from the views on your own channel. Content ID scans all of YouTube. If a gamer, a vlogger, or a kid in their bedroom uses your song in *their* video, YouTube places an ad on that video and pays *you* the revenue. Ensure your distributor has "YouTube Content ID" checked ON.

Direct-to-Consumer Digital Never underestimate the audiophiles and the DJs. Streaming pays fractions of a penny. A direct sale on Bandcamp pays nearly \$1.00 per track. Selling 100 digital downloads earns you the same revenue as 30,000 Spotify streams. Own your customer data and sell directly to your fans.

DIRECT-TO-CONSUMER RETAIL

If you rely on Spotify to sell your music, you are effectively asking a vending machine to pay your rent in pennies. The most profitable artists do not just upload files; they run retail operations.

When you sell direct-to-consumer (D2C), you aren't just making money; you are capturing Data. When a fan streams a song, Spotify knows who they are. When a fan buys a song from you, *you* know who they are.

Here is the breakdown of the current retail landscape so you can choose the right storefront for your business model.

THE FLAGSHIPS (Merch & Physicals) If you are building an empire that sells vinyl, hoodies, tickets and anything else related to your music, you need a serious storefront.

Shopify: The industry standard. If you treat your music like a Fortune 500 company, you build on Shopify. It integrates with an app called Single, which allows your direct sales to count toward the Billboard Charts.

Big Cartel: The underground favorite. It's affordable, simple, and perfect for the artist who wants to sell a few limited t-shirts without paying monthly subscription fees that eat into profits.

Fourthwall: The "Creator" choice. If you don't want to hold inventory (boxes of t-shirts in your garage), Fourthwall handles high-quality "Print on Demand" and builds a beautiful site for you instantly.

THE DIGITAL HUSTLE (Files & Knowledge) You don't need to ship physical goods to make money. Selling your expertise or raw assets—like vocal presets, songwriting templates, or educational eBooks—is pure profit (100% margins).

Gumroad: Ugly but effective. It is the best checkout experience for digital files. If you are selling an eBook on *"How to Structure a Verse"* or a PDF guide on *"Live Performance Techniques,"* Gumroad converts higher than anything else.

Payhip: The smarter alternative. Similar to Gumroad but with lower fees and better tools for "Social Discounts" (e.g., "Tweet this link to get 10% off"). This is perfect for selling packs of your raw acapellas to DJs or remixers.

Untitled: The "Private Club." This started as a way to share demos securely but has evolved into a sleek app for selling unreleased audio. It gives your music an exclusive, "if you know, you know" vibe that streaming services can't replicate. Use this to sell your voice memos or "B-Side" demos directly to superfans.

THE DROP (Mobile & Scarcity) These platforms rely on FOMO (Fear Of Missing Out). They turn your release into an event.

Vault: The digital box set. Vault allows you to bundle unreleased demos, photos, and videos into a "Key" that fans buy to unlock content on their phone. It reintroduces scarcity to digital music.

Laylo: The notification king. It allows fans to RSVP for a drop via SMS or DM. When you release merch or tickets, Laylo texts them instantly. It cuts through the noise of the Instagram algorithm.

STRATEGY: Do not try to be on all of them. Pick one Flagship for your brand and one Digital outlet for your exclusives. Funnel your traffic there, not to Spotify.

CLOSING

THE FINAL WORD

The tools and information listed in this report are the infrastructure. The **Master Ownership** is the asset.

When you control the Master, you control the licensing, the distribution, and the equity. Do not build your house on rented land (leased beats). Own your masters, collect your data, and diversify your revenue.

See you in the studio.

- **Charlie Hayz**