The Summit Newsletter

Are You Ready For August?

February is here! The groundhog predicted six more weeks of winter… but we have something that is warmer and much more exciting to focus on: The **8th Annual ISSA Awards Show & Summit** and it's just around the corner!

We understand just how much planning goes into this exciting time, so we're here to help you stay organized, prioritized, and informed.

Here's a snapshot of what's ahead:

Key Deadlines & Reminders:

* **Nominations** (January – March)
* **Preparing your fans & followers for voting** (January – March)
* **Reserve your hotel rooms** (March)
* **Make your travel reservations** (March)
* **Fan Voting** (April)
* **Finalists announced** (May)
* **Have your music ready for the Judging team** (May)



This month we are focusing on the first two items:

1. Have you submitted your nomination form yet?

If not—why wait? Even if you're unsure whether your music is "award-ready," remember that the ISSA Awards Show & Summit is the **premiere event** to network and learn from artists, industry specialists, and executives. Don't miss your chance to be where it happens!

Submit your nomination here: https://issasongwriters.com/2026-nomination-form/

2. Start preparing your fans NOW!

Share your nominee graphics and begin talking to your family, friends, and followers about voting in **April**. The sooner you engage them, the easier it will be to mobilize votes when the time comes.

Let's make this your year to shine

Stay tuned for more updates, and as always, we're here to help you every step of the way.

THE LIVING WAGE FOR MUSICIANS ACT GAINS TWO NEW SPONSORS IN THE U.S. HOUSE



The following was submitted to us by the United Musicians & Allied Workers Union

The UMAW announced two new co-sponsors of the Living Wage for Musicians Act (LWMA) in the U.S. House of Representatives, Rep. Summer Lee (PA-12) of Pittsburgh and Rep. Troy Carter (LA-02) of New Orleans. Two more great music cities added to the list! We thank Reps. Lee and Carter, their staff, and of course our UMAW members who are constituents in their districts and who made their voices heard loud and clear in support of the LWMA.

The LWMA was reintroduced to Congress by its sponsor **Rep. Rashida Tlaib** (MI-12) in September. The LWMA would finally regulate streaming services like Spotify and ensure fair streaming payouts to artists. This legislation would create a new streaming royalty paid directly to artists, ensuring that musicians can build sustainable careers in the digital age. The new royalty would be an additional revenue stream on top of artists' existing royalties. As of January 25, 2026, the full list of Rep. Tlaib's LWMA co-sponsors now includes Rep. LaMonica (NJ-10), Rep. Alexandria Ocasio Cortez (NY-14), Rep. Ilhan Omar (MN-05), Rep. Delia Ramirez (IL-03), Rep. Bennie G. Thompson (MS-02); and now Rep. Lee and Rep. Carter as mentioned above.

Streaming Committee is meeting with House members and staff in districts across the country. **Come to a meeting** and get involved. Every district counts and our UMAW constituent members are the key to this strategy! **Streaming Committee meets virtually via Zoom every week on Mondays at 3pm PST / 6pm EST.**

This week, UMAW just launched a massive coalition action with 11 other partner groups calling for the passage of the LWMA. Join the action now and send a letter to your lawmakers here.

You can find out more information at **https://weareumaw.org/**

Shuttle Bus Cancelled

Although this was a huge hit by those who used it last year, we were unable to find anyone who wanted to assume oordinating the Shuttle Bus for this year's Summit. Thus we have decided not to offer the service. We will definitely try it again next year.



New 2026 Awards Show & Summit Items Available In The ISSA Store



ISSA Awards 2026 Tee Shirt

Have you checked out the ISSA Store lately? There are a lot of cool new items, including:



2026 ISSA Summit Tee Shirt



Embroidered 2026 Summit Cap

Make sure to go to the ISSA Store and add a few other these to your wardrobe. Just click on the link below and pick out something for yourself or your loved ones.

https://issasongwriters.com/store/

February Artist Poll

This month's artist poll is for Male Modern Country Artist of The Month. Please click the link below and vote daily for your favorite ISSA male modern country artist.

https://issasongwriters.com/poll/





Tamanie's Notes

We're proud to share a closer look at how the GRAMMY Awards process works, from eligibility and submission to screening and voting. Transparency and education matter — especially in an industry where so many artists are working hard to understand the path their music takes.



This past year, ISSA Songwriters has had the honor of submitting recordings on behalf of many of our members as a Registered Media Company with The Recording Academy. It's a responsibility we take seriously, and one we approach with professionalism, accuracy, and respect for the process.

Advocating for independent artists at this level is part of our ongoing mission — helping creators not only make great music, but also understand the systems that support and recognize it. We're incredibly proud of the artists we represent and grateful to be able to serve our community in this capacity.



Have You Heard??

The Rick Spins Show is now on TikTok! Although we're not broadcasting live on TikTok yet, you can catch snippets of Rick Spinning his tales and your songs on his TikTok page.

We need a few more followers to be able to broadcast live, so please click on the link below, watch and like the videos of Rick and then follow the page!

https://www.tiktok.com/@issa.rick.spins



Music Industry News!

News From Around The World That Affects All Of Us

A coalition of music publishers has filed a second copyright infringement lawsuit against AI company Anthropic, and it's a big one!

The companies, including **Universal Music Publishing Group**, **Concord Music Group**, **and ABKCO Music,** are seeking more than **$3 billion** in potential statutory damages over alleged infringement of more than **20,000** songs.

The complaint, filed today (January 28) in the Northern District of California, represents a dramatic escalation from the publishers' first lawsuit against Anthropic, which was filed in October 2023 and covered around **500** works with potential damages of around $75 million.

In a statement provided to MBW, the plaintiffs said: "We have been compelled to file this second lawsuit against Anthropic because of its persistent and brazen infringement of our songwriters' copyrighted compositions taken from notorious pirate sites."

"WE BELIEVE THIS WILL BE ONE OF THE LARGEST (IF NOT THE SINGLE-LARGEST) NON-CLASS ACTION COPYRIGHT CASES FILED IN THE US."

They added: "The new case also addresses Anthropic's ongoing violation of these rights by exploiting lyrics in the training of new AI models without authorization, as well as in the outputs generated.
"In total, we are suing for infringement of more than 20,000 songs, with potential statutory damages of more than $3 billion. We believe this will be one of the largest (if not the single-largest) non-class action copyright cases filed in the U.S."

The new complaint, obtained by MBW, makes two central allegations:

- That Anthropic's founders illegally downloaded millions of pirated books via BitTorrent, including songbooks containing the publishers' copyrighted musical compositions;
- And that Anthropic continues to infringe their works by training newer Claude AI models without authorization.

According to the complaint, the publishers only discovered the alleged torrenting activities in July 2025, when Judge William Alsup issued a ruling in a separate copyright case (*Bartz v. Anthropic*) that publicly revealed the company's use of pirate library websites.

60,000 AI TRACKS HIT DEEZER DAILY AS PLATFORM MOVES TO LICENSE DETECTION TECH TO THE MUSIC INDUSTRY

Deezer is now receiving over 60,000 fully AI-generated tracks every day – and is moving to license its AI-detection technology to the wider music industry.
The Paris-headquartered streaming service revealed the new figures today (January 29), confirming that synthetic content now accounts for roughly **39%** of all music delivered to the platform daily.

The **60,000** figure marks another significant jump from the **50,000** tracks Deezer reported in November, the **30,000** in September, and the **10,000** it disclosed when it first launched its AI detection tool in January 2025.

A year on from that launch, Deezer says it has detected and tagged over **13.4 million** AI-generated tracks on its platform – and is now making its detection technology commercially available.

The company says it has already performed successful tests with industry partners including French collecting society Sacem.
“We’ve seen a great interest in both our approach and our tool,” said **Alexis Lanternier, CEO, Deezer**.
“From now on, we are licensing the tech to make it widely available. Deezer continues to lead the way in promoting a transparent experience for artists and fans, with a commitment to fight AI-music fraud across our industry.”

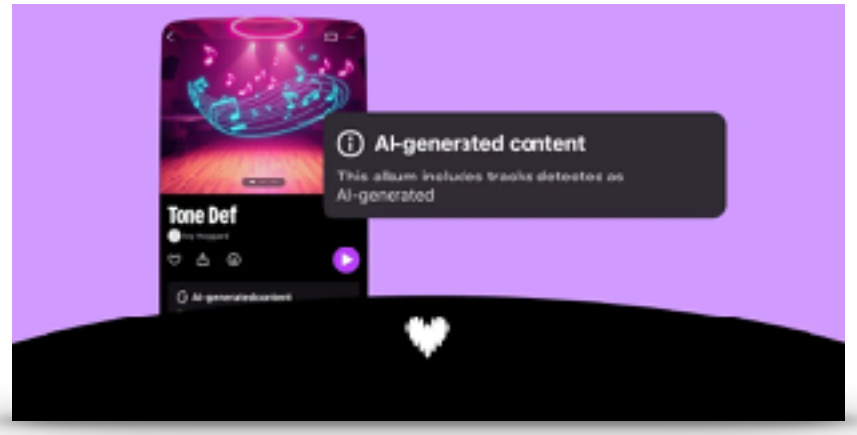
Deezer also revealed that up to **85%** of all streams on AI-generated music were fraudulent in 2025 – up from the **70%** figure it reported last year. Those streams are demonetized and removed from the royalty pool.
By comparison, streaming fraud across Deezer’s entire catalog accounted for **8%** of all streams in 2025.

While AI-generated music currently makes up only a small share of total streams on Deezer (up to **3%**), the platform maintains that generating fake streams remains the primary purpose for uploading such content.

“WE KNOW THAT THE MAJORITY OF AI-MUSIC IS UPLOADED TO DEEZER WITH THE PURPOSE OF COMMITTING FRAUD, AND WE CONTINUE TO TAKE ACTION.”
ALEXIS LANTERNIER, DEEZER

“Music generated entirely by AI has become nearly indistinguishable from human creation, and with a continuous flood of uploads to streaming platforms, our approach remains crystal clear: transparency for fans and protecting the rights of artists and songwriters,” said Lanternier.

“We know that the majority of AI-music is uploaded to Deezer with the purpose of committing fraud, and we continue to take action.



Screenshot of Deezer's new AI Detector

"We detect and tag AI-generated music and remove it from algorithmic recommendations, so that our users have a clear choice regarding what to listen to, while making it harder for fraudsters to game the system."

Deezer noted that it's the only music streaming platform to explicitly tag and exclude AI-generated music from algorithmic recommendations and editorial playlists.

The company claims that its AI detection tool can identify **100%** AI-generated music from generative models such as Suno and Udio, with the capability to add detection for other tools. Deezer says it has also made progress in creating a system with increased generalizability, capable of detecting AI-generated content without a specific dataset to train on.
In December 2024, Deezer applied for two patents for its AI Detection technology, focused on methods of detecting unique signatures that distinguish synthetic content from human-made music.

The announcement comes amid growing concerns about AI's impact on creator revenues. According to a study conducted by CISAC and PMP Strategy, nearly **25%** of creators' revenues are at risk by 2028 – amounting to as much as **€4 billion**.



Courtyard fun at the 2025 ISSA Summit, a great time to network, collaborate, relax make new friends, renew friendships with old friends and have fun!

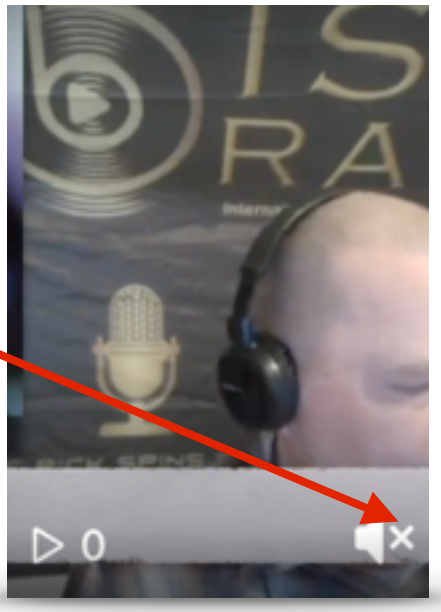
Don't miss out on this great opportunity at this years's event!





Where's The Audio To My Song?

Have you ever went to a TikTok post expecting to hear your latest song, only to see this?



Well we did a "Deep Dive" and contacted both TikTok and DistroKid to find out what's happening to your audio.

The Silent Clip: A Short Story About TikToK

Marco strummed the last chord of his new single, "City of Echoes," and let the sound hang in the quiet of his home studio. He was proud of this one. He'd uploaded it through his distributor, checked all the boxes for streaming, and even shared it with the team at ISSA Radio. Hearing it on **The Rick Spins Show** had been a thrill.

So when his friend Lena texted him—"I went to hear your song on TikTok! But why was the video silent?"—his heart sank. *Silent?* He found the clip. It was from The Rick Spins Show, a dynamic clip promoting his song. But where his soaring chorus should have been, there was silence. A label at the bottom read: *Audio removed due to copyright.*

Confused and a little hurt, Marco reached out to Rick. The reply was kind and enlightening. "It's not us, Marco," Rick explained. And it's not really TikTok being mean. It's a setting, often hidden in the fine print with your distributor or label. They've told platforms: 'When you find our music, mute it.'

Marco logged into his distributor portal. He navigated past the familiar album art and stats, digging deeper into the "Advanced Settings" and "Platform Permissions." And there it was: a small, unchecked box next to a line of text about **"Allowing user-generated content for social media."** It was off by default. He had never known it existed. With a click, he changed his preference from "Block" to "Allow." He was in control of his own music's journey again.

This isn't just Marco's story. It's happening to about 20% of the clips we post from The Rick Spins Show. Platforms like DistroKid, CD Baby, and others have these settings, but they aren't always obvious. Some distributors don't even offer the option, leaving it in the hands of the label.

Here's the takeaway for every ISSA artist: If you want your music to travel freely, to be shared by fans and featured on TikTok such as Rick's, you need to open the gates.

What You Can Do:

1. **Don't Panic.** If we contact you about a muted video, see it as a heads-up, not a problem.
2. **Log In.** Go into your distributor's dashboard (DistroKid, Tunecore, etc.) or contact your label directly.
3. **Look & Ask.** Search for settings regarding "TikTok," "UGC (User-Generated Content)," "Social Media Licensing," or "Content ID Policies." Your goal is to ensure your music is *allowed* for use on platforms like TikTok.
4. **Be Patient, sometimes,** even though you may have originally approved the song to be used, the approval may have slipped through the cracks. If this happens contact your Distributor and ask them to rectify the problem.
5. **Let Us Know.** Once you've made the change, tell us! We're happy to re-post the clip and let your music be heard as it was meant to be.

Together, we can turn these silent clips back into a chorus of shared sound. Let's make sure your voice isn't muted in the digital crowd.

The Rick Spins Show News



There seems to be some confusion among our ISSA Artists about "The Rick Spins Show" and "ISSA Radio 24/7 stream. Although "The Rick Spins Show" is exclusively on ISSA Radio, Rick has a separate email address. What gets sent to Rick does not get sent to ISSA Radio, and what gets sent to ISSA Radio, does not get sent to "The Rick Spins Show" Thus…

If you want your music played on the "Rick Spins Show" email it to ISSARadio.Rick@gmail.com
If you want your music added to "ISSA Radio", sent it to ISSAradiosubmissions@gmail.com
Please note that only REGISTERED ISSA members may submit original music to ISSA Radio, please make sure it is broadcast ready, professionally mixed, mastered and meta-tagged.

If you want your music on both platforms, then please make sure to send it to both email addresses. We hope this clears things up a bit.

Tips From Our Members

One of the great benefits of being a member of the ISSA is that we have so many members that are here to help you out with industry questions. This month's featured articles are from Angela Marie Eidenmiller (ISSA Associate Director of Artist Relations), and Michael Botte (ISSA Philadelphia Representative).

Michael Botte's Just One Tip



Welcome to this Month's edition of "Just One Tip", presented by "ON THE MIC WITH MICHAEL BOTTE" in partnership with Sound Foundation Studios, where I post a "TIP" I have learned either through experimentation or from observing others smarter than me!

This month is all about Radio Play!

RADIO PLAY is so NEAR and DEAR to my Heart. Just look at my timeline to see how I am CONTINUALLY thanking radio stations for playing me!!!

1️⃣ Before you approach any radio stations, make sure you have:
*An electronic press kit (EPK) or a well-crafted biography
*A strong visual identity that supports your music.
*Active and engaging social media profiles.
*High-quality sound recordings (preferably .wav or .mp3 format, 16-bit, 44.1kHz)
*Complete metadata for your tracks (title, performer, author, composer, producer, ISRC code, etc.)

2️⃣ Choose the Right Single
Select a high-quality track that represents your style and has strong potential for radio play. Your chosen single should be catchy, memorable, and professionally produced.

3️⃣. Respect Radio Formats
Radio stations often prefer tracks that are between 2:30 and 4:30 minutes long. Create a radio edit if necessary to fit this format, ensuring the version is clean and suitable for airplay. This adaptation can help increase your chances of getting your song played.

4️⃣. Choose the Right Radio Stations
Target radio stations that align with your music genre. Research stations that play similar music and cater to your potential audience. Reach out to commercial, independent, college, and online radio stations to maximize your exposure.

5. Radio Contact Methods
*Social Media: Reach out to radio stations on social media for contact information.
*Network: Networking among artists is so underrated, it hurts. Meet people because they know people. Your contacts go as far as the contacts of your contacts.
*Email: Send concise, engaging emails with links to your music and relevant information. Remember that some stations can get up to 100 emails/submissions per day!
*Radio Station Websites: Submit your music through their official websites or submission platforms they may use.
So COOL!!!! As an ISSA Representative, I must ensure I am serving my community.

PS - If you need AFFORDABLE AND PROFESSIONAL music production and promotion, please message or email me michaelbotteband@gmail.com



Angela's Artist Advice

Angela Marie Eidenmiller is the ISSA Associate Director of Artist Relations. Over the past few years many of our Award Winning Artists have benefited from Angela's sage advice.

Happy February ISSA family,

With it being Valentines soon, seems everyone is talking about love—but usually the kind you find in other people.
I've been thinking about the one love that has actually been there for me through every single peak and valley,
Music.

As I was putting my thoughts and feelings to paper, I kept coming back to all of you. Because the truth is, the music wouldn't exist without talented creators like you, who are willing to turn your personal and private moments into our collective lifelines, celebration anthems and every life's situations soundtrack.
Thank You

Loads of Love and appreciation ISSA family. ❤️❤️
Until the next month, go forth and continue to CONNECT authentically,
CREATE fearlessly, and confidently keep CONTRIBUTING your music
.
The world needs your music now more than ever.

— Your ISSA Sis,
Angela Marie Eidenmiller
ISSAsongwriters.angela@gmail.com

Dear Music,

I’m writing this because I realized today that you’ve been the most consistent presence in my life.

You are the only thing that has never asked me for anything, yet you’ve given me everything.

I want to thank you for being the perfect mirror for every version of me.

For the Contrast of My Life
You were there in the highest peaks. I remember the windows rolled down, the volume pushed to the limit, and that specific beat that made me feel like the world was finally mine for the taking. You turned a simple drive into a victory lap.
But more importantly, I thank you for the deepest valleys. When the room was too quiet and my thoughts were too loud, you stepped in. You sat with me in the dark when words from friends felt like too much effort. You gave a rhythm to my grief and a melody to my loneliness, making me feel understood without me having to say a single word.
When I was restless, you were my anchor.
When I was bored, you were my adventure.
When I was angry, you were my release.
When I was in love, you were the only language that made sense.
The Heart of the Song
You are the time machine that takes me back to being ten years old in an instant, and you are the courage that helps me face whatever is coming tomorrow. You are the invisible thread that connects my memories, stitching together the person I was with the person I am becoming.
To the Creators
But as much as I love the sound, I know you don't just appear out of thin air.
To the music makers: thank you. Thank you to the songwriters who bled onto a page so I didn’t have to feel alone in my pain. Thank you to the producers who obsessed over a snare hit or a synth swell until it felt like a heartbeat. Thank you to the singers who pushed their voices until they cracked, just to reach the part of my soul that was hiding.
You took your private moments—your joys, your heartbreaks, and your midnight epiphanies—and you packaged them up for me. You turned your life into my lifeline.
Without the makers, the world would be far too quiet. Thank you for giving me something to listen to when I couldn't find the words myself.

With eternal gratitude,
Ang... your listener



The 2026 ISSA Awards Show & Summit Host Hotel



We are pleased to announce that the Courtyard by Marriott Atlanta Perimeter Center will once again serve as the Host Hotel for the 2026 International Songwriters & Singers Association (ISSA) Awards Show & Summit.

We have secured excellent room rates for our attendees, and the hotel management has kindly confirmed that our group will have access to the courtyard area for after-hours events.

Important Booking Information:
A limited block of rooms has been reserved by Tamanie Dove. To access the special ISSA room rate, you must first purchase your tickets to the ISSA Awards Show. After providing proof of your ticket purchase, you will receive a dedicated code to book your hotel room at our discounted rate.

We understand that Awards Show tickets are not yet available for purchase. This early announcement is intended to help you plan ahead. The moment ticket sales are launched, we will notify you immediately by email, ensuring you have the earliest opportunity to secure your preferred seats and hotel accommodations.



Stogie Joe Guitars

Have you been to Stogie Joe Guitars website yet? These are handcrafted exquisite 3 or 4 string guitars that offer up a huge sound!



We will be raffling off this guitar at the 2026 ISSA Summit, but why wait until August, go to stogiejoeguitars.com and order yours today!



Your Stage Awaits: Let's Co-Create the 2026 ISSA Summit Together!

Hello ISSA Family,
As the rhythm of 2026 picks up, so does the excitement for our upcoming Summit— a cornerstone event where songwriters and artists connect, learn, and elevate their craft together. This month marks our **fifth Summit Newsletter**, and we're filled with gratitude for this growing channel that keeps us connected, away from the fleeting scroll of social media.

You spoke, and we listened. Many of you shared that missing Facebook posts meant missing out on Summit moments last year, and you expressed a desire to help plan if you could stay in the loop. Well, you're in the loop! This newsletter is for you, and now, we're reaching out not just to inform, but to invite—to truly build this event *together*.

Why Your Voice Matters More Than Ever
The ISSA Summit has always been a testament to our core belief: **Artists Helping Artists**. It's a volunteer-powered engine fueled by passion. While attending the Summit is free, creating its magic — the inspiring breakout sessions, the networking hubs, the coveted swag bags—requires collective effort and resources.

So far, we've had a handful of wonderful members step forward (you know who you are, and we are profoundly thankful!). But to realize the full potential of this year's gathering, we need more hands on deck. This isn't about adding to your to-do list; it's about shaping an experience that benefits us all.

Two Key Areas Where You Can Make a Real Difference:

1. Shape the Conversation: Breakout Sessions & Speakers
We dream of stages filled with dynamic discussions—from music marketing and licensing to vocal health and creative collaboration. But we need your brainpower!

- **Got a Topic?** What do *you* want to learn about? What challenges are you facing that a session could solve? Send us your idea—no idea is too big or too small.

- **Know a Speaker?** Think of the knowledgeable people in your network—industry pros, successful indie artists, coaches. Would they inspire our community? Making an introduction is a huge help. We had hoped to announce our speaker lineup now, but we're counting on *you* to help us fill that stage.

2. Fuel the Engine: Sponsors & In-Kind Support
We don't need just cash; we need creative support. Every business loves exposure to a dedicated audience like ours.

- **Know a Local Business?** A café, a guitar shop, a recording studio, a merch printer? A donation for our raffle or swag bags (think: stickers, picks, gift cards, CDs, etc..) gets them featured in our newsletter, social media, and Summit program. It's a win-win that directly offsets costs like venue rental.

The Ripple Effect of "Yes"

When we don't act as a community, we risk losing the very things that make the Summit special. For instance, due to a lack of volunteer coordination, we've had to make the tough decision to **cancel the shuttle service for the Awards Show Pre and After Parties this year**, a service many enjoyed last year. This is a tangible example of how volunteer help directly shapes your experience.

This Is Your Call to the Stage
Imagine a Summit built by the very community it serves—topics you chose, sponsors you championed, an atmosphere thick with shared ownership and pride. That's the Summit we can have.

How to Step Forward:
It's simple. Reply to this Newsletter with:

- **Your idea** for a breakout session topic.
- **The name** of a potential speaker or sponsor you can connect us with.
- **A simple "I'm in"** to join our volunteer planning circle.

Let's pay it forward. Let's ensure that the 2026 ISSA Summit isn't just something you attend, but something you helped create. The spotlight isn't just on the stage; it's on us, as a community, to make this happen.

In harmony and hope,
The ISSA Summit Planning Team
Together, let's write the next verse of our story.



This Newsletter is edited by Todd Apfel (issasongwriters.todd@gmail.com) & Angela Marie Eidenmiller (issasongwriters.angela@gmail.com) Feel free to reach out to either of us with your comments or suggestions.