The Summit Newsletter

We're Off And Running

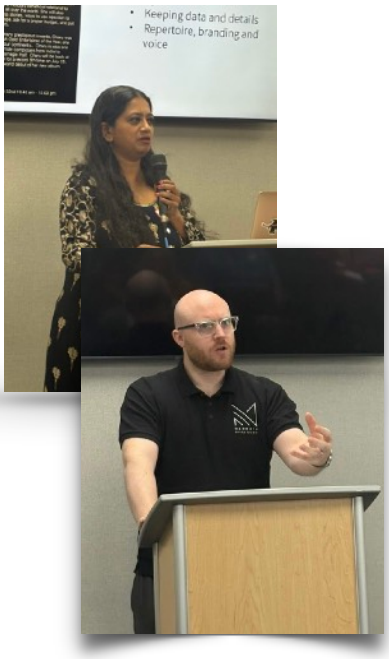
The planning is underway, and we're off and running with the 2026 ISSA Summit! Starting with this month's Newsletter, we will be providing updates on where we are in the planning stages for next years show! We will also be giving you opportunities to help us out with the planning.

Thanks to you, the 2025 Summit was a huge success and our goal is to make the 2026 event even better. To do that we definitely will need your help. Throughout this issue there will be different articles where we will be asking for ideas, help and opinions. Many of you have offered up your services to help, Here's your chance, as we're offering opportunities to help us and participate in next year's Summit.

Seeking Sponsors for the 2026 Summit

One of the reasons for the success of the 2025 Summit was the many sponsors that provided us with some great items that we were able to either give away or raffle off! The rental of both conference rooms, the swag bags, and keynote speaker fees were just a few of the costs that the raffle helped pay for.

Believe it or not, you all probably know someone or a business that might want to have exposure with our attendees at the Summit, on our Facebook page and newsletter. We would be glad to accept whatever they have to offer. It can be a product for raffle, promo items (koozies, stickers, picks, pens, magnets, etc..) for the Swag Bags, or cash to help defray the costs. Please have them email Todd Apfel or Angela Marie Eidenmiller for more information.



Breakout Sessions & Keynote Speakers

Part of what made the 2025 Summit such a big success was the breakout sessions and Keynote Speakers that provided our attendees with lots of useful information. Our objective for this year is to use you to improve on what we accomplished last year.

Before we can find and schedule speakers, we need to come up with topics. We're asking each of you to think of topics that you'd like to see addressed and then think about who would be a good candidate to speak on that topic (yes it can be yourself). Then take those ideas and send an email to Angela Marie Eidenmiller or Todd Apfel. We look forward to seeing your suggestions and getting next year's speakers scheduled as soon as possible.

Shuttle Bus Coordinator Needed

We are in need of someone to assume the responsibilities of procuring and coordinating the Shuttle Bus for this year's Summit. Your responsibilities will be to issue "Request For Quotes" from transportation companies. Then to select and procure the best company. You will also be responsible for coordinating a schedule with attendees. If this is a task that you would like to take on, please email Angela Marie Eidenmiller or Todd Apfel. We can supply you with names and contacts at the companies we considered and worked with last year.



HITS Act Versus Living Wage For Musicians Act

If you've never heard of Krystle Delgado (Top Music Attorney), we strongly suggest that you look her up. During the Summit many of our artists we talking about how Congress had passed the HITS Act and how it was going to help musicians. In one of Krystle's recent YouTube broadcasts, she explains how the HITS Act really is something that artists have had at their disposal all along and how we should be requesting Congress to pass the Living Wage For Musicians Act (H.R. 5664). Click on the following link to watch the episode, it's well worth the 11-1/2 minutes of time!
https://youtu.be/soFxnfOxZds?si=BHWAVrv_brlpaXqQ



Tamanie's Notes

The International Singer Songwriters Association is more than awards show. Becoming an **ISSA Member** means joining a powerful global network of independent artists, musicians, and industry professionals — all supporting one another year-round. Here's what you get:

Why Join ISSA? Because Independent Doesn't Mean Alone.

When you become an **ISSA Member**, you're joining a worldwide family of artists who lift each other up every single day. Here's what you'll gain:

Global Connections & Support

- Daily interaction and encouragement from thousands of members and reps around the world
- A private global member directory for collaboration and exposure

Recognition & Opportunities

- Annual **ISSA Awards Show** in Atlanta
- Monthly Featured Artists & Gold Record Awards
- Billboard and media exposure
- Grammy® recommendation eligibility through ISSA's Registered Media Company

Radio, TV & Media Access

- Hundreds of approved radio stations ready to play your music
- **ISSA TV** on Roku
- **ISSA Radio** on Live365 (commercial free!)
- **ISSA Radio** LIVE Shows Monday and Thursday on The Rick Spins Show
- **ISSA Magazine** features and interviews

Career Growth & Industry Doors

- **ISSA Record Label** opportunities
- **Pitch & Sync** placements with respected professionals
- ISSA Reps host meet & greets, open mics, and local lunches

Community Perks

- Member birthday shout-outs
- Live trivia nights with free prizes
- Annual Toys for Tots Guitar Giveaway
- Exclusive ISSA merchandise

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).



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 LOL!

This month is all about SONG STRUCTURE!

Song structure is the blueprint of how a song is organized, using different sections to create a musical journey for the listener. Think of it as the roadmap that guides you through the story and emotions of the song. While there are no rigid rules, understanding common structures can be incredibly helpful for songwriters.
Common Song Structures (I gravitate to #3):
These sections can be arranged in various ways to create different song structures. Here are a few of the most popular ones:

1️⃣ Verse-Chorus (AB): This is a very basic and common structure where verses (A) alternate with the chorus (B).

2️⃣ Verse-Chorus-Verse-Chorus (ABAB): A slight variation that reinforces the main theme by repeating the verse and chorus twice.

3️⃣ Verse-Chorus-Verse-Chorus-Bridge-Chorus (ABABCB): This structure adds a bridge (C) to provide contrast before the final chorus, adding more dynamic and emotional depth.

4️⃣ Verse-Pre-Chorus-Chorus (ABC): The pre-chorus (B) helps to build anticipation for the impact of the chorus (C) after the verse (A).

5️⃣ Verse-Pre-Chorus-Chorus-Verse-Pre-Chorus-Chorus-Bridge-Chorus (ABCB ABCB DB): A more elaborate structure that utilizes the pre-chorus and bridge to create a dynamic and engaging song.

6️⃣ Verse-Verse-Bridge-Verse (AABA): This structure, often called the 32-bar form, was common in early popular music and jazz. The bridge (B) offers a contrasting section before returning to a final verse (A).

Thank you, family



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.

Aria's First Release - A Manager / Artist Conversation

Let's set the scene: A Musician (Aria) is excited about a new single release, and he Manager (Miles) is being the necessary, detail-oriented team member.

Aria (Musician): The final mix for the album is insane. We're launching in 3 weeks, right?

Miles (Manager): Love that energy, and yes, three weeks out. Now, let's talk the not-so-sexy stuff: Copyright Registration. Did you file the e-copyright yet?

Aria:: Do I need to? Isn't it like, automatically mine the second I exported the WAV file?

Miles: You know the law, but that's like bringing a knife to a gunfight. Automatic protection is just the bare minimum.

Aria: A knife fight? Seriously?

Miles: Seriously! If some massive TikTok star copies your main riff and you have to sue, the court doesn't care about your WAV file timestamp. They want the official, registered copyright.

Aria: Ugh. Why is the government always so extra?

Miles: Because that registration is your legal power-up. It makes you eligible for statutory damages and attorney fees in federal court. That's the difference between maybe breaking even on a lawsuit and actually being reimbursed and paid what you're owed. Plus, the public record scares off weaker infringers.

THE INSTANT PROTECTION TRAP

Aria: So I saw that service that gives you an "Instant Global Certificate" for $20. Can't I just use that to save the hassle?

Miles: NO. Please, no. Look, those services are fine for time-stamping, but they are not a substitute for official government registration with the U.S. Copyright Office.

** Conversation Continued On The Next Page **

Aria: Why not? They say they offer protection.

Miles: They're selling convenience and marketing hype. The only thing that grants you those crucial legal benefits (the attorney fees and statutory damages) is the official, government-issued stamp. Anything else is a weak foundation.

Aria: So I'd be paying for a certificate that doesn't actually help me win the knife fight... or gunfight.

Miles: Correct. You pay more for less legal standing. When you do it yourself, you pay the official filing fee (around $45-$65) and you learn the forms, which actually gives you better control over your work in the long run.

Aria: Fine, fine. I'll get into the eCO portal this afternoon. Is it one form per song?

Miles: That brings us to the cost-saving pro tip! Since you have three new singles lined up before the album drop...

If you can bundle a collection of songs (especially unpublished works by the same author/claimant) you might qualify for a group registration. That means you pay one lower fee (like $65) to cover multiple tracks—not a separate fee for every single.

Aria: Wow! So, saving money by being organized?

Miles: It's smart business! Just remember the difference: register the Composition (the melody and lyrics), the Sound Recording (the master), or both. For a new release, we should cover both!

Aria: On it! Composition + Sound Recording. Official U.S. Copyright Office. No "instant certificates." Saving money with bundling.

Until the next newsletter, "Go forth, CONNECT authentically, CREATE fearlessly, and confidently CONTRIBUTE your music to the world."

- Your ISSA Sis,

Angela Marie Eidenmiller

Email Angela your feedback, questions and suggestions of subjects you'd like for upcoming articles.

On the following page is a great Copyright Checklist that you can use

The Songwriter's Copyright Registration Checklist

Protect your songs like the hits they're destined to be!

- **STEP 1: Know What You're Protecting**
  Musical Composition (lyrics + melody), Sound Recording (the recording), or both. If you wrote and recorded it yourself, register both under one form!

- **STEP 2: Gather Your Info**
  Titles, artist name, authors, year, MP3/WAV files, lyric sheets. Label files clearly — "SongTitle_YourName_2025.mp3".

- **STEP 3: U.S. Registration**

Visit copyright.gov/registration.
Create an eCO account, upload your song, and pay:
$45 (single) or $65 (standard/group).

* Save money with "Group Registration for Unpublished Works."

- **STEP 4: Canadian Songwriters**

Go to CIPO online (~CAD $50).

* SOCAN = royalties; CIPO = copyright protection.

- **STEP 5: European Creators**

Copyright is automatic. For proof, use time stamping or deposit services. Register with local PROs like PRS, SACEM, or GEMA.

- **STEP 6: Keep Records Organized**
  Store certificates, lyric sheets, receipts, backups. Keep a "Copyright Portfolio" per album.

- **STEP 7: Avoid "Instant Protection" Traps**

Only government registration (like the U.S. Copyright Office) holds up in court. Do it yourself — cheaper, official, and empowering.

- **STEP 8: Celebrate!**

You did it! You own your songs — officially.

* Celebrate your creative rights and get back to writing your next hit!

Odds-N-Ends

The ISSA and the Summit is all about you, the "Artist! What helps us grow is when you give us your feedback. So here's your chance! If there is something that you feel will help out the ISSA, the ISSA Awards Show or the ISSA Summit, well… all you have to do is send either Angela Marie Eidenmiller or Todd Apfel an email and we will definitely take your suggestions into consideration. Remember, there is no such thing as a bad idea, as ideas are what created both the ISSA and the ISSA Summit!





Mid-Winter Retreat

During one of the recent Rick Spins radio broadcasts it was brought up in the chat that we should have a Mid-Winter Retreat. What do you think?

* Should we have one? If so..
* When? We were thinking a Thursday night through Sunday, sometime in January or February.
* Where? We have 2 retreat centers in Iowa that are available for a reasonable rate. Would you be willing to come to Iowa in the winter? Would you rather go somewhere warmer? If so please let us know if you have any leads on a place we could use for a reasonable price.

For this to happen this year, we need to get this coordinated as soon as possible. So if this is of interest to you, please get back to us ASAP with you "when" and "where" suggestions!

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.