

# QUESTIONS ABOUT MUSIC LICENSING AND YOUR BREWERY? BMI TAPS INTO THE CONVERSATION

## **Do we need a BMI License if we only play original music?**

Many brewery owners say they hire songwriters that only play "original" music and not songs that have been recorded by someone else, so they don't need to license. The term "original music" generally means musical works written by the performing artists. That doesn't mean, however, that the artists hired are not affiliated with BMI. This is because licensing organizations like BMI are the vehicles through which songwriters and composers are compensated for the public performances of the music they write. BMI represents more than 800,000 songwriters, so there is a strong possibility that the singer/songwriter or band that you're hiring to play their original music is affiliated with us and can receive royalties if they submit their playlist to BMI. What do these royalties cover? Food, gas, rent back home, a place to rest between gigs and an opportunity to continue to create the music that we all enjoy and benefit from. How does BMI pay them? From licensing fees. What you pay artists for is their ability to entertain your customers, which is an incentive to keep them on the road to their dreams. BMI pays them for the public performances of the songs they create, which are protected under U.S. copyright law.

## **I have received multiple calls and letters from BMI but am unsure of whether I actually need a license. What can I do?**

BMI was the first performing rights organization to set up a customer care center specifically designed to answer your questions. If you have concerns about our correspondence, or just have questions about your need for a license, please call **888-689-5264** so that we can help. You can also check out the article on music licensing and BMI's accreditation on the Better Business Bureau's website.

## **We have a license with another PRO. Do we still need to license with BMI?**

A music license with another performing rights organization allows you to perform only copyrighted music represented by that organization. It does not cover public performances of the nearly 13 million musical works licensed by BMI. This is because each songwriter or composer may belong to only one performing right organization at any given time, so each PRO licenses a unique repertoire of music.

## **Where do my fees go?**

BMI operates on a non-profit making basis, returning approximately 88% of all revenue to the musical creators and copyright owners we represent. The remaining 12% covers BMI's operating expenses that include costs associated with processing data on more than a trillion performances, including those that are live, which cumulatively give BMI an accurate model of what is being played by all types of music users. In every quarterly statement they receive, BMI songwriters can see what sources they're being paid from, as well as how much is being distributed per source. For licensed businesses, BMI provides cost-effective blanket copyright clearance to play BMI-affiliated music. Your music license fees help songwriters create even more music, and more music helps your business prosper by allowing you to create an enticing ambiance for your customers.

## **How do we know if we are playing BMI music?**

Approximately half of all the music played in America each day is represented by BMI. In addition to the music of our U.S. copyright owners, the BMI repertoire also includes the music of songwriters and composers that belong to more than 90 sister societies across the globe, adding to the diversity of all of the music BMI licenses. For a list of song titles and songwriters represented by BMI, please visit [www.bmi.com/repertoire](http://www.bmi.com/repertoire).



**BMI**