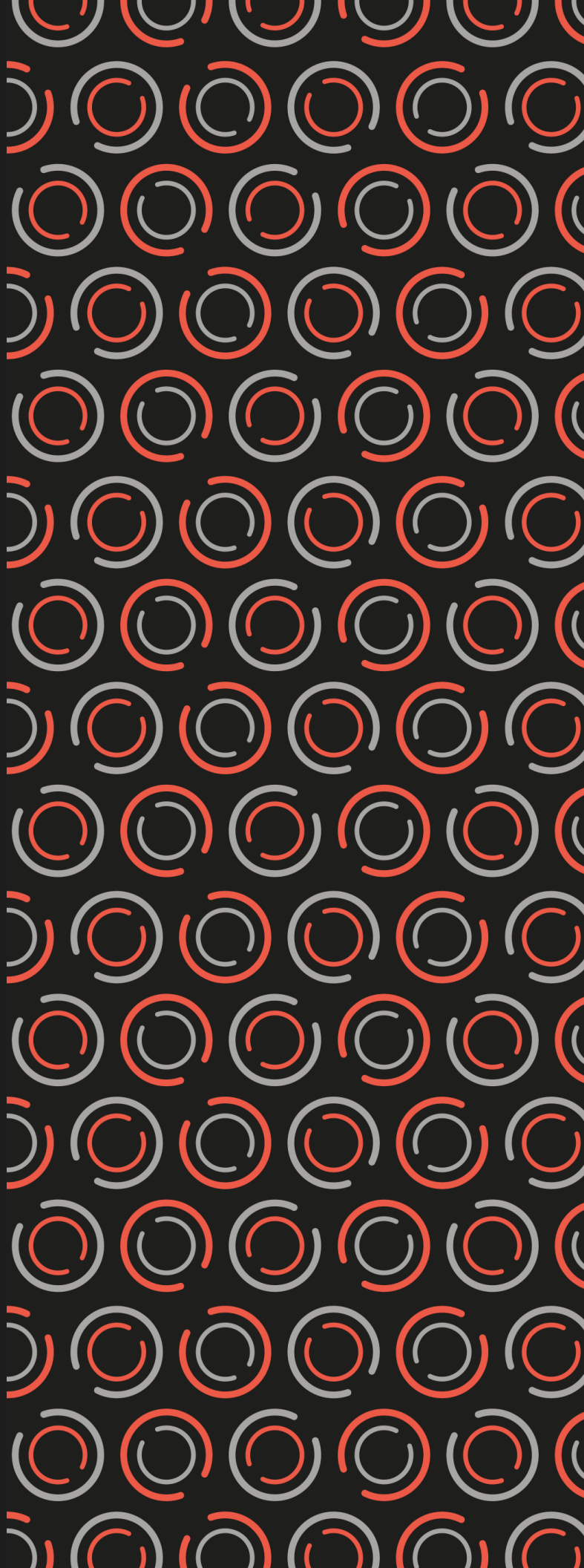


2021

TOP TWELVE MUSIC PUBLISHING TIPS



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Music publishing is an important part of a songwriter's long-term revenue, but can often seem complex. Below are Songtrust's top twelve tips for setting up your publishing and ensuring you're accessing all the global royalties due to you.

Understand the two halves of a song

Every song is broken down into the **master recording** and **composition** (underlying music and lyrics), which each earn their own types of royalties. You may be familiar with the royalties earned on the master side - master recording royalties and neighbouring rights. But on the publishing side, the composition breaks down into performance and mechanical royalties, as well as micro-sync royalties (e.g. YouTube).

Performance revenue further is split into the writer's share and the publisher's share. Both sides of the song and the royalties they earn are earned in different ways and by different pay sources. Most artists get a label and/or distributor in place before they start thinking about publishing and, in that case, may be leaving those royalties on the table.

Choose a distributor

In order for your songs to generate revenue, they need to be released and distributed to the world. **Choose a distributor** that works best for you and get your songs in front of fans.

Affiliate with a collection society

Every songwriter needs to be affiliated with a **collection society** (a Performing Rights Organisation or a Collective Management Organisation) in order to collect their performance royalties and enter the publishing system. Songwriters based in the UK can join PRS, and those based in Ireland can join IMRO.

Understand that your PRO isn't enough

While it's important that songwriters be affiliated with a collection society, it's also vital to understand that **the work doesn't end there**. Because the PRO is responsible for collecting only performance royalties, and generally focuses on its home territory, international performance royalties and mechanical royalties are still uncollected.

A publisher or publishing administrator (like Songtrust), with an extensive global network, will ensure all songs are proactively registered around the world for all publishing royalty collections.

Choose a publishing partner

Whether you're just getting started or recently learned about publishing, you'll need to review your options and **choose a publishing partner** to work with. Even if your goal is a traditional publishing deal, working with a publishing administrator, like Songtrust, in the meantime is a great way to ensure you're collecting what your songs are earning until that time comes. Research your options and choose the one that makes the most sense for you.

Download a split sheet

As you learn more about publishing, you'll want a structured way to document the ownership shares with your co-writers. [Downloading a split sheet template](#) and adding this step into your co-writing routine will help to avoid any uncomfortable split discussions with co-writers or provide evidence if you encounter a split dispute later on.

Gather your songs' metadata

There are a few important pieces of **metadata** you need to have on hand when registering your songs for publishing, and it's a good idea to have them readily available. In addition to names and songwriter split shares for all co-writers on a song, whether or not you're managing rights for all of them, you'll need the IPI numbers for all your managed writers (Interested Party Information, issued by a collection society) and ISRCs for every song. You'll also need your tax ID information handy so you can be legally paid by your publisher when the royalties start coming through.

Register your songs

A very important step is actually registering your songs with your publisher as soon as they've been released. **Don't wait to register them** - make it a part of your process and avoid losing out on hard-earned royalties.

Global Royalty Collection

There are countless usage types that your songs can earn money from, and even more places around the world that they can be earned. Many countries have multiple collection societies covering each type of right - and with **nearly 250 countries around the world**, imagine registering directly everywhere your songs might be used. Ensuring you're collecting not only your domestic earnings but also your global earnings would be virtually impossible without the help of a publisher or publishing administrator who has a network of direct global collection partnerships.

Submit your setlists

If you're a performing artist and are performing gigs or touring, [make sure you submit your setlists for performance revenue](#) with your collection society or publisher. Remember, there is often a time period of about 6 months before your society may no longer accept setlists.

Set up a publishing company

Generally, anyone who is managing multiple songwriters will want to set up a [publishing company](#) at their local PRO. For tax and liability reasons, it often also makes sense to incorporate this company as a separate business, but that isn't necessary to set up your publishing company with your PRO and start registering writers with it. Because a publishing administrator will need to ensure registrations match at all global sources, it's essential to ensure your administrator has not only all songwriter information but also information about your publishing entity.

Keep a reference on hand

Music publishing can be complex, but you don't have to navigate it alone. Build out your resources and start by downloading our free [Modern Guide to Music Publishing](#) to learn (and refer to later!) the fundamentals of music publishing.

If you're a songwriter looking to get your publishing in order, Songtrust can help get your catalogue registered globally and collect everything you're due. If you're ready to take the next step, you can [join Songtrust today](#) or, [get in touch with our team for more information](#).

