

The **Digital Innovator Award** is given to a company or individual who is pioneering the effective use of digital technologies to positively impact how the modern music industry does business.

Submission #1

Brian Harris

Founder, MedRhythms

brian@medrhythms.com

I'd like to nominate and offer my strongest recommendation for Brian Harris, Founder of MedRhythms, for the Digital Innovator Award. Brian is redefining what music can be in the digital age, not simply as entertainment, but as medicine.

Through MedRhythms, Brian pioneered the world's first prescription music platform, which helps patients recovering from stroke and living with Parkinson's disease. He was the first to push through barriers that many believed were insurmountable. He navigated the rigor of clinical trials, FDA regulation, achieved Medicare reimbursement, and in doing so demonstrated, at a national level, that music can function as a legitimate medical treatment. This work did more than create a product; it established an entirely new industry category at the intersection of music, technology, and health.

Brian's innovation proves that music can be delivered digitally in a way that is clinically validated, scalable, and sustainable - one in which rights holders are paid, new business models emerge, and, most importantly, people are meaningfully helped. His leadership challenges the modern music industry to imagine a future where music is not only consumed, but prescribed; not only streamed, but trusted. We've always believed music is good for our souls and medicine for our bodies, and now it is - thanks to Brian's innovation.

I met Brian in my role at Universal Music Group, after we struck a groundbreaking partnership with MedRhythms. In my time working on this partnership, I've seen firsthand the impact of Brian's work. Presenting his vision to our labels and artists has been transformative; many have been deeply moved, with some brought to tears by the realization of how their music can directly improve lives. This collaboration between MedRhythms and UMG represents a milestone for the music industry, enabling artists to witness their creations being used in clinical settings to enhance patient outcomes.

I have a personal connection to this mission as a number of people in my life have suffered from strokes, and I often think about how much they could have benefited from InTandem/MedRhythms. Knowing how music profoundly affects people, I am deeply moved by the thought of this technology bringing hope and healing to so many patients and their families.

Brian Harris is not just using digital technology to advance music, he is expanding its purpose, its value, and its impact on humanity. He is profoundly deserving of the Digital Innovator Award.

Details and press clips below

Website: <https://medrhythms.com/>

Youtube: Shows the power of the therapy with real patients and discussions with industry leaders
<https://www.youtube.com/@Medrhythmstherapy>

Press Clippings

Announcing the World's First Prescription Music Product (for Stroke Survivors):

<https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/medrhythms-announces-fda-listing-of-intandem-mr-001-to-improve-walking-and-ambulation-in-adults-with-chronic-stroke-301871199.html>

Announcing Partnership with Universal Music Group:

<https://www.rollingstone.com/pro/news/universal-music-medrhythms-partnership-strokes-music-therapy-1233747/>

Announcing Reimbursement Code from Medicare:

<https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/medrhythms-announces-new-cms-reimbursement-code-for-intandem-rehabilitation-system-for-chronic-stroke-gait-impairment-302228922.html>

Announcing Second Prescription Music Product (for People with Parkinson's disease):

<https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/medrhythms-announces-fda-class-ii-listing-for-move-to-support-gait-rehabilitation-and-motor-function-for-parkinsons-disease-302394002.html>

Announcing \$2M Grant from Michael J Fox Foundation:

<https://www.eurekaalert.org/news-releases/1114075>

Announcing Brian Harris being first Music Therapist named as member of The Recording Academy and Fellow of the American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine:

<https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/medrhythms-co-founder-and-chief-scientific-officer-brian-harris-named-2025-fellow-of-the-american-congress-of-rehabilitation-medicine-acrm-302551525.html>

Jeff Stoltz, UMG

jeff.stoltz@umusic.com | 3108658683

The **Digital Innovator Award** is given to a company or individual who is pioneering the effective use of digital technologies to positively impact how the modern music industry does business.

Submission #2

Bryn Boughton

VP, Music Affairs, Feed.fm

bryn@feed.fm

Bryn Boughton has spent more than two decades advocating for artists, championing licensing transparency, and building digital music systems at moments of profound industry change. From the earliest days of digital distribution to today's social and UGC-driven ecosystem, her career reflects a rare ability to anticipate where culture is heading — and to build practical, artist-first solutions that allow music to thrive there.

At the dawn of the digital music era in 2003, Bryn co-founded and launched IRIS Distribution, one of the early digital distribution platforms designed to help independent artists and labels navigate the transition from physical to digital formats. At a time when the industry was grappling with piracy, collapsing retail, and unproven online models, IRIS helped rightsholders establish legitimate digital footprints and revenue streams. This early work laid the foundation for Bryn's lifelong focus on scalable, rights-respecting innovation.

She continued pushing boundaries through ventures such as Blinkeractive and Noiseclerk, exploring emerging intersections between music, technology, and digital marketing long before they became industry standards. Alongside her entrepreneurial work, Bryn managed bands directly giving her firsthand experience with the economic realities artists face — insight that continues to shape her approach to licensing and product design today.

In 2025, Bryn brought this deep, end-to-end perspective to one of the most consequential innovations for rightsholders in the modern social ecosystem: Feed Clips, built in partnership with Warner Music Group and Warner Chappell Music.

At a time when generative AI audio dominates headlines — diluting catalog value and complicating rights attribution — Bryn delivered a bold counterpoint: a system purpose-built to ensure that human-created music remains central to digital culture and fully compensated as it spreads across new platforms. The deal she architected opens a high-integrity path for real artists, real catalogs, and real royalties to thrive in the most dynamic areas of media consumption.

Feed Clips launched during a pivotal shift: the fragmentation era of social media. Users are flocking to dozens of new platforms — niche communities, hobby networks, messaging environments, creative tools — each shaping culture in real time. Historically, only Big Tech could afford the infrastructure, licensing, and compliance required to bring real music into

these environments. Everyone else had to choose between silence or unlicensed audio and constant takedown risk.

Bryn changed that.

By securing both sound recording and publishing rights from WMG and WCM, she built a unified, developer-accessible licensing system for song clips delivered through a lightweight API. This breakthrough enables emerging platforms — not just incumbents — to offer music-driven experiences users expect, from social creation flows to storytelling and communication tools.

For rightsholders, the impact is clear:

- New revenue from the fastest-growing category of music consumption: short-form and social video
- Total transparency through automated, platform-agnostic reporting
- Expanded discovery in the environments where youth culture and music trends begin
- Protection of catalog value as synthetic content threatens to erode it
- A future-proof licensing model that scales with each new social platform that emerges

From IRIS Distribution in 2003 to Feed Clips in 2025, Bryn’s work consistently ensures that artists and songwriters are not left behind as technology reshapes how music is created, shared, and monetized. Her career embodies a long-standing belief that innovative technology and artist-first principles are not in conflict — they are mutually reinforcing.

For her sustained strategic vision, her deep commitment to rightsholders, and her pivotal role in shaping a future where human-made music leads the next chapter of digital expression, Bryn Boughton exemplifies the spirit of the Digital Innovator of the Year Award.

VIDEO: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-yOmKNCg-Azy-LdiO8vFLCjMAKvqAtcr/view?usp=sharing>

Melissa Clark, Feed.fm
melissa@feed.fm | 4158689951

The **Digital Innovator Award** is given to a company or individual who is pioneering the effective use of digital technologies to positively impact how the modern music industry does business.

Submission #3

Cas Weinbren

*Modern Musician, Producer, Content Creator, Copyright Reform Advocate,
Caskeyboardproducer*
caskeyboardproducer@yahoo.com

Cas Weinbren / Caskeyboardproducer is an award winning (NYTopliners 2020), blessed to be a multimillion streamed, classical and jazz trained keyboardist, composer, songwriter, multi-genre producer, project manager, content creator, creator technologist, and copyright reform advocate. Cas's credits include Disney's Zombies (I'm Finally Me and Utopia), song collaborations with Statik Selektah, Action Bronson, Joey Bada\$\$, country legend Stephen Wrench, singer-songwriter-producer Kari Kimmel, spiritual organization Voices 4 Him and his own band /. brand See See Beats. Cas is also an ambassador with Muso.ai and has been advocating for the usage of Muso.AI for copyright protection, advocating for the proposed Living Wage For Musicians Act HR 7763 (now supported by NYC and Detroit City Councils) which he was present in NYC City Hall for, the Protect The Working Musicians Act HR 5576, the American Royalties Too Act HR 4017, the American Music Fairness Act HR 791, the Legislative Branch Agency Clarification Act HR 6028, and the No Fakes Act HR 2794 in light of the devastating \$424 Million audit of the Mechanical Licensing Collective and the failed Music Modernization Act, the \$123 Million lawsuit against ASCAP by Alibi Music, the class action lawsuit against ASCAP and BMI by Alexander C. Baker and Adam Bravery, the \$400 Million Soundexchange v Sirius XM lawsuit, and now the power of generative AI tools that completely change how copyright (music, art, animation, post production, film, episodic film, theatre, live events) are created, consumed, marketed and valued in the age of AI, smartphones, social media and streaming. Copyright itself is an investment and the fragmentation and lawsuits show that the companies licensing music are corrupt and banks should take over. Cas is also a partner with www.epicsound.io which is using web3, AI and copyright stable coin concepts to change how stream pay. CDs and DVDs are extinct, Vinyl is a collectible, but the valuation is streams, reels, syncs, collaborations, and live events. As addressed these are the resources mentioned. Corrupt leadership and complacent staff leads companies to fail when technological, cultural innovations disrupt the foundations.

<https://artistrightswatch.com/2023/12/20/wordsbykristin-the-mlc-being-audited-by-bridgeport-music-company-that-reps-george-clinton-funkadelic/>

<https://www.classaction.org/news/class-action-lawsuit-challenges-ascap-bmi-arbitration-agreements-says-entities-should-be-audited#:~:text=ASCAP%20and%20BMI%20face%20a,and%20Publishers%20Broadcast%20Music%20Inc.>

<https://www.digitalmusicnews.com/2025/12/17/ascap-radio-royalties-lawsuit/>

<https://www.digitalmusicnews.com/2025/09/03/mlc-duplicate-works-royalty-fraud/>

<https://www.musicbusinessworldwide.com/soundexchange-launches-appeal-of-ruling-in-siriusxm-lawsuit-says-satellite-radio-firm-has-underpaid-royalties-by-400m/>

https://www.copyright.gov/rulemaking/mma-designations/2024/Rep_Fitzgerald_MMA_Designation_letter.pdf

<https://www.musicweek.com/digital/read/elon-musk-s-x-sues-music-publishers-in-the-us/093338>

Living Wage For Musicians Act HR 7763

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/7763>

Protect The Working Musicians Act HR 5576

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/5576/text>

American Royalties Too Act HR 4017

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/4017>

Legislative Branch Agency Clarification Act HR 6028

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/6028>

American Music Fairness Act

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/791>

Cas Weinbren, Caskeyboardproducer
Caskeyboardproducer@yahoo.com | 9179221670

The **Digital Innovator Award** is given to a company or individual who is pioneering the effective use of digital technologies to positively impact how the modern music industry does business.

Submission #4

Ed Rivadavia

SVP Marketing and Digital, mtheory

ed@mtheory.com

Ed Rivadavia has decades of experience in the music industry, but as opposed to a lot of folks his age, he is excited by all the digital innovations that have come to our industry. In his current role, he meets with every digital partner and helps us as a company distill who is doing what, what it costs, and the best ways to utilize them. Our company works with artists across all genres, and with various budgets, so there isn't really any "default" of what works and what doesn't, because we know everyone's needs are different. So having someone like Ed who is excited to be on the cutting edge, gather the information, and make recommendations, is SO valuable. He also helps push us to be open to trying new companies, methods, strategies, etc. He has watch the industry evolve from 100% physical, to the introduction of digital, to ringtones, to streaming, to where we are today, and has remained inspired by change instead of jaded, which is such a rarity.

Tiffany Provenzano, mtheory
tiffany@mtheory.com | 918814843

Ed Rivadavia has long been a digital marketing thought leader, spearheading innovative campaigns at all of his career stops. His work as SVP, Marketing and Digital Strategy at mTheory has now led to cross-genre work on behalf of leading artists. He has led innovative strategies applying AI to music marketing, efficiency and new revenue opportunities. His work with artists like Djo and Tyler Childers has helped develop artist centric privacy policies to ensure data ownership amid the rise of superfan monetization and D2C product and audience development.

Jaime Marconette, Luminata
jmarconette@luminatedata.com | 615-415-4976

Leads marketing and digital strategy for mtheory's superstar roster including Jelly Roll, Tyler Childers, Djo, Alison Krauss, Wyatt Flores, Shakey Graves, Ashe, Sam Ryder, Tom Odell, Blackberry Smoke, Sabrina Carpenter. 25 years pioneering and adopting new technologies for the music industry: Napster, iTunes, YouTube, Meta, Spotify, TikTok, AI.

Jeremy Rosen, SuperBam, Inc.
jeremy@superbam.com | 212-888-2122

I'm proud to recommend Ed Rivadia for a Music Business Digital Innovator Award. I've know and worked with Ed for many years. As SVP of Marketing and Digital, Ed consistently pushes the industry forward by blending creative vision with data-driven strategy to build meaningful fan experiences and scalable digital platforms. He's a wealth of knowledge and insight. His leadership has driven growth across marketing, ecommerce, and fan engagement. Ed's impact, innovation, and ability to turn emerging technology into real business results make him exceptionally deserving of this recognition.

Andy Martel, ONELIVE
andy.martel@onelive.com | 9788281577

I am writing to nominate Ed Rivadavia for Digital Innovator of the Year. Ed is one of the most thoughtful and forward-looking minds in digital media today, consistently operating at the intersection of creativity, strategy, and data. He has an exceptional ability to identify emerging trends early and translate them into practical, scalable ideas that actually move the industry forward. Beyond his own work, Ed is a generous mentor to young, up-and-coming, digitally minded professionals, investing real time and energy into their growth. He doesn't just share knowledge — he actively builds confidence and curiosity in the next generation. Community is central to how Ed operates, and he naturally fosters strong, collaborative ecosystems around him. People gravitate toward his leadership because it is grounded, inclusive, and intellectually honest. His approach is deeply data-driven, yet never loses sight of the human and cultural elements that make digital innovation meaningful. Ed is constantly testing, learning, and refining, never settling for surface-level insights. For his sustained impact, mentorship, and commitment to advancing digital thinking, Ed Rivadavia is highly deserving of this recognition.

Johnny Cloherty, Genni
johnny@genni.com | 4407852220

I've worked with Ed for decades, since our time at Roadrunner Records together. Even though we're not working directly at this moment, he is my go-to person for all new digital technology, news, digital law and more. I see what he does for his clients and only hope I can do part of that for my artists.

Marc Schapiro, Ipecac Recordings
marc@ipecac.com | 9176649889

The **Digital Innovator Award** is given to a company or individual who is pioneering the effective use of digital technologies to positively impact how the modern music industry does business.

Submission #5

Jay Gress

SVP, Head of Intellectual Property Licensing, Sony Music Entertainment

jay.gress@sonymusic.com

Jay Gress is Senior Vice President, IP Licensing at Sony Music Entertainment where he has worked in various roles since 2000. In his current position he has responsibility for a wide range of functions including publisher licensing strategy, mechanical royalties administration, and copyright registrations on behalf of Sony Music's various labels, including Columbia, RCA, Epic, Legacy, Masterworks and Nashville among others. In 2009 Jay was a key Sony Music figure in negotiating and implementing the NMPA-RIAA settlement agreement that provided means to disburse \$264 million in pending and unmatched monies to songwriters and music publishers. By updating internal systems and adjusting department policies and procedures Jay's efforts established the framework to prevent P+U problems from escalating in the future. Subsequently Jay has negotiated and managed bulk licensing agreements with numerous publishing companies to streamline and modernize the music licensing process. He was a central figure in designing, testing and applying Music Data Exchange's MWN messaging automating the exchange of data. He's currently working with TheMLC on streaming their data directly into systems used by record companies. As a co-chair of the DDEX Licensing working group Jay champions the importance of messaging standards and is a key figure in improving the efficiency of data processing, credit clarification and regulating clean sound recording data. Jay Gress is an advocate for dependable metadata in the music industry and thanks to his efforts music business leaders have access to tools necessary to reliably exchange data throughout the industry.

Irek Lacki, Sony Music Entertainment
irek.lacki@sonymusic.com | 212-833-7556

The **Digital Innovator Award** is given to a company or individual who is pioneering the effective use of digital technologies to positively impact how the modern music industry does business.

Submission #6

Jeff Darko

Founder/CEO, MixPlug AI (Previously SiriusXM/Pandora)

jeffdarko@mixplug.ai

I'm nominating Jeff because I've watched him do something rare. He walked away from a comfortable career to bet on a vision most people wouldn't understand until they saw it built.

At Pandora, Jeff was instrumental in creating AMP, which finally gave independent artists a real seat at the table. We're talking analytics, promotional tools, direct fan engagement. Things that used to be reserved for artists with label backing. He helped build a system where any artist could submit music, manage their catalog, and tell their own story. That matters more than people realize.

He also had a hand in launching Mood Modes and the For You discovery feed, features that actually changed how listeners find new music. Not through algorithms that feel cold and random, but through something that understands vibe and how people actually experience a song. That's Jeff. He gets how music works because he genuinely cares about it.

What I admire most is that he didn't take the easy path. He left stability behind to focus on building access for creators who've historically been shut out. As someone from an underrepresented background himself, he's never treated DEI as a talking point. It's baked into everything he builds.

Jeff's the kind of person this award was made for. He's not chasing recognition; he's too busy making things that actually help people. That's exactly why he deserves it.

Christina Bowen, Wake & Chase Sports Media
wakeandchasesports@gmail.com | 8608012009

The **Digital Innovator Award** is given to a company or individual who is pioneering the effective use of digital technologies to positively impact how the modern music industry does business.

Submission #7

Vickie Nauman

Founder/CEO, CrossBorderWorks

Vickie@crossborderworks.com

Vickie Nauman is an OG music tech and has been at the forefront of music technology since its very inception in 2000. She is recognized as a subject matter expert in music licensing and rights, and has deep commitment to ensuring fair and sustainable deals between licensees and licensors, and is dedicated to breaking new ground in emerging technology and new models for legally licensed music. Currently at the precipice of gaming, Roblox worlds, AI and new use cases for music, she is recognized around the world for her knowledge, understanding of tech as well as music norms, and bridging gaps between music, tech, gaming sectors.

Her background tells the story - She had been working in radio when she joined the product team at Real Networks working on MusicNet, one of the first two legally licensed digital music services in 2000-2001. From there, she built a Webby-award winning DMCA compliant streaming service for one of the first global streaming apps from taste-making Seattle station KEXP. Then she earned a joint MBA from TRIUM (London School of Economics, NYU-Stern, and HEC Paris). After this she led partnerships for wifi-connected speaker system Sonos, and then started up and led 7digital (Massive Music) US business from 2010-2014. All of these complex roles built a foundation for her own company CrossBorderWorks launched in 2014, in which she creatively brings music to life inside games such as Beat Saber (Meta), Roblox worlds, Dead as Disco (Brain Jar Games), plus projects with Niantic and Ubisoft, as well as leading companies such as Harman Kardon, Bose, Spotify, and Downtown. She is advising AI attribution company Musical AI and VR start ups Realize and Paradiddle XR. She served as a board member for Seeker Music, a traditional label/publisher and is also an advocate for transparency and progress in copyright law, and was involved in roundtables leading up to the establishment of the MMA with the US Copyright Office.

Her commitment to translating between music and technology industries, simplifying and navigating across labels, PROs, and publishers, fostering greater understanding between often-opposing parties, and building a vision of greater innovation in digital music is the basis of her company CrossBorderWorks, as well as her career path. She is a sought after speaker, makes time to write thought leadership pieces on hot topics for respected industry media outlets, and encourage the next generation through guest lectures at music business programs in leading university programs. (and of course startups).

Her longstanding commitment and consistency in music technology qualifies her for this award. She has chosen to forge her own path with her own company, and has shared many lessons learned at industry events, private mentoring sessions, and in her writing. WWW.CROSSBORDERWORKS.COM

https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/268-28fd38c11e822c66d86b03eb93f38dfe/2026/01/Nauman-2-1964.jpg

https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/268-28fd38c11e822c66d86b03eb93f38dfe/2026/01/For-Music-and-AI-All-Roads-Lead-to-Licensing-Guest-Column.pdf

https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/268-28fd38c11e822c66d86b03eb93f38dfe/2026/01/Music-tech-entrepreneurship-requires-more-than-product-market-fit-Music-Business-Worldwide.pdf

https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/268-28fd38c11e822c66d86b03eb93f38dfe/2026/01/Music-in-Video-Games-How-the-Industry-Can-Capitalize-on-the-Boom.pdf

Vickie Nauman, CrossBorderWorks
Vickie@CrossBorderWorks.com | 2133211617

The **Digital Innovator Award** is given to a company or individual who is pioneering the effective use of digital technologies to positively impact how the modern music industry does business.

Submission #8

AIMS

fedor.filimonov@aimsapi.com

AIMS builds AI-powered search and discovery technology for the music industry. Our tools help music professionals search full catalogs using audio, language, and intent, not just metadata. The goal is simple: help people find great human-made music faster and more intuitively, at scale.

For years, AIMS has quietly powered the world's largest players in sync, including the production music divisions of all major music companies. While often invisible to the outside world, our technology sits at the core of daily workflows for teams handling massive catalogs and high-pressure briefs.

We are solving one of sync's longest-standing problems: discovery. Too often, music catalogs cannot be searched in full. As a result, only a small fraction of tracks drive the vast majority of placements. In some catalogs, as little as 1 to 5 percent of tracks generate up to 90 percent of sync revenue, leaving enormous creative and commercial value untapped.

AIMS removes that bottleneck. By analyzing audio and meaning across 100 percent of a catalog, we make every track searchable and give every piece of music a real chance to be found. According to our clients, AIMS helps teams find the right music up to 10x faster. Just as importantly, it surfaces music they did not even realize they had.

This is where assistive AI shows its true value. AIMS does not replace creative decision-making. It enhances it. By helping rightsholders unlock more value from their catalogs, we support better outcomes for the entire ecosystem. Artists and songwriters gain increased exposure, more placement opportunities, and greater earning potential. Music supervisors and sync teams gain speed, confidence, and depth in their searches.

Our recent partnership with DISCO marks another major step in this mission. DISCO is used by 95 percent of music supervisors worldwide and manages over 160 million files, powering more than 5 million searches every month. Together, we are embedding advanced search and discovery directly into the industry's most trusted platform, helping more great human-made music be discovered, celebrated, and used to its full potential.

AIMS is proud to be a practical, proven example of digital innovation that works quietly but meaningfully, improving how the modern music industry does business every day.

Fedor Filimonov, AIMS
fedor.filimonov@aimsapi.com | 420736792703

The **Digital Innovator Award** is given to a company or individual who is pioneering the effective use of digital technologies to positively impact how the modern music industry does business.

Submission #9

ARELIA

robert@areliatech.com

ARELIA is reshaping the independent music industry by placing major-label technology directly into the hands of indie artists and labels — all in one powerful platform.

As a first-of-its-kind music business operating system, ARELIA unifies real-time revenue tracking, royalties, streaming analytics, publishing, fan management, SMS/text communication, and social posting into a single dashboard. What once required multiple disconnected tools — and was only accessible to major labels — is now available to everyday independent creators.

But ARELIA goes beyond analytics.

The platform empowers artists to actively grow their careers through built-in fan management and direct communication tools, allowing musicians to text fans, post across socials, build deeper relationships, and turn casual listeners into superfans — all while tracking the business impact in real time.

With groundbreaking technology and an ambitious roadmap, ARELIA continues to roll out major-label-level capabilities including advanced performance insights, audience engagement tools, and revenue optimization features — giving independent artists a true competitive edge and more money in their pockets.

By combining data intelligence with fan connection, ARELIA is transforming artists into CEOs of their careers and redefining what independence looks like in today's music industry.

For its bold innovation, all-in-one ecosystem, and commitment to empowering creators, ARELIA stands out as a true Music Business Digital Innovator.

https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/268-28fd38c11e822c66d86b03eb93f38dfe/2026/01/ARELIA-TECHNOLOGIES-Overview.pdf

Kara Wells, Hope Lane Media
kara@hopelanemedia.com | 561-809-8778

The **Digital Innovator Award** is given to a company or individual who is pioneering the effective use of digital technologies to positively impact how the modern music industry does business.

Submission #10

beatBread

matthew@beatbread.com

I am pleased to nominate beatBread for the Digital Innovator Award, in recognition of its innovative use of data and technology to modernize music financing and transform how the global music industry does business.

At its core, beatBread is focused on democratizing access to capital for creators. Through its data-driven platform, beatBread analyzes streaming and revenue data to forecast future earnings and generate customized funding offers for artists, songwriters, labels, and distributors. This approach removes traditional gatekeeping and enables creators at every stage of their careers to access growth capital based on performance and potential – not legacy relationships.

Since its inception in 2020, beatBread has provided more than \$100 million in funding to approximately 1,500 artists and labels with a catalog of music accounting for more than 67 billion streams since inception.

beatBread distinguishes itself by prioritizing transparency and choice over traditional label-funded deal structures. The platform empowers artists and music businesses to retain ownership of their work while selecting financing terms that align with their individual goals. By replacing opaque, one-size-fits-all advances with clear, flexible options, beatBread shifts financial decision-making power back to creators.

The company's rapid scale and global impact reflect the strength of its technology. Through direct partnerships, white-labeled solutions, and embedded integrations within existing music platforms, beatBread has expanded access to funding across continents and throughout the digital music ecosystem. Last year, beatBread expanded its offerings with the launch of its Global Independence Fund, committing \$100 million to labels and distributors seeking alternatives to traditional industry financing.

By meeting artists and music businesses where they already are, beatBread ensures its innovation is both practical and widely accessible.

Finally, beatBread continues to push the industry forward with its deal comparison tool, which allows users to evaluate multiple funding offers side-by-side. This capability brings clarity and confidence to one of the most critical decisions in an artist's career and represents a meaningful advancement in an industry long defined by complexity and information asymmetry.

By combining data intelligence with a scalable, data-driven platform, beatBread sets a new standard for digital innovation and is reshaping how capital flows through the modern music industry.

Kelli Krebs, Boldsquare
kelli.krebs@boldsquare.com | 9544823494

The **Digital Innovator Award** is given to a company or individual who is pioneering the effective use of digital technologies to positively impact how the modern music industry does business.

Submission #11

CashorTrade

brando@cashortrade.org

In an era when ticketing has become synonymous with frustration, inflated prices, and predatory resale practices, CashorTrade stands as a true digital innovator—redefining what ethical, fan-first ticketing looks like in the modern music industry.

Founded on a simple yet radical belief—that fans deserve fair access to live music—CashorTrade has built a pioneering peer-to-peer digital marketplace where tickets are bought, sold, and traded for face value or less. By combining innovative technology with a deeply principled mission, the company has not only created a trusted alternative to scalper-driven resale platforms but has also mobilized a grassroots movement for fairness and transparency in live events.

CashorTrade’s technology empowers fans through verified profiles, anti-scalping tools, and a community-driven feedback system that has processed over half a million face value transactions. Their digital platform goes beyond commerce—it’s a social ecosystem where artists, fans, and venues can interact directly without middlemen or markups.

In the past year, CashorTrade has forged groundbreaking partnerships with independent artists, festivals, and venues across North America, including collaborations with artists like Margo Price, Goose, and Geese, as well as major events like When We Were Young Festival and independent venues nationwide. These partnerships demonstrate how technology can align with artist values—keeping tickets in the hands of real fans, not scalpers—and how digital innovation can restore integrity and trust to live music.

With former ticketing executives like Andrew Dreskin (Ticketfly, TicketWeb) and Craig Snyder (Lyte, ReverbNation) joining the team, CashorTrade is poised to scale its impact and lead the next chapter in fan-centric ticketing innovation.

As the live industry continues to grapple with systemic challenges, CashorTrade has proven that technology can be both disruptive and restorative—empowering fans, supporting artists, and reshaping the economics of live music for the better.

For its commitment to fairness, transparency, and innovation in digital ticketing, CashorTrade embodies the spirit of the “Digital Innovator Award.”

Taylor Esche, JED Media
taylor@jedmedia.co | 9185208229

The **Digital Innovator Award** is given to a company or individual who is pioneering the effective use of digital technologies to positively impact how the modern music industry does business.

Submission #12

ClicknClear

chantal@clicknclear.com

VIDEO: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1MD-3TuKhVKAijVjxWEL5kcmHFj0GLZaG/view>

Chantal Epp, ClicknClear
chantal@clicknclear.com | 5859029989

The **Digital Innovator Award** is given to a company or individual who is pioneering the effective use of digital technologies to positively impact how the modern music industry does business.

Submission #13

DISCO

lauren@disco.ac

Recognised with the MIDEM (MiCannes) Tech Innovator Award in 2025, since its creation in 2016 DISCO has been a trusted partner and central to the workflow and daily operations for the entire music ecosystem, DISCO is the industry's mission critical software for managing and sharing music, managing over 160 million files. Each month, DISCO powers 5M searches across the entire music community, from artists and labels to publishers, production libraries, agencies, and sound houses.

DISCO is pioneer in digital innovation through mission critical software such as:

- Catalog Management; secure all assets and metadata in ready to send formats
- Inboxes; streamline the delivery and management of briefs directly within the platform.
- Track Nesting; keeping everything in the one place for complex project organization
- Song Tagging; AI powered, intuitive tags that describe track mood, BPM, Genre and instruments
- Email Creator; manage mailing lists and share music to decision-makers all from the one platform
- Instant Instrumentals; enabling immediate sync-ready versions in seconds
- Lyric Transcription; removing busy work and prioritising creativity
- Artist Pages; providing professional EPKs without expensive web developers
- Mobile app; ensuring creators stay competitive while constantly on the move

Over the past several months, DISCO has expanded on these digital tools, fully revamped the on-platform discovery experience and redeveloped its search capabilities from the ground up. Alongside key strategic partnerships they continue to place the global users experience at the forefront. New key features include:

-Major advancements for non-English customers through improved search engine capabilities with a focus on Japanese and Korean characters.

Deeper search capabilities powered by next-generation audio AI. Trained on a far richer understanding of music, this technology goes beyond surface-level acoustic matching. It captures melody, rhythm, texture, energy, and mood through a unique sonic fingerprint, enabling millions of tracks to be compared in milliseconds and delivering highly relevant, high-quality matches.

-Multi DISCO Search - ability to search across specific DISCO catalogs, enabling more music than ever to be accessed globally

Partnership with AIMS; a developed Natural-language search, DISCO has made it easier to explore catalogs at greater depth, at speed, and with more creative precision. With the AIMS add-on, users can describe creative intent, lyrical themes, emotional sentiment, or even full briefs in their own words, making it possible to find music based on what it's for, how it sounds, or what it means.

Integral to DISCO's digital innovation is its commitment to security. These include:

- Service Availability; DISCO will endeavor to maintain an uptime of 99.9% for the services
- Disaster Recovery; DISCO maintains detailed disaster recovery contingencies, which are reviewed and tested annually.

SOC-2 / Available Upon Request

- Personnel Security; All DISCO personnel undergo detailed background checks before accessing Company data
- Application Security; The DISCO web app is HTTPS-only, which means all traffic to and from the website is encrypted

Passwords, MFA, SSO, and Login Protections

- Penetration and Vulnerability Tests; At least once per year, the DISCO application engages CREST Certified providers to conduct a penetration test and identify any vulnerabilities
- Security Incident Notification; DISCO agrees to notify Customer of any security incident affecting Customer as obligated by relevant data protection laws

Single sign-on (SSO) and enterprise-grade encryption to full SOC 2 compliance, DISCO meets the highest industry standards to ensure data protection at all times. This focus on security is essential to maintaining trust and safeguarding sensitive creative and commercial assets.

Beyond innovation, DISCO distinguishes itself as a digital educator. In addition to providing powerful tools, DISCO offers comprehensive guides, weekly webinars, School of DISCO tutorial videos that simplify the complex technology for all industry professionals from artists and managers, to A&Rs and rights holders, to production studios and soundhouses. This accessible, education-first approach ensures users not only have cutting-edge tools, but also understand how to use them effectively. Combined with a fast, highly responsive support team, DISCO demonstrates its commitment to not just innovating for the music industry, but actively helping it grow on a global scale.

<https://school.disco.ac/>

<https://blog.disco.ac/>

Lauren McCully, DISCO
lauren@disco.ac | 61435629979

The **Digital Innovator Award** is given to a company or individual who is pioneering the effective use of digital technologies to positively impact how the modern music industry does business.

Submission #14

Duetti

Duetti@luckybreakpr.com

Duetti is a music technology and financial services company that partners with independent artists to finance, acquire, and actively manage music catalogs, providing upfront capital while supporting long term growth. Historically, music catalog financing has been concentrated on major label and legacy superstar catalogs, with limited transparency and access for independent creators. Duetti represents a new model for how digital technology can modernize the music business by bringing transparency, liquidity, and scale to an area long dominated by inefficiency and exclusivity.

While much of the industry's digital innovation has focused on distribution or audience growth, Duetti applies technology to the full financial lifecycle of music rights. At the core of Duetti's platform are proprietary data models and systems that identify artists and rights holders, assess sustained performance, and support flexible deal structures across streaming, licensing, sync, and emerging revenue channels. This technology enables faster, more accurate valuation of catalogs, particularly smaller and mid sized independent catalogs, that traditional investors often overlook. As a result, Duetti has unlocked access to capital for creators at every level, including artists previously excluded from catalog financing altogether.

Duetti's digital infrastructure also supports active catalog management at scale. Rather than treating music as a passive asset, Duetti manages catalogs as living portfolios, using data to inform rights management, release strategy, and sustained planning across platforms. This approach allows songs to be sustained and optimized over time, extending their lifespan and value beyond a one time transaction.

Marketing and audience development are one component of this broader system. Duetti supports audience first growth strategies that prioritize authentic connection, creator storytelling, and enduring fan relationships across social and digital platforms, rather than relying solely on algorithms. These efforts are informed by data grounded in community, enabling artists to grow sustainably while maintaining creative independence.

Duetti announced in January 2026 that it secured \$200 million in new funding to expand its platform capabilities and global footprint, bringing total capital raised to more than \$635 million. This growth has enabled Duetti to scale its technology and services globally, with the company now signing more than 80 deals per month and partnering with over 1,100 creators across 40+ countries, with a growing share of transactions originating outside the United States.

Duetti's impact is most clearly reflected in how artists engage with and grow their catalogs over time. Artists such as Mario, Olivia O'Brien, Brent Morgan, and Sylvan Lacue have partnered with Duetti to unlock capital while retaining control over how their music is monetized. Beyond the initial transaction, catalogs regularly see meaningful performance growth, including sustained increases in daily streams and strong double digit gains tied to new releases.

As Sylvan Lacue shared, “The cool thing about Duetti is that you can strike and negotiate fair deals for individual songs on your own terms. Working with Duetti was great because I could negotiate the sale of singles at a premium level as opposed to forfeiting rights to an entire catalog of music. I like the idea of being selective about how I desire to do business. Artists deserve that right.” This combination of flexibility, ongoing support, and performance growth highlights how Duetti’s model replaces rigid legacy structures with creator first choice and transparency.

By applying fintech discipline, proprietary data systems, and creator first design across the entire value chain, Duetti is redefining how the modern music industry does business.

https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/268-28fd38c11e822c66d86b03eb93f38dfe/2026/01/2024-Music-Economics-Report-Duetti.pdf

https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/268-28fd38c11e822c66d86b03eb93f38dfe/2026/01/Case-Studies-Q1-2026.pdf

https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/268-28fd38c11e822c66d86b03eb93f38dfe/2026/01/BB-IndexReport-FullReport-PDF.pdf

Jackie Trimble, Lucky Break PR
Jackie@luckybreakpr.com | 9255886788

The **Digital Innovator Award** is given to a company or individual who is pioneering the effective use of digital technologies to positively impact how the modern music industry does business.

Submission #15

Fuller AI

srfuller@fullercreative.net

go to Marykutter.com to see all the work Fuller AI did to get Mary Kutter from an evolving indy artist to an artist with a major record deal on BMG Records. Steven and his team handle web design, creatives for socials, analytics, Spotify, Apple, Amazon, Pandora, Artist Growth, Set.Live, Laylo and all digital security.

Adrian Michaels, BMG Music / Adrian Michaels Agency
adrianmichaelsagency@gmail.com | 6154770545

Fuller.AI is nominating our company for the Digital Innovator Award, presented to a company or individual pioneering the effective use of digital technologies to positively impact how the modern music industry does business. Our work with Mary Kutter demonstrates an artist first, data informed operating system that turns organic audience behavior into practical business decisions without compromising the creative process.

After discovering Mary Kutter in 2024, Adrian Michaels partnered with Fuller.AI owner Steven Fuller to apply responsible AI analysis across social platforms and streaming services. We built a repeatable monthly intelligence cycle that helped guide release planning, messaging, tour strategy, and audience development while keeping Mary's voice and story at the center of every decision.

What We Built

We built a cross platform artist intelligence system that combines social listening, video performance analysis, internet presence research, and DSP analytics into one decision framework. The system is designed to enhance clarity and consistency in the business layer of an artist's career.

Inputs and data sources

- More than 100,000 comments collected from TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube across posts and music related clips
- Video libraries and platform insight data, including retention patterns such as time watched and time listened
- Internet wide deep research across public articles and public commentary in places such as Reddit
- Distribution and streaming data from TuneCore plus consumption data from Spotify, Amazon Music, and Apple Music

AI analysis methods

- Sentiment and theme clustering to identify what fans felt and why they engaged
- Narrative pattern detection to map recurring story elements that increased shares, saves, and conversation
- Retention and hook analysis to isolate the moments that kept viewers watching and listening

- Platform divergence modeling to understand how audiences differed by channel and how content should adapt without changing the artist

- Monthly trend tracking to stay ahead of platform and algorithm changes

Demographics and Audience Expansion

One of the most meaningful outcomes of this work was a demographic shift from an audience that was more than 70 percent male to the balanced split the fan base reflects today. This was not achieved by changing Mary's identity or message. It was achieved by translating her existing story into a narrative format that resonated across a broader set of lived experiences, then delivering that narrative in the right places and at the right moments.

How data and narrative drove the demographic shift

- We used comment analysis to identify which themes created high trust engagement among women, including personal resilience, accountability, faith, family, and self worth, then elevated those themes in framing without altering the songs or message

- We adjusted content packaging based on retention signals, using stronger context in openings, clearer emotional stakes, and tighter storytelling arcs that improved completion rates among both men and women

- We created a consistent narrative ladder across platforms so new listeners could understand the meaning behind the music quickly, reducing misinterpretation and increasing repeat listening

- We prioritized community management behaviors that reinforced safety and authenticity, including how posts were captioned, how comments were replied to, and how difficult topics were contextualized

- We matched platform specific audience insights with intentional content distribution, so the right stories appeared where women were already engaging and sharing

- We aligned tour and local promotion to places where streaming and social signals showed female listening strength, then used show content to convert online resonance into ticket buyers

In practice, this meant the creative stayed constant while the business layer became smarter: the same artist, with more precise context, better positioning, and higher relevance across a wider demographic mix.

Business Outcomes and Industry Impact

The system produced outcomes that materially impacted Mary Kutter's career trajectory in a short time window and created a replicable blueprint for other artists.

- Social media following doubled through consistent, data guided content strategy

- Cities were identified for booking shows, supporting sold out performances on Mary's first tour

- Mary appeared on The Glenn Beck Show, expanding reach beyond core platform audiences

- Increased industry visibility contributed to attention from Oswald Entertainment and a signing with WME

- High profile performances included a residency at Sturgis, opening for Hank Williams Jr. at Full Throttle Saloon, and opening for Pam Tillis

- These opportunities led to additional bookings including an arena show at the BOK Center with Hank Williams Jr. and an opening slot for 38 Special

- Starting work in February 2025, Mary signed a contract with BMG under the BBR label by December 2025, with her first major label single launching February 13, 2026

Why This Is Digital Innovation

This project is innovative because it treats AI as operational infrastructure for artist businesses, not as a replacement for artistry. We used AI to compress time to insight, reveal cross platform patterns, and reduce the uncertainty that typically slows early stage careers. The result was faster iteration, smarter

allocation of effort and budget, and better outcomes across touring, releases, and long term positioning.

Artist First Principles for 2026

Fuller.AI's approach to AI in music is built on clear boundaries that protect creative integrity. Our 2026 focus is to scale these principles into a repeatable service model for artists and teams.

- The artist remains the author. AI analyzes audience signals and operational data, not the creative soul of the work
 - Explainable recommendations. Every conclusion ties back to observable audience behavior and platform performance
 - Audience ownership. Build artist owned data vaults so artists keep control of their audience intelligence
 - Responsible automation. Automate reporting, monitoring, and insight extraction so artists and teams spend more time on music and community
 - Authenticity preservation metrics. Measure aligned engagement such as saves, shares, ticket intent, and meaningful comments, not empty reach
 - Tour and release decisions anchored in resonance. Use social and DSP divergence to route shows and sequence releases where the music lands most deeply

Conclusion

Fuller.AI's work with Mary Kutter demonstrates a modern, ethical, and scalable application of digital technologies that improves how music careers are built. We turned high volume audience behavior into clear business direction while protecting the artist's voice. The results show what is possible when AI is used to support artistry rather than replace it. This is why Fuller.AI deserves the Digital Innovator Award.

The **Digital Innovator Award** is given to a company or individual who is pioneering the effective use of digital technologies to positively impact how the modern music industry does business.

Submission #16

Muserk

paul.goldman@muserk.com

Muserk was founded in 2014 by lifelong creator and innovator Paul Goldman to address a simple but urgent problem: music creators and rights holders were consistently missing compensation because their work was neither properly tracked nor paid for in the expanding digital world. Goldman, who learned firsthand about missing royalty payments as a composer, now serves as CEO of a multi-continent endeavor that manages the largest copyright catalog in the world, exceeding the combined size of Universal, Sony and Warner. Muserk currently manages over 30 million copyrights and collects in over 180 countries and territories worldwide.

The music industry contains an outdated system that cannot keep up with modern technology platforms and can work in favor of these platforms to leave copyright owners at a huge disadvantage. Muserk is more than a royalty collection company; it's about building a future where artists and rights holders are empowered, informed, and treated fairly in the new digital age economy. The solution is Muserk's proprietary AI platform, Blue Matter®. This technology enables hyper-accurate royalty collection across every major digital platform, including social media, streaming services, and global digital services.

Blue Matter® was specifically created to be the most efficient solution for collecting royalties and ensuring artists, songwriters and publishers receive the compensation they deserve. The patented AI technology allows Muserk to sift through millions of usage data records in minutes, finding disconnected and lost money on platforms like YouTube, Spotify and Apple Music. Blue Matter® performs at a scale equal to hundreds of human administrators, enabling quicker earnings with minimal leakage for industry professionals. Powered by eight years of specialized data and development, this innovation has driven significant results, with customers seeing a 100% increase in first-year royalties and a 422% cumulative growth over three years. The technology is one of the only AI-patented technologies in the music industry in the field of administrative royalty.

Today, Muserk is providing a faster, more lucrative solution for many artists and songwriters. Because of automation and efficient data pipelines, Muserk can pay royalties with less delay and with more detailed reporting and analytics, with a breakdown of platform by platform or usage format. This transparency and data insight give artists a better understanding of where and how works are used. Creators can make better-informed decisions, such as which platforms are more lucrative or which categories of usage are under-monetized.

Furthermore, Muserk has an established global reach through partnerships unrealized by its competitors. Many songwriters outside major markets struggle to collect royalties in foreign jurisdictions, or miss out because they're not registered properly. Muserk's partnerships with foreign collection societies, such as JASRAC, KOMCA, and IPRS, ensure cross-border revenue flows more effectively.

In the same vein, Muserk has also been a longtime partner with the Japanese Society for Rights of Authors, Composers and Publishers (JASRAC), helping Japanese artists uncover royalties in the United States. SUKO Manami, Director in Charge of International at JASRAC, has applauded the work of Muserk. He shared, "We have seen significant results after partnering with Muserk for collections in the United States. Even better than the leading technology and market knowledge that Muserk brings to the table is the dedication and helpfulness of its staff. We look forward to continuing this fruitful relationship with Muserk."

Separately, in 2025, Muserk began developing a new business initiative to enter the music catalog acquisition space. This effort is focused on acquiring undervalued and disconnected works globally, including in emerging markets where Muserk has already demonstrated success across various genres and rights types. This initiative builds directly on the company's core strength of identifying and unlocking value that others cannot. By combining deep administrative expertise with powerful technology and country-specific knowledge, Muserk is uniquely positioned to drive superior performance from acquired catalogs. In music, unlike traditional finance, how you collect determines what you earn, and Muserk is designed to realize maximum value.

Looking ahead, Muserk is working tirelessly on its Software as a Service (SaaS) model, which it plans to roll out at the top of 2026. Launching its patented product directly to customers, big and small, Muserk will revolutionize how copyright owners collect royalties. The new SaaS product is designed to put the power back into copyright owners' hands, allowing them to manage the collection of their own royalties from their own homes

In an era where digital content is rapidly expanding, rights holders face unprecedented challenges in tracking and monetizing their work. Muserk's innovations don't just improve existing systems—they fundamentally reimagine rights management for the 21st century, closing the gap between creative output and fair compensation. By leveraging cutting-edge, patented AI and maintaining a creator-first approach, Muserk is solving one of the most urgent and overlooked problems in the digital age by ensuring that those who fuel culture are rewarded fully for their contributions.

Gabi Lopez, GS&F
glopez@gsandf.com | 6153851100

The **Digital Innovator Award** is given to a company or individual who is pioneering the effective use of digital technologies to positively impact how the modern music industry does business.

Submission #17

OpenPlay

peggy@openplay.co

In an era when over 120,000 new tracks are released every day, the modern music industry is operating at a scale its underlying infrastructure was never designed to support. Fragmented systems, inconsistent metadata, manual workflows, and disconnected partners continue to slow down an industry that increasingly depends on speed, accuracy, and interoperability between platforms and services to function.

OpenPlay is being nominated for the Digital Innovator Award because it has become one of the few companies tackling this challenge at its roots by rebuilding the operational infrastructure of the music business itself.

Today, OpenPlay serves as the operational backbone for more than 3,500 music companies across 24 countries, including two of the world's major record companies. Its platform replaces layers of disconnected legacy systems with a single, unified environment where music companies can manage their catalogs, assets, metadata, rights, delivery, royalties, and financial operations end to end.

The impact has been significant: OpenPlay has helped modern music companies scale without losing control – improving data accuracy, reducing operational errors, shortening release timelines, and enabling teams to collaborate across departments and partners using a shared source of truth.

As a result, OpenPlay supports the management of millions of assets and hundreds of thousands of releases annually, helping music companies scale globally without losing control. Customers report significant reductions in delivery errors, faster release timelines, and shorter onboarding periods - while enabling teams across labels, publishing, finance, and operations to collaborate using a shared source of truth.

For one global music group operating across dozens of territories, OpenPlay replaced multiple legacy systems and regional workflows with a centralized operational layer—allowing local teams to retain flexibility while dramatically improving data consistency, release coordination, and financial reconciliation at scale.

Building an interoperable operating layer for modern music companies

What sets OpenPlay apart as a digital innovator is not simply the breadth of its functionality, but its long-term focus on interoperability – building foundational technology that allows the industry to work together more effectively at scale.

Long before interoperability became an industry buzzword, OpenPlay recognized that the future of the music business would depend on systems that could connect teams, partners, and platforms without friction.

Its core platform functions as a neutral operating layer where labels, publishers, distributors, and rights owners can manage complex workflows across the entire lifecycle of a release – from catalog set-up to delivery, reporting, and settlement – using consistent data and standardized processes.

OpenPlay’s catalog management and rights operating system is now integrated with more than 75 distributors, platforms and music tech companies. This scale of these integrations — combined with OpenPlay’s flexible API architecture — enables labels and media companies to seamlessly deliver, receive and transact across the music industry’s global ecosystem.

For organizations managing millions of assets and complex global rights structures, this has translated into greater transparency, faster decision-making, and the ability to grow volume without a proportional increase in operational overhead.

Advancing choice, control and flexibility in global distribution

A major example of OpenPlay’s industry impact was the launch of OpenPlay Reach, which introduced a fundamentally new approach to global music delivery.

Historically, rights holders have been forced into rigid delivery models that limit choice and require duplicative workflows across distributors and partners. OpenPlay Reach removed this constraint by allowing rights holders to decide how, where, and through whom their catalogs are delivered - at a label, artist, or individual release level - without rebuilding workflows or fragmenting data.

Laying the groundwork for the industry’s next phase

As the music industry enters a period of increased volume and heightened complexity - driven by global expansion, UGC, and AI-generated content – OpenPlay has continued to invest in infrastructure designed for what comes next, not just what exists today.

Recent developments, including the forthcoming introduction in Q1 2026 of OpenPlay Connect App Exchange, reflect this long-term vision: a standardized ecosystem where music businesses and service providers can collaborate through shared commercial and technical frameworks, replacing bespoke, manual integrations.

In Q3, OpenPlay will also launch Verse, a natural extension of its rights management ecosystem and CMS, purpose-built for music publishers and publishing administrators.

Together, these initiatives demonstrate OpenPlay’s role in shaping the future architecture of how the music industry collaborates and transacts while helping labels and publishers scale efficiently.

A sustained record of digital innovation

OpenPlay’s impact is the result of sustained innovation over more than a decade. The company’s product suite – including tools for catalog management, financial reconciliation, workflow management, and analytics – reflects a clear and consistent mission: to remove operational friction so music companies can focus on creativity, growth, and long-term value.

That vision is shaped by co-founder Edward Ginis, a widely recognized leader in music technology and metadata, whose experience across music, media and emerging technologies has informed OpenPlay’s systems-level approach to innovation.

By combining scale, interoperability, and real-world adoption, OpenPlay is not simply delivering new tools – it is helping define the digital infrastructure standards on which the modern global music business increasingly depends.

For these reasons OpenPlay represents a clear and compelling candidate for the Music Biz Digital Innovator Award.

Jose Guariglia, Fourth Pillar
jose@fourthpillarpr.com | 4.40760E+12

The **Digital Innovator Award** is given to a company or individual who is pioneering the effective use of digital technologies to positively impact how the modern music industry does business.

Submission #18

Pirames International LLC

federico@piramesinternational.us

Pirames International has redefined how digital innovation drives progress in the global music industry. Since its foundation, Pirames has pioneered a new model of digital rights management — one that merges technology, ethics, and data governance into a single, transparent ecosystem.

Through its proprietary ingestion, delivery, and reporting platforms — all ISO/IEC 27001:2013 certified — Pirames has built a digital architecture that transforms complex metadata, rights, and copyright workflows into precise, automated, and verifiable processes.

Its AI-driven infrastructure, trained on over twelve years of real-world ingestion and quality-control data, performs continuous validation of assets, cross-checks rights ownership, and fingerprints every recording to prevent duplication or misuse before content reaches DSPs or collecting societies.

By combining automation with accountability, Pirames has proven that innovation in music is not only about efficiency — it's about integrity, transparency, and trust.

This vision has positioned Pirames as a true digital pioneer, shaping how the modern music industry operates today and setting new standards for the years to come.

Federico Montesanto, Pirames International Srl
federicomontesanto@piramesinternational.com | 39.33363807

The **Digital Innovator Award** is given to a company or individual who is pioneering the effective use of digital technologies to positively impact how the modern music industry does business.

Submission #19

SINGLE – www.single.xyz

tommy@single.xyz

Single: Revolutionizing Music Merch, Fan Data, and Live Sales

Single www.single.xyz is at the forefront of the music industry's shift to a direct-to-consumer model. Through its Shopify-integrated platform, founded by Tommy Stalknecht and his team, the company helps artists achieve several key goals:

1. Boost Merch Sales: Provides an effective way for artists to sell more merchandise.
2. Chart Reporting: Reports sales data directly to the official music charts.
3. Fan Data & Marketing: Collects valuable data on fan buying habits, enabling artists to create more effective marketing strategies.

Integrating Live Event Commerce with Fan Data (atVenu) <http://bit.ly/4hv49bq>.

Single has strategically partnered with atVenu, a leading commerce platform for live events, to bridge the gap between in-venue merch sales and online fan data. This integration allows artists to:

1. De-Anonymize Tour Sales: Turn anonymous buyers at the merch booth into identifiable fan profiles (with name and email).
2. Capture First-Party Data: Capture contacts on-site using promotions and QR codes and automatically sync them to the artist's mailing list/fan club.
3. Track Lifetime Value: Unify all fan and sales data (both live and online) into a single Shopify system to track total spend, fan rank, and revenue by city.

With over 4,000 artists using the service, including major names like Travis Scott, Metallica, Adelle, and Nickelback, Single has proven its impact. SINGLE has reported over 18 million scans on the Billboard charts. The company also holds exclusive deals with industry giants such as Sony Music, Universal, Warner Music, Concord, The Orchard, and FUGA, among others.

https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/268-28fd38c11e822c66d86b03eb93f38dfe/2025/12/DistroLink-Partnership.pdf

https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/268-28fd38c11e822c66d86b03eb93f38dfe/2025/12/Promotions-by-Single.pdf

Scott Welch, Scott Welch Management Inc.
scott@swelchmgt.com | 615-390-6501

The **Digital Innovator Award** is given to a company or individual who is pioneering the effective use of digital technologies to positively impact how the modern music industry does business.

Submission #20

Songtools

danny@songtools.io

SongTools is nominated for the Digital Innovator Award because it finally fixed the broken link between "uploading a song" and "finding an audience."

Instead of building just another marketing tool, SongTools built the infrastructure to power the industry itself. By integrating white-label technology directly into the dashboards of major distributors like ONErpm, Symphonic, and Amuse, SongTools allows artists to access affordable, vetted growth tools the exact moment they release their music.

The results prove the model works: SongTools has already helped over 2.5 million tracks get discovered by fans. This technology hasn't just helped artists; it has fundamentally shifted the business model of distribution, turning static upload platforms into active growth engines.

Andre Do Valle, Songtools
dre@songtools.io | +1 (347) 399-5914

The **Digital Innovator Award** is given to a company or individual who is pioneering the effective use of digital technologies to positively impact how the modern music industry does business.

Submission #21

Syntho Hub Ltd

hazel@synthohub.com

Syntho is a pioneering digital music education platform that empowers the next generation of electronic music producers. Founded by respected UK house artist Josh Baker, Syntho has spent the past five years transforming how artists learn, create, and break into the modern music industry. Entirely bootstrapped from inception to profitability, Syntho represents true innovation driven by passion, community insight, and technology-enabled scalability.

Innovation in Digital Music Education

Syntho specialises in teaching Ableton to aspiring and emerging house music producers. What sets the platform apart is not just the content itself but the digitally-native learning experience and industry-integrated ecosystem Syntho has built.

Key innovations include:

- Highly structured, modular online courses that break down production techniques into digestible, practical lessons.
- A technology-enhanced learning environment designed specifically for music producers, improving retention and accelerating artistic development.
- Interactive, real-time feedback loops, allowing students to submit works-in-progress and receive actionable guidance from professional producers.
- A thriving digital community where thousands of artists collaborate, exchange ideas, and build networks that would otherwise be inaccessible.

Syntho uses digital technology not simply to deliver content, but to create an entirely new pathway into the music industry, reducing traditional barriers of geography, cost, and insider access.

Impact on the Modern Music Industry

The platform has already helped countless producers turn their passion into signed releases, with students landing tracks on respected labels and receiving support from major artists. This demonstrates Syntho's meaningful contribution to the modern music ecosystem:

- Democratising access to high-quality production education.
- Creating a pipeline of skilled, innovative producers entering the industry.

- Shortening the journey from first project to label-ready music.
- Strengthening artist communities, where collaboration and growth are digitally facilitated.

By merging technological innovation with real-world industry insight, Syntho is positively reshaping both how music is created and how new artists sustain careers.

Commercial Viability & Growth

Syntho's success is built on a lean, scalable model:

100% bootstrapped with no external funding.

Now profitable, demonstrating strong product-market fit.

Has grown a large global user base purely through community-driven growth and digital innovation.

The platform's ongoing evolution—including advanced learning tools, new content verticals, and deeper integration with labels and A&R pipelines—ensures long-term industry impact.

Why Syntho Exemplifies Digital Innovation

Syntho stands at the intersection of technology, creativity, and community. Their work not only elevates individual artists but contributes to the future sustainability of electronic music as a whole. Through accessible digital education, modern teaching tools, and a results-driven learning community, Syntho is setting a new standard for how the music industry can operate in the digital era.

Syntho doesn't just teach music production—they are digitally transforming how the next wave of artists learn, collaborate, and succeed.

https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/268-28fd38c11e822c66d86b03eb93f38dfe/2025/11/Hazel-Savage-and-Josh-Baker-2.jpg

Hazel Savage, Syntho
hazel@synthohub.com | 447915211135

The **Digital Innovator Award** is given to a company or individual who is pioneering the effective use of digital technologies to positively impact how the modern music industry does business.

Submission #22

Tuned Global

virginie.chelles@tunedglobal.com

Tuned Global are true pioneers in music technology playing a foundational role in the future of the industry especially, how music is evolving beyond traditional streaming.

As music expands into health, gaming, social, and real-world environments, the industry urgently needs infrastructure that makes innovation possible without breaking trust, rights, or economics.

The fast-growing company enables organizations and creators to bring licensed music into new environments and experiences, from therapeutic music in hospitals to reactive soundtracks in video games. Through its Music Cloud platform, Tuned Global supports these experiences end to end, helping companies such as Samsung, Lululemon, Delta Airlines, Line Music, Vodafone, Universal Music, Pizza Hut and the UFC, turn ideas into production-ready music products that operate at global scale.

Tuned Global isn't stopping there and continues to invest in new capabilities and listening models that push how music can be experienced, discovered, and monetized.

The company is pushing the industry forward with ongoing innovations including AI-driven discovery, intelligent mixing, and emerging creator-led listening models. To date, Tuned Global has helped more than 100 brands and businesses across 70+ countries launch music-powered products in months rather than years while ensuring rightsholders are paid accurately and transparently.

Today, Tuned Global's Music Cloud platform processes hundreds of millions of tracks and billions of music interactions annually across global markets.

Thank you for reviewing this nomination. Please see the document attached, where we outline what makes Tuned Global a worthy recipient of acknowledgement for the Bizzy's 2026 Digital Innovator Award.

https://musicbiz.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/TunedGlobal_Bizzy-Award2026_DigitalInnovator.pdf

Virginie Chelles, Tuned Global
virginie.chelles@tunedglobal.com | 61412760667