

YouTube agrees multi-million dollar royalties deal with US publishers for unclaimed songs

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By [Music Business Worldwide](#)

The National Music Publishers' Association (NMPA), on behalf of music publishers and songwriters, has negotiated an agreement with YouTube to distribute royalties for musical works used on the platform where ownership was previously unknown.

Any unclaimed works which appeared from August 1, 2012 through December 31, 2015 are potentially covered by the settlement.

As a result, says the NMPA, 'millions of dollars in previously unclaimed non-performance royalties will be paid to publishers and songwriters, starting in 2017'.

According to the trade body: 'The agreement addresses the challenges around identifying ownership of musical works, and it will help solve the problem of attribution so that music publishers and songwriters can not only be paid for works viewed on YouTube in the past where ownership was previously unknown, but also be paid for those identified works moving forward.'

"We appreciate YouTube's willingness to work with us on behalf of the industry to help pay out millions of dollars in previously unclaimed royalties to publishers and songwriters," said NMPA President and CEO David Israelite (pictured).

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David Israelite, NMPA

"It is essential that we work with digital services like YouTube – the most popular digital platform for music discovery – to fix the challenge of incomplete ownership information to ensure royalties are no longer unmatched and music owners are paid accurately by the platforms that rely on their work."

"The revenue earned by the music industry on YouTube continues to grow significantly year over year, and we're committed to making sure that publishers are paid for the usage of their works on our platform," said Tamara Hrivnak, Head of Music Partnerships, Americas for YouTube and Google Play.

"We are excited to partner with the NMPA to address the industry-wide challenges associated with identifying publishing ownership on digital platforms."

Music publishers will have the ability to opt into this agreement during the opt-in period, which opens on December 12, 2016 and will remain open through February 28, 2017.

Following the opt-in period, YouTube will provide participating publishers with a list of songs YouTube may have been unable to obtain proper ownership information for, after which publishers can claim ownership.

Any accrued royalties that remain unclaimed will be distributed to participating publishers based on market share and on revenue paid for known usage on YouTube during the initial accrual period.

The agreement, however, will not affect the rights of any publisher or songwriter who does not choose to participate.

The NMPA says that the process will be repeated for future twelve-month usage periods beginning on January 1, 2016 and ending on December 31, 2019 *Music Business Worldwide*