



For immediate release

Music-Industry and Digital Music Services Form Data Exchange Standards Organization

Industry Aims to Improve the Business Operations of the Legal Digital Music Industry By Helping Harmonize and Accelerate the Current Exchange of Data, Ultimately Benefiting Artists, Writers and Consumers.

4 May 2006 - The world's leading companies and organizations involved in digital music today announced the formation of a new organization called the Digital Data Exchange (DDEX, pronounced "dee-dex"). DDEX will develop and encourage the adoption of voluntary standards to improve the current exchange of data between companies operating in the digital music business.

The legal distribution of digital content is continuously evolving and growing. As additional businesses participate, inter-company communication becomes increasingly complex, more products and services are made available and transaction volumes grow. In this environment, the development of international standards to facilitate accurate, fast and effective data exchange between parties is critical.

The DDEX standards will help improve the efficiency of data sharing and the processing of transactions between participants in the music supply chain. They will allow the music industry and its partners to continue to deliver value to artists and writers, increase quality and choice for the consumer and help ensure success in a complex and growing digital music business.

The standards identify the information required to provide digital music to the consumer and report sales back to the music companies, as well as common ways for this data to be exchanged between companies. This will help improve the quality of information relating to the music, the identification of rights owners, the reporting of sales data and ultimately the distribution of royalties to beneficiaries.

"By working together and developing voluntary technical standards, we can harmonize and streamline the exchange of information relating to digital music," said Chris Amenita, ASCAP, the newly appointed chair of DDEX. "That's great news for the all participants across the whole value chain - from artists and writers through to the consumer."

The charter members of the organization are the record companies, EMI Music, SONY BMG MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT, Warner Music Group, Universal Music Group; music rights societies from the US, UK and Spain, The American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP), The Harry Fox Agency Inc. (HFA), The MCPS-PRS Alliance Limited, Sociedad General de Autores y Editores (SGAE),; and the digital service providers, Apple Computer Inc., Microsoft Corp. and RealNetworks Inc. Furthermore SACEM (the French rights society) has agreed to join DDEX and will shortly become a Charter Member.

Membership is open to any organization with an interest in the legal distribution of music, such as record labels, music rights collecting societies, digital and mobile service providers, digital music aggregators or broadcasters.

"Our work here is just beginning," Amenita added. "We invite any organization or company involved in digital music to join us. Together we can help fully empower and unlock the future of digital music."

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