

# Music Producer Contracts

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As you start to become serious about your music business, it's vital to understand the importance of having your own music producer contract. Why? Because it's your music and it's your responsibility to protect it. A contract is the most effective legal binding agreement you can use. PERIOD. A dynamic producer is shopping tracks to artists, producing albums or even mixtapes that culminate into an actual release. It doesn't matter if the release is on iTunes, Bandcamp, Datpiff or any other aggregate of music. Your music producer contract can give you and/or the person counter signing the legal right to release your music. Your production contract will spell out your copyright, mechanical, synchronization, points and publishing interest, among many other things. A formal contract can be upheld strongly in a court of law. "He said, she said," not so much. Your music producer contract will safeguard your rights and the share of money that is due to you.

## Cheap or Free Music Producer Contract?

I'm sure the lure of downloading a free or cheap template off the internet is very seductive, but I personally recommend against doing so. For starters, odds are, you are not a lawyer. Therefore, how do you know if the agreement is really what you need in your personal situation? Second of all, if you pay attention to the economics of the business, you know that things move lightning fast. What could have been typical two years ago may not make sense for your music business today. Remember, as a music entrepreneur, you create your own standard and this goes for music AND business. Let me give you an example. Most "standard" music producer contracts don't give you any rights to license or release the music yourself. So what happens if you're out networking and want to pitch a record you produced. When it's time to handle business, someone will ask if there is any existing paperwork. At this point, the artist could be MIA for all you know, which would then leave you SOL.

## Ready For The Big Leagues?

I recommend all producers to retain an attorney who can draft a custom contract that makes sense for your business. Your contract can even include various addendum's that can either be included or excluded, depending upon the situation. Doing this, it really becomes a solid investment that can pay for itself over a life long career in music. Plus, what's \$500, \$1000 or even \$2,000, when you know you're going to make it make when you become the industry's next "go to" producer?