Stations Get Music

RadioMusic.com

Larger, more established radio stations get some new music from record companies free, but most startups have to buy theirs. Radio music is created and released by record labels. They hire promo people to send free samples and persuade stations to play new songs.

Broadcast conglomerates that own hundreds of major market stations get a lot of attention from record companies. Labels want maximum airplay with minimum contacts. Big station owners research what songs their target audience wants to hear. Their radio stations get music from the Corporate Office with instructions on what to play.

Most other radio stations get their music indirectly. Record companies pay "DJ pool" music download websites to distribute new songs free to radio.

What radio music do stations get free? Uncharted and bottom-of-the-chart new songs. Only a fraction of these are worthy of airplay.

Free music tends to be new and unfamiliar, tuning out listeners

Label promo people have tunnel vision: They only push up-and-coming songs on their label. For your station to get all the current songs the download site needs approval from dozens of labels. Once a song has stopped climbing the charts, record companies move on to work their next up-

and-comer. They want the next chart topper to be theirs ─ not another company's. Promotion staffs pay and bonuses are tied to their making their next artist as big as Taylor Swift or Jay-Z. They often let established artists sell tomorrow's hit based on yesterday's popularity.

In other words, radio station music might get free songs, but they are likely the radio music your audience doesn't yet want to hear.

Do stations really have to buy music for radio?

Yes! Startup stations, stations flipping formats, or stations looking for older songs. The exception is the station that has aired songs for radio in its current format for a long time and kept all the uncompressed music that has come in from record companies over the years.

For example, if your radio station were to switch from one format, let's say country or easy listening, to another format, like top 40 oldies, most stations won't get as much free music as they want. Some exceptions include owners with a sister station in that plays new music and is cozy with promo people, which can be leveraged to swap airplay favors on your behalf. These classics aren't on any free download site. Record companies' promo departments that give away music probably don't have access to free samples of songs except their label's up-and-comers.

How stations pick what they play

How music is picked is not solely based on where radio stations get music. It's a fact: "If you want to be the most popular radio music station, play the most popular music." Stations tabulate a lot of data to pick what they play. Big stations research with telephone call out surveys and in-person auditorium tests. Listener and Internet music-on-demand streamer requests are factored in. National sales charts and emailed music tip sheets show hits in other cities. Ratings companies such as Nielsen measure listening audiences nationwide. Music for radio that wins ratings elsewhere gets copied and played everywhere.

Radio stations exist to make money selling advertising. More listening grows ad prices and profits. Radio music is programmed to maximize listening.

Whether a song really appeals to your audience depends on many factors, one of which is familiarity. New music is not familiar, which can cause tune-out to a competitor playing a more popular song.

DJ pool music download sites

There also are two kinds of DJ pools: Radio pools, free to stations but requiring approval by record companies, and club and wedding DJ pools at $12-45 per month that let every DJ join. Radio pools like NewMusicServer.com, PlayMPE.com and AllAccess.com offer CD quality uncompressed WAVE songs. Contact them to see if you qualify for free music. Approval may be hard to get until your station has ratings to demonstrate its popularity. Club DJ pools only have low quality mp3. For FM radio broadcast, **stay away from mp3s**. Sure, they sound fine on your stereo or in a club. But in an FM transmitter chain, music goes through cascading

digital bit reductions before it gets to the listener's ears. Digits being thrown away are theoretically psycho-acoustically less audible, but mp3 compression through a studio-transmitter-link and FM transmitter works OK on some songs but not others.

If you don't buy CD-quality uncompressed music from RadioMusic, get CDs and build your library by ripping them yourself, even if you have to wait for them to come in the mail. In the long run, quality is worth it.

Some stations that don't get approved for free music for radio, or don't want their staff bothered by calls from promoters choose to pay $50 per month to download lossless new music from TopHitsUSA.com or PromoOnly.com. Like the record company promoters, once a song drops down the charts, these DJ pools delete it. They don't offer oldies.

The Easy, Fast Way Stations Get Music

If you have a licensed call letter radio station, then you can have your new radio music library shipped to you in a day or two from RadioMusic. It won't be free; expect to pay something over a dollar per song. But an "instant library" has huge advantages: You can flip your format tomorrow. You don't want a competitor to beat you to it. This instant library music has clean radio versions. No dirty words. Long album cuts are shortened. Silent beginnings and loose ends have been trimmed for tight starts and smooth segues. Levels are consistent to avoid unexpected loudness or softness that irritates listeners. Title, artist, intro time and length to sequencing point, and ending has been already typed in for instant import into your computers. You'll get uncompressed music for radio with true CD quality.

Why trust RadioMusic.com? They've sold 15,000 radio music formats to stations, with virtually total satisfaction.

RadioMusic has dozens of libraries for every genre. Or you can just pick and choose songs you want at a low unit cost from their 117,000 inventory. You don't have to pick from RadioMusic.com lists, just send your own music list any way you like. Either way, RadioMusic is much faster, easier and less expensive than any other way to build a format. The RadioMusic.com website helps with free links to decades of past Billboard and MediaBase charts.

Two Hidden Costs of "Download Songs from the Internet": Lost Quality and Lost Time and Money

Hidden Cost One: Lost Quality

Music sources such as Amazon, Apple Music and other downloads are mp3s, not competitive broadcast quality. And the sound of your radio station is really all you have to sell. Broadcast professionals agree: Mp3s through an FM transmitter chain aren't good enough to bet your life on.

Some downloads advertising "high quality" are really 320 kbps bitrate mp3s. RadioMusic WAVE songs are 1411 kbps, a true bit-for-bit copy of the source CD before level normalization. Mp3s at 320 kbps compress and throw away 77 percent of music's digital data. Can people hear it? Ask veteran FM engineers in competitive markets.

Bottom line: Mp3 songs are false economy. Many stations that allowed mp3 songs to creep into their library have since replaced them with WAVE files. Either start with CDs and carefully rip them, or go with an instant library WAVE service such as RadioMusic.

Hidden Cost Two: Lost Time or Money

For an occasional song or two, prep work to make a song ready for a radio automation system is trivial. But for a complete radio music library, ingest work and costs add up. Levels need to be consistent; starts and ends need trimming for smooth flow, titles and artists need to be typed in to both music rotation and on-air computers.

You can find songs at Apple Music and Amazon Digital for 99 cents to $1.29 per song. But TOTAL cost is what really matters. RadioMusic delivers money-saving benefits you don't get with downloads.

Let's compare the true total cost of download plus required staff time for the startup work. You'll download about 30 songs per hour. If you're paying $20 an hour, that adds $0.66 to the price of the song. You're really spending $1.65 per "99 cent" song or $1.95 per "$1.29" download.

Cost from Amazon or Apple	$0.99 per song	$1.29 per song
Payroll to download 30 songs @ $20/hour	$0.66	$0.66
Subtotal	$1.65	$1.95

 If your tech only gets $10 per hour, your cost is still $1.33 to $1.62 per song.

Cost from Amazon or Apple	$0.99 per song	$1.29 per song
Payroll to download 30 songs @ $10/hour	$0.33	$0.33
Subtotal	$1.32	$1.62

That's just a start. You'll have additional cost to type in the titles, artists, intros, segue times and endings. Processing songs all day, few people process more than 20-25 songs per hour for typing of titles/artists and punching the automation segue at the end. RadioMusic's uncompressed music includes timing and labelling already embedded in the music.

At pay of $20 per hour, if music was free your boss will spend $1 per song getting them into airplay form after the download. Adding Amazon's $1.29 plus $0.33 to $0.66 for download time

plus $1 for make-ready means a total cost of $2.65 to $2.95 per song. But that's for mp3 music with quality deficiencies.

	$0.99 per song	$1.29 per song
Cost from Amazon or Apple		
Payroll to download 30 songs @ $20/hour	$0.66	$0.66
Subtotal	$1.65	$1.95
Payroll to ingest, label & trim 20 songs @ $20/hour	$1.00	$1.00
Total cost to broadcast @ $20/hour	$2.65	$2.95

As above except at pay of $10 per hour:

	$0.99 per song	$1.29 per song
Cost from Amazon or Apple		
Payroll to download 30 songs @ $10/hour	$0.33	$0.33
Subtotal	$1.32	$1.62
Payroll to Ingest, label & trim 20 songs @ $10/hour	$0.50	$0.50
Total cost to broadcast @ $10/hour	$1.82	$2.12

Click here to use promo code BLOG129

ou're saving money with RadioMusic! Do it yourself from Internet mp3 download cost of $2.95 per song (at personnel cost of $20 per hour) for 600 songs is $1770. 600 songs from RadioMusic.com is $774, a savings of $996! And your new format can be on the air a week sooner.

But that's not all! Music downloads or CDs have levels that vary from too loud to too soft. They'll blast listeners' ears. RadioMusic.com delivers a uniform peak level on all songs.

RadioMusic comes to you preconfigured for whatever brand of automation you're using.

RadioMusic.com has radio versions that are often shorter, letting you play more songs per hour, a proven audience builder. RadioMusic.com versions have FCC-friendly language. Downloads and record store CDs often have explicit language. If you have to edit dirty words, you'd be lucky to process 10 in an hour, which even $10 per hour would add another $1.00 per song (or $2 at $20 per hour), putting you at a real cost of about $2.82 to $4.95 per song.

Better quality than mp3 downloads are compact discs if you can find them for all the songs you want, averaging about $15 each. Unless you have a great music store near you, likely they'll take weeks to arrive by mail and cost more including shipping. Sometimes a $15 CD has several songs you'll play and other times $15 gets only one airable song. Plus ripping, processing and typing time. Total cost $2.83 to $15.33 per song.

Useful content per $15 CD:	10 songs per CD	1 song per CD

Pay to buy CD @ $15	$1.50 per song	$15.00 per song
Payroll to rip 20 songs @ $10/hour	$0.33	$0.33
Subtotal	$1.83	$15.33
Payroll to Ingest, label & trim 20 songs @ $10/hour	$0.50	$0.50
Total cost to broadcast @ $10/hour	$2.33	$15.83

In summary, here's what RadioMusic.com delivers that you're **not** going to get from the "99 cent" music download:

- Save payroll cost for downloading music (saving you $0.66 per song if your person is paid $20 per hour or $0.33 per song at $10 per hour).
- MUCH better radio music audio from WAVE files with true CD quality (compared to mp3 that throws away 77% of the data). If you bought CDs, add $0.50 to $13.99 per song to your cost.
- Automation ready for YOUR brand of digital system. No time-consuming handling.
- No personnel cost for typing in the titles and artists in music scheduling software because Radio Music provides a spreadsheet that imports at one touch.
- RadioMusic.com's endings and seque times are already embedded in the music they offer, so we pass the payroll savings on to you.
- Levels (which adds $0.05 to $0.10 to your total cost per song, and that's if you don't have to spend an extra $500 for the software.) (RadioMusic.com's are already leveled.)
- No personnel cost for editing songs from commercial release to radio version to play more songs per hour. (RadioMusic.com's are already radio versions but you also get the longer versions at no extra cost for airing if desired.
- No payroll cost for editing dirty words out of commercial release of songs to radio version. (RadioMusic.com's are already clean and in the rare possibility that a song is not, you can get a cleaned version at no extra cost upon request.)
- If you could find music for free (and you won't), RadioMusic.com is saving you labor of $0.83 to $1.66 per song and more if you have to edit to clean radio versions. And the downloaded mp3s are inferior quality.