

My name is Suzanne Glass, President & Founder of Indie-Music.com, Inc., a small internet company that has as its customers musicians and independent music industry professionals.

I am also a musician myself with 20 years experience, 4 albums, and numerous copyrighted songs. My music career is run as a small business, dependent on broadcast markets to get my product into the public's hands.

In the past, I was able to submit or present my recordings to local radio with some expectation of airplay and interviews. That does not happen today - the formerly friendly local stations have become monopolized and unavailable to the local artist. There are no longer local stations in my area (Columbus, Indiana) that will broadcast local music or related news, and it puts people like me at a competitive disadvantage to large record companies like Sony and BMG.

The FCC should define local programming, and it should include a set percentage of music and other programming that is produced, derived, or independently marked in the local community.

Radio stations should be required to carry a certain percentage of local music as a community service. The same applies to local events like sports, public events, and news. Any type of locally originated programming could count towards the quota.

Broadcast stations should participate in local community activities, but such activities should not count for more than 50% of a station's commitment to local programming.

Re: "Pay for Play" or "Payola" in music and radio. This needs to be addressed at the corporate level, to put a check on the escalating costs of music promotion. However, even if broadcasting becomes more local, payola concerns need to be regulated. Musicians who can't afford to "pay to play" are at a competitive disadvantage, especially compared to multi-million dollar advertising budgets of major record labels and media companies.

Re: "Voice-tracking". This practice is wholly condemned among the musician community. An independent musician has a chance to get on the airwaves if he can develop relationships with local broadcast talent. Once the gatekeepers monopolize and leave the local area, musicians are again at a competitive disadvantage. This "voice-tracking" necessarily restricts the amount of local material available, leaving musicians with no market to promote their music, and no way to get their music in the hands of the corporate gatekeepers (such as Clear Channel Communications).

Re: "LPMF". I think expanding low-power FM licenses would help give musicians a voice on the local airwaves, and I think more LPMF stations should be licensed.

Thank you for accepting my comments.

Sincerely,
Suzanne Glass

