

Hip Hop Davey D on Recent Music Industry Rulings

Written by Davey D ID3408

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Gangsta Moves Made by the Industry Designed to Shut You Down by Davey D

Over the past couple of days two major rulings came out about the music industry in profound ways that will have long lasting **NEGATIVE** impact if we sit back and do nothing. One had to do with the FCC Ruling around the issue of payola.

For those who don't know, the FCC cut a settlement deal with 4 radio chains including Clear Channel, CBS, Citadel and Entercom where they would be required to play one half hour worth of independent music per day. That means 6 songs by artists on independent record labels. Now a lot of people have been talking about it and jumping for joy, because they feel the airwaves have finally opened up and they now have a shot. Right? **WRONG!!!** This has got to be one of the most short sighted, full of crap rulings I've seen in a while. Here's a few things to keep in mind.

A while back former major label executives formed their own "Independent Label and Music group. This means that hip hop artists like Lil Jon and the Ying Yang Twins on TVT Records, Jim Jones on Koch/Dipset records, Mike Jones on Asylum records and Ice Cube on Lench Mob Records can all be considered independent artists. If you think you're gonna hear a Peanut Butter Wolf cut, a new Hiero track or a new C-Bo cut think again. In all likelihood you will probably hear some of these major label connected indy artists and at most one or two cuts from an artists on Stonestrow, RhymeSayers or Angeles records. In the words of Public Enemy... Don't Believe the Hype.

These radio companies agreed to donate 4000 hours of air time to indy artists. That **DOES NOT** mean 4000 hours per station. It means all the stations will add up their numbers and split that 4000 hrs. So you can get a company like Clear Channel that has 1500 stations. Add that to CBS 144 stations. Add that to stations owned Entercom and Citadel and divide that into the 4000 hours. All of sudden you have a commitment that can be short lived.

Hip Hop artists aren't the only ones seeking air play. Remember we have rock, country, reggae

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and R&B artists all vying for that coveted half hour per day slot. So that means your favorite Hip Hop and R&B station may opt to play 6 neo-soul cuts late at night when they slow things down and call it a wrap. Maybe they'll venture out and play a few reggae cuts. Remember a radio station is out to get high ratings and in doing so they will program themselves accordingly. Most are trying to win over female listeners. Hence, if they have choice between playing an independent artist like Goapele over a new hardcore joint by LA artist Mitchy Slick, who do you think these stations are gonna pick?

A radio station may decide that it wants to play indie records from another region as opposed to one that is local. So you could live in New York and instead of hearing Papoose or Saigon you may hear a bunch of southern records that are considered independent. Bay Area folks instead of hearing some new joints from Messy Marv, Zion I or San Quinn, may suddenly hear music from NY that falls under this independent label category. People in Seattle instead of hearing local artists like Chokalat, Blue Scholars, Dred I or Silent Lambs may instead hear LA artists like Ice Cube or Tha Dogg Pound who are on independent labels.

The decree doesn't stipulate that a station has to play "New" music. Hence you might hear a Too Short or EPMD record from 15 years ago when they were on small independent labels. They may hear some old Snoop Dogg and 2Pac from Death Row which is considered independent. Heck if they want to they could go pull an old Sugar Hill Gang record like "Rappers Delight" which was on an independent label. While hearing the classic can be good, it doesn't do any good for artists trying to break new records.

These radio stations are not doing you any favors by playing local or independent artists. It's what they SHOULD be doing. They were granted a license to broadcast on the public airwaves with the stipulation that they serve the public good. Hence there is no reason that Chicago artists should not be getting airplay in Chi-Town. There's no reason why Bay Area artists shouldn't be getting love from their local stations. Its a damn shame that it took a FCC ruling where they avoided harsher penalties for committing a crime (payola) that lead to them doing what they should've already been doing. Its akin to a dead beat dad getting hauled off to court and facing jail time suddenly holding a press conference to announce that he's gonna take care of his kids and pay child support.

Many are saying "Fuck the Radio!". "Who needs them?" "Hip Hop doesn't need to be on there anyway, we gotta take it back to the streets". Well I agree. That's absolutely true...But here's the deal. Popular methods used to get around radio like Mixtapes and Internet Radio are under serious attack. Mixtape retailers and producers are getting arrested or fined.

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Even worse on the same day as the FCC rulings, major record labels cut a sinister deal with the Congress and US Copyright Office to basically shut down Online Radio unless you are very very rich. I don't wanna bog people down with too much reading so check out SaveInternetradio.com for all the gory details.

For those who feel that they'll go out and just do shows keep in mind that even the venues are on lock. First in many cities, the main concert venues are owned by Clear Channel.

Second, three years ago Clear Channel got a patent for the methodology used to record live performances, and sell it back to customers that same night at the venue. It's called Instant Live Performance Recordings. Well now you need a license from Clear Channel to do that in ANY venue. These cats went and got a patent for that and locked that income source up for themselves. A number of companies tried to sue them over this Draconian measure, but were unsuccessful. You can check out these two articles if you don't believe me:

[EFF challenges Clear Channel Recording Patent](#)

All in all this FCC ruling was feel good measure designed to get everyone excited to the point that they start paying closer attention to these radio stations. In the beginning you are likely to hear a lot of fanfare about them reaching out to give the little guy a shot.. But after a short period of time when the lights and cameras go away they'll be catering to those who don't need any extra help.

Please folks don't get hoodwinked.

Davey D

Below is a petition for you to sign to Save Internet Radio Please pass this far and wide..

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<http://www.petitiononline.com/SIR2007r/petition.html>

To:Internet Radio Listeners

To my Congressional representatives, and to Congress as a whole,

As a fan of Internet radio, I was alarmed to learn that music royalty rates were recently determined by the Copyright Royalty Board (CRB) which, if enacted, would certainly silence most or all of my favorite online listening services. For most webcasters, this royalty rate represents more than 100% of their total revenues!

The shuttering of the webcasting industry would be a loss for not only independent business owners, but also for musical artists, for copyright owners, and for listeners like me who enjoy the wide variety of choices available via Internet radio.

I respectfully request that Congress look into this matter and initiate action to prevent it. As the CRB rate decision is retroactive to January 1, 2006, please understand that time is of the essence -- as the immediate impact of this decision could silence many free Internet radio stations forever.

Sincerely,

The Undersigned