

BUSINESS; NAVIGATING THE GIG ECONOMY; Moneymaking platforms for the musically inclined

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FULL TEXT

If you're a talented singer, songwriter, instrumentalist -- or even a passionate listener -- there are a number of ways you can make money with music. Side hustles for musicians and music lovers include creating custom songs and curating playlists. And, while the pay won't make Kenny Chesney envious, the best sites pay reasonable rates for enjoyable work.

Your options depend on whether you're a musician or a music lover, and the more talent you have, the better the choices.

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Songfinch

If you're a musician capable of writing and producing songs, one attractive option is signing up as an artist on Songfinch.

Songfinch connects singers and musicians with consumers wanting to memorialize a special event with a customized song. The musician is given details about the event -- for example, it's a 60th birthday, an anniversary or an engagement. The client also provides information to be included in the song and chooses the musical genre, such as country, rap or pop. The client also can even pick a specific artist after listening to samples on the site. Artists are presented with the request and can choose to accept or reject. If you accept, you are paid \$100 to write and perform a two-verse song. If customers want a third verse, it's an extra \$40. About 20% of clients also provide a tip to the songwriter.

You keep all the rights to the song you create. What buyers get from Songfinch is a lifetime noncommercial license that allows them to play your song, but not profit from it.

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Fiverr

Fiverr also allows musicians to list their services to write and/or perform music for pay. You set your own rates on Fiverr and detail what you are selling. Theoretically, you could offer a service identical to what you get at Songfinch. Or you could offer to write advertising jingles or musical telegrams or provide an online serenade. The offer -- and pricing -- is up to you. You simply pay a commission to the site for marketing and collecting payment on your behalf.

But you need to be specific about what your offer includes and excludes. Most successful Fiverr pros delineate the number of words or minutes in the song, the number of free revisions, and other restrictions. These should also include what rights the consumer is buying. After all, if you're creating a commercially viable product, it's important to specify if you're giving the buyer the right to use it one time or forever. Can the buyer commercially profit from your work or is it for personal use only? If you're uncertain about how to structure this language, you may want to consult a lawyer familiar with artistic copyrights.

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BeeBizy

If your musical talents pertain to entertaining children, you can sign up with BeeBizy, a children's party-planning platform. The site's most popular bookings are for character actors, who generally charge \$100 per hour. But the bulk of BeeBizy clients and service providers are in Southern California. In other states, request volume may be light to nonexistent.

GigSalad and TheBash also promise to help you advertise your band to people arranging weddings and parties. But they both charge significant listing fees, plus commissions.

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LessonFace

If you can teach students to sing or play an instrument, several sites will help you find clients. The best of the bunch is called LessonFace. This site allows you to sign up and book online students from all over the world. You set your own rates and the site's fees range from 4% to 15% of the lesson price, depending on who found the student. Other sites, including TakeLessons and Wyzant, also help find clients for music teachers. However, both charge teachers more for the connection.

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Playlist Push

If you love to curate and recommend songs while also possessing a widely followed Spotify playlist, you may want to sign up with Playlist Push. Musicians pay this site to review their new songs and, potentially, get them added to consumer playlists.

Playlist Push pays playlist curators between \$1.25 and \$15 per song review. And reviews can be brief – just a few lines stating what you liked or disliked about the song. If you like the song and want to add it to your playlist, all the better. But adding a song to your list is not required to get paid for the review. To qualify to curate, you'll need at least 1,000 Spotify followers. And, if your followers are inactive or bots, you'll get booted from the site.

Notably, several other sites, including MusicXray, SlicethePie and Hit Predictor, also promise to pay consumers to listen to and review songs. However, the payments are minuscule and often unpredictable.

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Kristof is the editor of SideHusl.com, an independent website that reviews moneymaking opportunities in the gig economy.

Caption: PHOTO: MUSICIANS and music lovers can pitch songwriting, reviewing and other skills on music-focused websites.

PHOTOGRAPHER:ShyMan Getty Images

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