



The Independent Label

A label needs a system. A logo is the beginning.

Fictional founder Cameron wants to launch three artists at once. The team has \$3,000 available, no approved release files and no consistent way to account for costs. Signing more artists would multiply the unfinished work.

The team chooses one pilot release. Before spending, they define the label's services, the project budget, who approves costs and what reports the artist will receive. They test the process on one recording before promising a release schedule for a roster.

The operating principle

A label should be able to explain what it contributes, what it controls, what it spends and how the artist gets paid. If the team cannot answer those questions for one release, a larger roster will not solve the problem.

What you will build

A label model, a release-readiness checklist, a project budget and a statement-preparation record. The examples are fictional and the arithmetic is illustrative, not a standard deal or revenue forecast.

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Compare the service and the obligations.

Separate delivery from development

A distribution arrangement may provide basic delivery or include additional services. Evaluate the written offer rather than assuming a company tier guarantees marketing, playlist placement or better results.

Ask concrete questions

Which stores and territories are covered? Who controls account access? What fees, commissions or deductions apply? How are statements delivered? What happens to the catalog on termination? Which support, marketing or collection services are specifically included?

Review funding carefully

If money is advanced, identify who receives it, what may be recouped, the income sources used, approval limits and the accounting process. Ask whether obligations reach other recordings or revenue streams. Model the actual wording with an appropriate adviser; do not assume every advance works the same way.

Keep the delivery record accurate

Spotify states that labels or distributors set metadata before delivery, and artist roles affect how credits appear. [2] Confirm the intended artist profiles and credits before submitting. Maintain a record of corrections and the party responsible for sending them.

Source [2]: Spotify for Artists, Music metadata guidelines. support.spotify.com/us/artists/article/metadata-formatting-guidelines/