

Music libraries today realize that it is not enough to offer vibrantly-original tracks. They must make it easy for a wide variety of clients to find the music they need. From the grizzled vet flipping through racks of CDs, to the independent producer, to the major studios and TV networks, all must be able to find the perfect track for their project. With such a wide range of personalities working in the industry, the music libraries are providing content through any means necessary: CDs, portable and network-able hard drives as well as the Internet, which offers the ability to search and also is beginning to realize its potential as a delivery tool.

MUSIC BOX

Music production house Music Box (www.musicboxmx.com) launched its library in 2002 after a year of production by composers/co-founders Joel Goodman and Dan Stein. Its core library comprises 50 CDs, which are billed as song-oriented music, covering a wide-range of styles, "good enough to listen to in your car," says Stein. In addition, Music Box will release another 50-CD set called the Cue Library, designed to be underscore music for documentary and reality programming. In terms of searching the Music Box collection, being a smaller library affords the ability to rely heavily on personal contact via its client services directors, Caitlin Hill and David Bramfitt.

"Those two know every track inside and out in our library, so we tend to rely on human contact," says Stein. "We let our clients know that any question, any time of day, if they need a track, just call rather than looking through key words on the computer. We can serve as your music supervisor as well."

While personal contact works well for Music Box, Stein notes that hard drive and Internet delivery will become more and more pervasive as clients become more comfortable with the technology.

Currently, Music Box offers an Excel file with appropriate keywords attached to help clients find tracks on the hard drives or CDs, and clients can also demo tracks off the company's Web site.

Music Box realized that with the growth of its library, it was more important to allow clients to search for music. In the next few months, Music Box will launch a new online and hard drive search engine. They are now deciding whether they will opt for one of the two popular third-party music search software systems or develop their own search engine.

Stein sees hard drive delivery as the best option for both the client and his own company, and welcomes any departure from manufacturing CDs. And these days, providing a hard drive of music is virtually the same cost as CDs. Still, Stein notes that CDs will likely always be necessary.

"We try and push the hard drive solution but many post houses resist because if they get a hard drive they need to get their IT person involved and then it's on their network," notes Stein. "We released our classical selections on DVD-ROM and we found some clients had trouble using that, so we had to go back and burn CDs. It's just an ease of use thing and CDs are the lowest common denominator. Technology does sometimes get in the way."

Behind the Music

Creating great content is only half the battle.

By Matthew Armstrong



Music Box's collection is comprised of 50 song-oriented CDs.

