

MUSIC LICENSING

The issue of music licensing has become a growing concern at meetings and shows. It is required by law that any music, whether mechanical or live, played at meetings or shows obtain permission from ASCAP (American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers) or BMI (Broadcast Music Incorporated). These organizations protect the rights of their members (authors, composers, and publishers of music) by licensing users, collecting a fee, and distributing approximately 80-85 percent of the fee to copyright owners.

If your company plans to play music, either live or recorded, during the exposition in your booth or at any special event you may be holding during the show, you must notify both BMI and ASCAP and complete the appropriate licensing forms. BMI and ASCAP are two different licensing organizations, and each has its own catalogue of music, but agreement with ASCAP does not permit the playing of BMI licensed music which may result in paying both ASCAP and BMI. It is to your benefit to find out if the music you intend on playing is copyrighted and in the repertory of BMI, ASCAP or both. This can be done very easily by notifying either or both of these organizations at the following addresses:

ASCAP

1 Lincoln Plaza

New York, NY 10023

212-595-3050 or toll-free 800-627-9805

BMI

320 W. 57th Street

New York, NY 10019

800-669-4264

Violations of the Copyright Law can be severe and expensive. Damage costs can be no less than \$500.00 and no more than \$20,000.00 for each song infringed, plus court costs and, in the court's discretion, reasonable attorney fees.