

From: [REDACTED]
To: FN-OMB-IntellectualProperty
Cc: [REDACTED] info@copyrightalliance.org
Subject: The piracy of music & copyrights in the USA
Date: Wednesday, March 24, 2010 4:59:53 PM
Importance: High

Dear Victoria Espinel,

The Copyright Alliance and A2IM (the U.S. independent music label trade organization) have informed me of this welcome invitation from the Obama Administration to share my thoughts on my rights as a creator.

My name is Laurens Kusters and I am the owner and founder of I Scream Records. An independent music label and music publishing company originally out of Brussels, Belgium (Europe), founded in 1994 and also based in New York City. We work with both established as well as young artists. These young artists will hopefully grow into the established artists of the future. The musical creations all of these artists have in common is precisely that what makes each and everyone of them unique but more importantly it's their intellectual property. Sadly enough the word "property", in this case, has lost more and more of its value and meaning over the past decades.

Since I started this company I've seen a yearly decline in sales and a degeneration of the values of music. Not that it's no longer being enjoyed by almost the entire population but that, through lack of education and upbringing, the consumer's behavior has put the music industry on the chopping-block. The many ways to illegally obtain music are putting this so important industry in jeopardy. Not only affecting artists and labels but also recording studios, publicists, distributors, retailers and the list goes on and on. With that I mean that it has taken, and will continue to do so, a toll on a lot of business and trades.

We all need to ensure that these rights are protected, allowing artists to keep on doing what they are good at, but we also need to re-educate the consumers of the future and give music back its value. If any of us ask our young sons and daughters or nieces and nephews what they would like to become when they grow up, the answer will likely be a pop- or rockstar. In order for us to keep their, and today's artists, dreams alive, we need to actively seek ways to legally protect the intellectual property as well as guide the younger generation so they'll respect and understand the value of music.

I strongly believe that the government needs to actively work with the internet providers who allow people to put blogspots, or such, online where music is offered for free. As amazing as the internet is, I believe that 90% of the problem lays right there. It's virtually impossible for the labels to find all these websites, although they are very easy to be flagged by the internet providers. As an example: when we commercially release an album, it is available all over the internet that same day and sometimes even sooner. Having one person fined with 5 million dollars for 3 illegally downloaded songs is not a solution. This only makes it more attractive for youngsters and ridicules the entire music industry.

We need to look at the big picture, where, understandably, any overnight solution will not be found nor be affective, but where action has been long overdue.

Regards,
from the desk of
Laurens Kusters
I Scream Records
PO Box 310344
Brooklyn, NY 11231
USA
Phone: +1 (212) 561-5531
Fax: +1 (212) 954-5387
Cell: +1 (213) 254-8614
E-mail: [REDACTED]
Aim: [REDACTED]
Msn: [REDACTED]
Skype: iscreamrecords

Visit www.iscreamrecords.com and get all your favorite tunes today.
I Scream Records was founded in 1994.

Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail!

The content of this email is intended for the use of the individual(s) to whom it is addressed only. It may contain information that is privileged, confidential or otherwise required to be protected from disclosure. If the reader of this email is not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution, copying or other use of this communication or its attachments is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please delete and notify us that you received this email in error.