



# The Facts

An Introduction to Canada's Leading Performing Rights Organization



SOCAN

Society of Composers, Authors and  
Music Publishers of Canada

Société canadienne des auteurs,  
compositeurs et éditeurs de musique

# The introduction

With the pervasive nature of music in our culture and the thousands of music users and copyright owners, keeping track of “who uses what” is a task far beyond the capability of the individual copyright owner.

Creators and their publishers can protect their rights by partnering with performing rights organizations (PROs), which exist to manage this complicated process and free the composer for more creative pursuits.

SOCAN is Canada’s PRO for music creators and their publishers. SOCAN and its predecessors have been administering the performing rights of Canadian songwriters, composers, lyricists, and music publishers for more than 80 years. That tradition continues today in an organization that is leading the way in the rapidly evolving music industry.

More than 80,000 members, and hundreds of thousands of creators and publishers worldwide, rely on SOCAN to: sell access to their music for communication and public performance in Canada by collecting licence fees based on tariff rates that are set by a government-appointed tribunal – the Copyright Board; distribute the royalties they have earned; and be a strong voice in defending their interests on the national and international stages. In addition, more than 48,000 customers license our members’ music to make their businesses more appealing and their events more memorable.

Our outspoken representation has attracted composers as diverse as Nickelback’s Chad Kroeger, Mike Kroeger, Ryan Peake and Daniel Adair, Kareem “Choclair” Blake, Blue Rodeo’s Jim Cuddy and Greg Keelor, Paul Brandt, Robert Charlebois, Bruce Cockburn, Kevin “k-os” Brereton, Michel Cusson, Mychael Danna, René Dupéré, Kathleen Edwards, Shirley Eikhard, Lara Fabian, Nelly Furtado, André Gagnon, Sarah Harmer, Jason “Kardinal Offishal” Harrow, Laurence Jalbert, Carolyn Dawn Johnson, Milan Kymlicka, Daniel Lanois, Avril Lavigne, Lynda Lemay, Les Respectables’ Sébastien Plante, Pascal Dufour, Stéphane Beaudin and Stephan Dussault, Claude Léveillée, Glenn Lewis, Gordon Lightfoot, Aaron Lines, Alexina Louie, Murray McLauchlan, Joni Mitchell, Michel Pagliaro, Kevin Parent, Luc Plamondon, Michel Rivard, Sam Roberts, Rush’s Geddy Lee, Alex Lifeson, and Neil Peart, Richard Séguin, Remy Shand, Swollen Members’ Shane “Mad Child” Bunting, Kiley “Prevail” Hendricks, Robin “Rob the Viking” Hooper and Daniel “Moka Only” Denton, Sum 41’s Deryck Whibley, Steve Jocz, Dave Baksh and Jay McCaslin, The Tragically Hip’s Gordon Downie, Gord Sinclair, Paul Langlois, Bobby Baker and Johnny Fay, Gilles Vigneault, Roch Voisine, Rufus Wainwright, John Weinzweig, Hawksley Workman, Paul Zaza, and many others.

We are governed by a member-elected Board of Directors, made up equally of publishers and writers, and guided by a *Passion for Service*. In addition to our members, we serve our music-user customers. We offer them access to one of the world’s most valuable cultural assets: virtually its entire repertoire of copyright-protected music for communication and public performance.

We invite you to learn more about our organization, and the advantages you can expect with SOCAN as a partner in performance.

# A partner in Performance

Every songwriter, composer and lyricist knows that the process of creating original music can be long, challenging and, sometimes, life-consuming. It is a uniquely personal endeavour, often taking years to complete.

Even when the work is complete, the struggle can continue as creators seek to protect the intellectual property rights for the works they have produced.

An original creative work remains the intellectual property of its creator(s), and it is protected by law from performance without their consent.

But the challenge to protect those rights has never been greater than it is today.

New technology is changing the way music is accessed, used and valued. Music is an essential element in a dizzying array of mediums, from radio to the Internet. And more and more businesses are recognizing the value of using music to attract and enhance the experience of their customers.

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In the midst of such change, it’s important for the individual copyright owner to have strong representation in the use and administration of their works. SOCAN is that partner.



# copyrights

Copyright comprises several different and distinct rights that have evolved, over time, in response to technology and other changes.

Today, the Canadian Copyright Act creates several separate rights that belong to anyone who creates music or lyrics, including:

1. The right to *produce* or copy the musical work (e.g. sheet music)
2. The right to *reproduce* the work, which includes:
  - mechanical rights (i.e. required for audio reproductions such as sound recordings), or
  - synchronization rights (i.e. required for reproductions of the musical work in audio-visual productions such as films and television shows)
3. The *performing right*, which gives copyright owners the sole right to
  - a) communicate their works to the public by telecommunications (i.e. broadcast);
  - b) perform their works in public; and/or
  - c) authorize others to do so in return for royalty payments.

Performing rights are usually assigned to a performing rights society, such as SOCAN, so that licence fees can be efficiently collected and royalties distributed accordingly. SOCAN is not involved in reproduction rights (i.e. mechanical or synchronization rights) or in registering the copyright in musical works. SOCAN focuses exclusively on performing rights.

For more information about how to protect the copyright in your works, contact the Canadian Intellectual Property Office, The Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., or the Songwriters Association of Canada (SAC).

# SOCAN Quick Facts

**Founded:** 1990, following the merger of Canada's two previous performing rights societies:

**CAPAC** (Composers, Authors, and Publishers Association of Canada) was founded in 1925 as the Canadian Performing Rights Society.

**PROCAN** (Performing Rights Organization of Canada) was founded in 1940 as BMI Canada.

**Members:** More than 80,000 across Canada and around the world

**CEO:** André LeBel

To view a list of our board of directors, please visit our Website at [www.socan.ca](http://www.socan.ca)

## For More Information

We would be happy to discuss our operations and our *Passion for Service* in more detail. Whether you are a music creator, a music publisher, or a music user, you will discover that SOCAN can be an invaluable partner in performance.

Please do not hesitate to contact us by e-mail, phone or fax with your questions and comments. For immediate information, be sure to visit our Website at [www.socan.ca](http://www.socan.ca) or call 1-866-307-6226.



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what's right for music  
la musique a ses droits