

Why Sync is Like Playing the Lottery & Being in it to Win it



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Randy Klein is a composer, pianist, author, educator, President of [Jazzheads](#) (a New York City based jazz label), winner of 2 Gold Records with the R&B legend Millie Jackson, 4 Emmys, and a bunch of other accolades, multiple recordings, songs and productions. You can find out more about him [here](#).



I have been submitting my music for usage for sync opportunities for close to 35 years. During that time, I have been lucky to have had some of my music used by outside sources. Yes, sync licenses abound! These sync situations included 22 seconds of a song on the TV show WKRP Cincinnati, which is in continuous re-runs worldwide, a national TV ad for K-Mart store chain, an instore sync for Bose headphones and multiple smaller usages. These were profitable syncs, yet they occurred when I least expected it and please note they were not submissions. My music was found because I have been putting my music 'out there' for years. The music was simply discovered.

In truth, there is a sense of random to the world of acquiring a sync license. This is not to say that I don't submit my music to all situations listed by Music Gateway that fit, but my experience has shown that the music being found in a random way has been the case in almost 99% of my placements. And, I am always enthusiastic when submitting. I still love the feeling of 'this could be the big one!' But because of the random quality of getting a placement, I have learned to keep my expectations in check to avoid the feeling of disappointment and rejection of my music.

Unfortunately, I never know who is making the final decision about the placement, and in some instances the decision is made by a group of people, not just the music supervisor. Needless to say, the media business is an industry that is built on collaboration. Most important is that I, the composer/owner of the music cannot predict what a music supervisor is specifically looking for or what the deciding factor is in having a piece of music selected for a sync.

So, What Do I Do? Submit, Submit, Submit!

1. Quality

I make sure my recordings are as high level as possible. This includes the musical quality of the performance as well as the audio reproductions embodied on my submissions.

2. Self-Assessment

I am objective about my creative output and take a humble honest approach. This takes practice. I am not afraid to pass if I think the music isn't good enough. This is the difficult part. Assessing your own work is a lifelong learning challenge.

3. Be Diverse

I try to be as diverse/eclectic as possible with my music. Having alternate versions of a piece of music that are well described helps a music supervisor. I pay attention to the details. I choose small segments of my recorded music as well as long tracks to have in my music library.

4. Be Organized

I am organized. I label content carefully. I give a music supervisor descriptive language that indicates what the music is on the particular track. This is also a skillset that takes practice and time to master.

5.

I don't submit to a request for music that 'I KNOW' doesn't have a chance in hell to get selected. It is a waste of time, and more important, the music supervisor will simply frown down upon it. And, if my name is on the track, be sure.... they will remember that I wasted their time.

My approach has always been, if it truly feels like my music fits the situation, I submit, if not I reluctantly pass and wait for the next possibility. By being true to this approach, I have at least controlled the situation to the best of my ability.

The rest has been random and unfortunately a bit like a lottery. But...remember...YOU HAVE TO BE IN IT TO WIN IT!

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