

Music Supported Here

Kasabian and Massive Attack are among the major artists backing our campaign to curb illegal filesharing.

Report by
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The Campaign

Music Supported Here is a new campaign for all musicians from the Musicians' Union. The campaign aims to curb illegal filesharing by encouraging pride in paying for music.

The MSH principles

- It centres on the simple but important assumption that musicians should not get ripped off in the digital world.
- For musicians, it will be a way to publicise and debate the issue and to remind fans that you want to control your rights.
- And for music fans it's a badge to say that you don't rip off musicians. By supporting musicians' rights, we're supporting music.



Sarah Springett of The Floe, one of the bands who are backing MSH

Music Supported Here (MSH), the MU campaign you will have read about in the Winter 2009 issue of *The Musician*, has gone from strength to strength over the last couple of months. The website is quickly growing into the first place to go to find out about how musicians feel about music and the internet, so if you haven't visited yet, make sure you take a look at www.musicsupportedhere.com

Among the many musicians who have signed up since the launch are some very well-known names. Kasabian, Massive Attack, Florence And The Machine and The Floe have all created their own versions of the iconic MSH logo. Musicians from all genres are adding videos on a daily basis, and the online debate has produced some original and creative ideas about how musicians should ensure they receive payment for their music, if they don't want it to be given away for free.

Signed And Sealed

At the Performers Alliance Parliamentary Group (PAPG) reception, held at the House of Commons at the end of January, I was able to speak about MSH to the MPs who attended, and as a result I'm happy to say they all signed up to the campaign on the spot. The Secretary of State, Ben Bradshaw, was one of the first to sign up, swiftly followed by the Shadow Minister for Culture, Ed Vaizey, and the Lib Dems' Don Foster. Also present at the event was actor David Tennant, who signed up too. So even the good Doctor supports MSH!

MSH now has a page on Facebook, a presence on Twitter and MySpace, as well as links with YouTube, which enables musicians to load their own videos directly onto the MSH site. UK Music's Feargal

Sharkey has signed up, and the Featured Artists Coalition (FAC) and the Music Managers Forum (MMF) are also backing the MSH movement.

A Surefire Success

So what is it that has made the campaign so successful? I think it's quite straightforward really. This is the first chance that musicians have had to have their voice heard in the debate about music and the internet — rather than the industry speaking for them or, even worse, telling them what to say. The record companies and the publishers are very fond of using artists to get their messages across but I think the public have wised up: we know that high-profile, expensive campaigns designed to combat piracy have been largely ineffective. And that is where MSH can really score. The public can see that this is a campaign run by musicians for all musicians. There is no big corporation behind the campaign pulling the strings, no multi-national sweating on its falling share price. MSH is a unique platform that enables the artist to talk directly to the fans about the issue of music on the internet.

MSH recognises musicians as individuals who can hold very different views about music and the internet. And the message to the fans is a simple one: 'free is great, but if I don't want you to take my music for free, don't do it'. **mm**

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