# AI music revolution sparks legal and creative upheaval in the industry



In recent years, the music industry has witnessed a profound shift as artificial intelligence (AI) emerges as a powerful, yet controversial, creative force. The story of Oliver McCann, a British AI music creator known by his stage name imoliver, encapsulates this transformation. Unlike traditional musicians who rely on instruments and vocal talent, McCann crafts songs across genres like indie-pop, electro-soul, and country-rap using AI chatbots to bring his lyrics to life. With no formal musical background or ability to play instruments, McCann’s breakthrough came when an AI-assisted track garnered over three million streams, leading to a deal with independent label Hallwood Media—a pioneering moment in the industry’s evolving relationship with AI.

McCann’s experience illustrates the democratizing potential of AI songwriting tools such as Suno and Udio, which allow anyone with a laptop and creative vision to produce music. Industry experts describe this surge in AI-generated content as a “tsunami,” forecasting exponential growth as younger generations grow up immersed in AI technologies. Indeed, platforms like Deezer estimate that around 18-20% of daily song uploads are entirely AI-generated, translating to roughly 20,000 new tracks each day. Despite this flood of synthetic music, streaming numbers suggest these songs garner relatively few plays, highlighting a gap between production volume and listener engagement.

The rise of AI music has sparked a complex debate among artists, labels, and legal experts. While some musicians, including notable names like will.i.am, Timbaland, and Imogen Heap, embrace AI as a creative tool that expands musical possibilities, many others fear it threatens to devalue traditional artistic skills. More than 1,000 established artists, including Kate Bush and Annie Lennox, protested proposed changes to UK laws on AI, concerned about losing creative control. The heart of the controversy lies in the use of existing recorded works to train AI models without artist consent or remuneration—a practice which has prompted lawsuits from major labels such as Sony, Universal, and Warner against AI startups like Suno and Udio for copyright infringement. Royalty organisations, including Germany’s GEMA, have also taken legal action, accusing AI generators of producing derivative works too close to classic hits.

This legal uncertainty, likened to the upheavals caused by Napster and the shift from CDs to streaming, marks a “Wild West” phase for AI music. Industry leaders advocate for clear regulations that balance encouraging innovation with protecting artists’ rights and income. Björn Ulvaeus, co-founder of ABBA and president of the International Confederation of Societies of Authors and Composers (CISAC), has highlighted reports projecting that AI-generated music could slash musicians’ revenues by up to 24%, potentially costing creators €22 billion by 2028. He stresses the unfairness of tech companies profiting from artists’ work without compensation, underpinning calls for industry-wide standards.

At the same time, AI tools are reshaping music creation itself. Users like McCann and Scott Smith, creator of the AI band Pulse Empire, describe using AI much like any other production tool—investing hours into refining songs until they meet their artistic vision. AI is particularly valuable for those without traditional musical training, enabling them to experiment and produce polished work. However, AI-written lyrics often face criticism for lacking depth and originality, tending towards clichés and repetitive structures. Artists like Lukas Rams of the AI band Sleeping With Wolves often rely on AI to generate musical backdrops while crafting original lyrics themselves.

One sector leading AI integration is the K-pop industry, where companies like Supertone, backed by entertainment giant HYBE, use AI to create digital artist counterparts and virtual groups, enhancing fan engagement with multilingual songs and innovative voice modulation technologies. This illustrates AI’s potential to augment creativity and reach in ways traditional methods cannot.

Nonetheless, experts caution that AI-generated music cannot yet replicate the human experience and emotional resonance that define truly meaningful artistry. While AI can emulate patterns and styles, the unique expression derived from human life stories remains irreplaceable. The future thus hinges on responsibly merging human creativity with AI’s technological capabilities, ensuring artists are credited and compensated while embracing AI as a tool for innovation rather than a substitute for genuine talent.

As the UK and global music industries navigate these developments, the challenge lies in fostering an environment where AI drives responsible innovation, amplifying creative opportunities without eroding the livelihoods of musicians. The path forward promises not only disruption but also exciting evolution, as AI increasingly democratizes access to music production and enables fresh forms of artistic expression. McCann’s optimism encapsulates this outlook: “I think we’re entering a world where anyone, anywhere could make the next big hit,” he said. This vision, balanced with careful regulation and respect for human artistry, could position the UK as a leader in harnessing AI for the future of music.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.limaohio.com/top-stories/2025/09/01/success-of-ai-music-creators-sparks-debate-on-future-of-music-industry/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://apnews.com/article/551308748c84c774c3c5ecd89aa93904> - The article discusses the rise of AI-generated music, highlighting artists like Oliver McCann, known as imoliver, who signed with Hallwood Media after his AI-assisted track garnered over 3 million streams. It mentions AI tools like Suno and Udio, which have led to a surge in synthetic music, sparking debates about AI's role in the industry and concerns over low-quality, mass-produced content. Experts note that generative AI is set to transform the $29.6 billion global recorded music market, though its full impact remains unclear. Deezer estimates that 18% of daily song uploads are AI-generated, but these tracks receive minimal streams, indicating limited listener engagement. The article also touches on legal disputes, with major record labels suing AI startups for copyright infringement and negotiating artist compensation when AI is used to remix songs. While some musicians embrace AI, others fear it may devalue their creativity. The piece concludes by comparing the current AI music debate to past technological advancements like AutoTune and synthesizers, suggesting that AI could eventually become a mainstream tool in music production.
3. <https://www.techradar.com/computing/artificial-intelligence/is-ai-bad-for-music-or-is-it-just-another-step-in-the-auto-tune-timeline> - This article explores the growing role of artificial intelligence (AI) in music creation, drawing parallels with past technological innovations like synthesizers, drum machines, and auto-tune, which initially faced skepticism but eventually became foundational in various music genres. With over 20,000 AI-generated songs now uploaded daily, there is growing concern among musicians and industry stakeholders over authenticity, economic impact, and copyright issues. Major labels are already taking legal action against AI platforms accused of using copyrighted material without permission. However, the article argues that AI should be viewed not as a replacement for human creativity but as a powerful tool to assist artists in experimentation and innovation. While AI-generated music can feel derivative or soulless, it holds promise as an accessible resource for aspiring musicians lacking traditional resources. The key lies in responsible integration, ensuring artists are protected and credited while leveraging AI's capabilities to expand musical possibilities. The debate, the article asserts, should focus not on banning AI but on how best to incorporate it into the creative process.
4. <https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2024/07/generative-ai-music-suno-udio/679114/?utm_source=apple_news> - The article discusses the impact of generative AI on the music industry, emphasizing that while AI can replicate and create music patterns, it lacks the human touch essential for deeply meaningful and influential music. The rise of AI-generated music by companies like Suno and Udio poses a threat to the livelihood of musicians, as it shifts the valuation and creation of art into a more mechanical and less human process. Despite technological advancements, proper music relies heavily on an artist's unique experiences and interpretations. Concerns include the potential replacement of professional roles in music production with AI and the broader implications for the labor market. The article concludes that while AI can be a useful tool, essential music retains a value that only human creativity can fulfill, underscoring a future emphasis on seeking authentic human artistry even amidst technological advancements.
5. <https://cincodias.elpais.com/companias/2025-08-18/una-de-cada-cinco-nuevas-canciones-creada-por-ia-cada-plataforma-musical-prepara-la-guerra-por-libre.html> - The article analyses the growing presence of AI-generated music on platforms like Spotify, YouTube, and TikTok, and how this is challenging moderation and regulation mechanisms. Deezer estimates that currently 20% of new music comes from AI, equivalent to about 20,000 songs daily. Some AI bands, such as The Velvet Sundown, already surpass one million monthly listeners. Platforms are adjusting their policies: Spotify focuses on preventing impersonations or deceptions; YouTube conditions monetization on added value; TikTok requires labeling with hashtags; and Apple Music collaborates with record labels like Universal to prevent unauthorized use in AI training. Deezer has implemented a detector with 99.8% accuracy to identify AI-generated content. However, regulation faces barriers like the lack of unified legislation. Spotify and Meta have criticized the fragmented approach of the European AI Act. Additionally, experts warn about failures in labeling systems, which could harm real musicians. According to CISAC, AI music revenues could reach €4 billion by 2028, compromising the sustainability of the music industry if common standards are not established.
6. <https://time.com/7012837/kyogu-lee/> - The K-pop industry leads in integrating AI technology, outpacing the American music scene that is fraught with concerns over copyright and job security. Supertone, an AI company backed by HYBE, uses AI to create digital counterparts for artists and entire AI-based groups, enhancing fan-artist connections by providing multilingual songs. CEO Kyogu Lee emphasizes this technology's potential to deepen fan engagement. Supertone resurrected the voice of late folk star Kim Kwang-seok and allowed artist Lee Hyun to sing in six languages. They introduced a virtual group, Syndi-eight, and a tool for real-time voice modulation, with broad applications from gaming to music production. Upcoming is Supertone Play, a multilingual text-to-speech service, aimed at advancing storytelling.
7. <https://www.ft.com/content/40b28a25-eddc-4ac5-82f3-dac0128a187f> - Björn Ulvaeus, co-founder of Abba and president of the International Confederation of Societies of Authors and Composers (CISAC), has expressed concerns over the impact of generative artificial intelligence (gen AI) on musicians' revenues. A report by CISAC indicates that AI-generated music could lead to a significant revenue decline for artists, potentially costing them 24% of their income, totaling €22bn by 2028. As AI technology uses existing music for training, Ulvaeus argues it is unfair for tech companies to exploit artists' work without compensation. Following lawsuits against AI startups, he stresses the need for regulations to protect creators' rights. Despite these concerns, Ulvaeus views AI as a revolutionary tool for enhancing creativity. The CISAC study projects that AI will considerably benefit tech companies' revenues, while harming human creators’ economic interests over the next five years.