

# The state of AI Transparency in Music 2025:

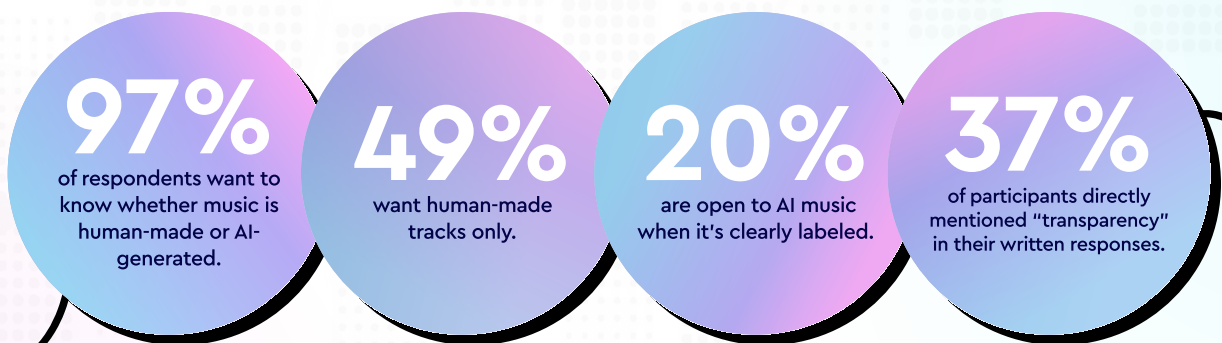
Using metadata to identify  
AI Content and protect  
human artists.



## Executive Summary

- ✓ Cyanite, MediaTracks, and Marmoset conducted an industry survey to understand how music licensing professionals view AI transparency and contextual metadata in music selection.
- ✓ As AI-generated music becomes more common across the industry, the goal was to explore how labeling and contextual information can protect and elevate human-made work in an evolving environment.
- ✓ This collaboration reflects a shared commitment to helping media professionals make informed decisions, support real artists, and preserve the integrity of human creativity in commercial music catalogs.
- ✓ 144 professionals responded, including music supervisors, film editors, advertisers, and filmmakers. They answered five questions about AI awareness and contextual metadata.

In a nutshell, our survey findings suggest that:



These results show how relevant the issue has become and, that the industry **demands transparency** but **remains divided** on AI itself.

## Why this study now?

The music industry is entering a new era where **AI is reshaping music production and distribution**. Many professionals are facing a new challenge: ensuring human-made music can stand out and be trusted in an increasingly AI-influenced landscape.

This study explores how transparency and contextual metadata—such as creative intent, cultural background, and production details—help industry professionals identify genuine human-made music and choose it with confidence.

Cyanite, MediaTracks, and Marmoset surveyed **150 professionals in music supervision, film, advertising, and music production**. The aim was to investigate which types of metadata matter most, and how clarity around music's origin and context supports creative and ethical decision-making.

The findings highlight that while AI transparency is now expected, the greater opportunity remains in strengthening how human creativity is identified, trusted, and valued.

*"There's an intangible, x-factor that can only be found within human creativity—not to mention an entire ecosystem of hard-working artists making meaningful contributions to our communities and culture. While there may be a place for AI-generated music, similarly to how there's long been a market for stock music, it's critical to have transparency and a clear understanding of a song's origin. Transparency guarantees clients and listeners will know exactly where their music comes from and, that the artists behind it are supported, paid fairly, and can be celebrated for their work and creativity."*

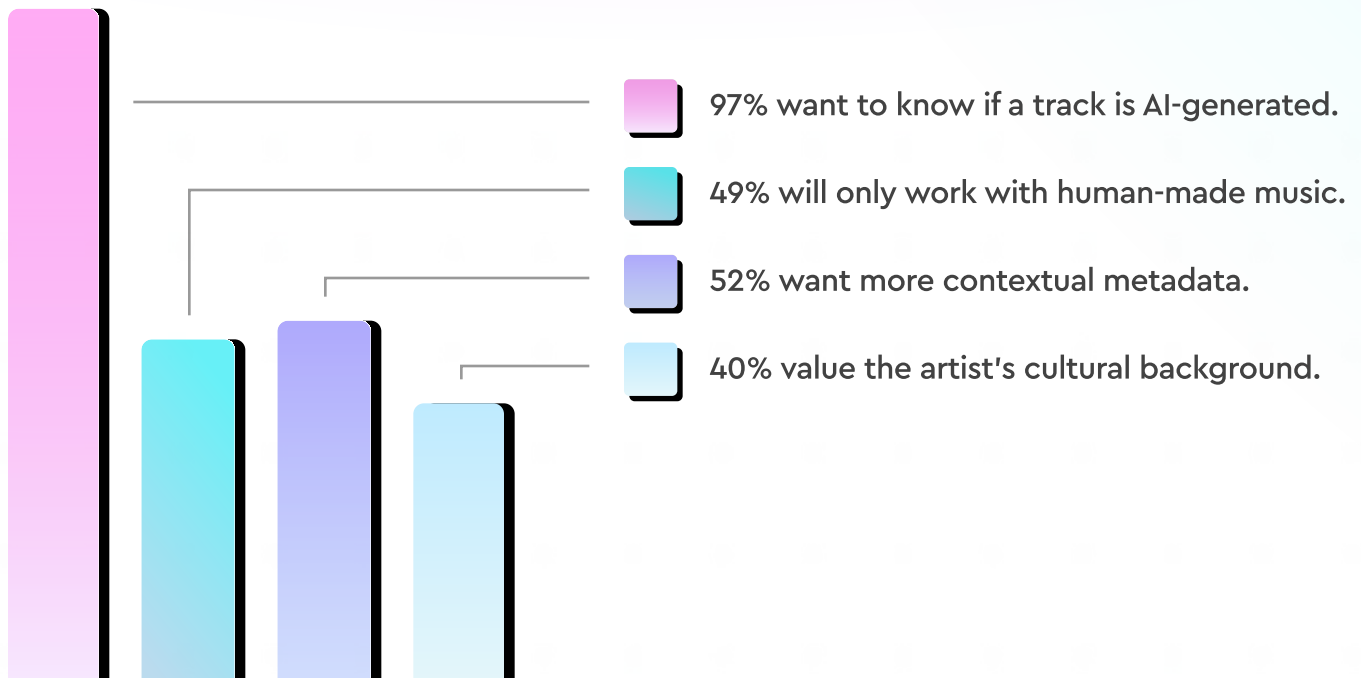


**— Ryan Wines**

CEO and Founder, Marmoset

# Key findings at a glance

What respondents think of AI-generated music:



## ► Surprise finding

While nearly all respondents want transparency, the industry remains split when it comes to AI music. Around half would choose human-only music exclusively, one-fifth are open to AI music with clear labeling, and 17% say it depends on the project.

## ► What this means

**Transparency is now the expected norm.** The next step is context: understanding who created the music and under what conditions. This awareness is beginning to shape how professionals evaluate creative work and make licensing decisions.





# **Deep Dive: Four Core Insights**

# The transparency imperative

Would you find it useful to know if a song is AI-generated or human-made?



97%  
said "yes"

For most professionals, transparency is about trust. Knowing how a track was made helps maintain authenticity, align with client expectations, and avoid legal risk. Several respondents noted that clients increasingly ask for proof that music is human-made, making transparency a **practical requirement** as much as a creative one.

## Transparency as a recurring theme

The push for transparency reflects a wider trust gap. Commercial catalogs now contain AI-generated tracks, yet attribution and metadata remain inconsistent.

In many cases, it's unclear whether AI tools were used in production and what material models were trained on. This uncertainty complicates rights verification and licensing. Until reliable systems for disclosure and documentation exist, **transparency remains the foundation of trust in music selection.**



37%

of participants explicitly used the word "transparency" in their responses.

*"At MediaTracks, we focus on the person behind the track: their story, talent, and background. In a landscape where AI-generated music is increasingly common, knowing who created a track and why it was made is essential. Metadata becomes a powerful tool for providing transparency and context, helping our clients understand the origins and intent behind every piece. By preserving this information, we ensure trust, authenticity, and clarity in music selection."*

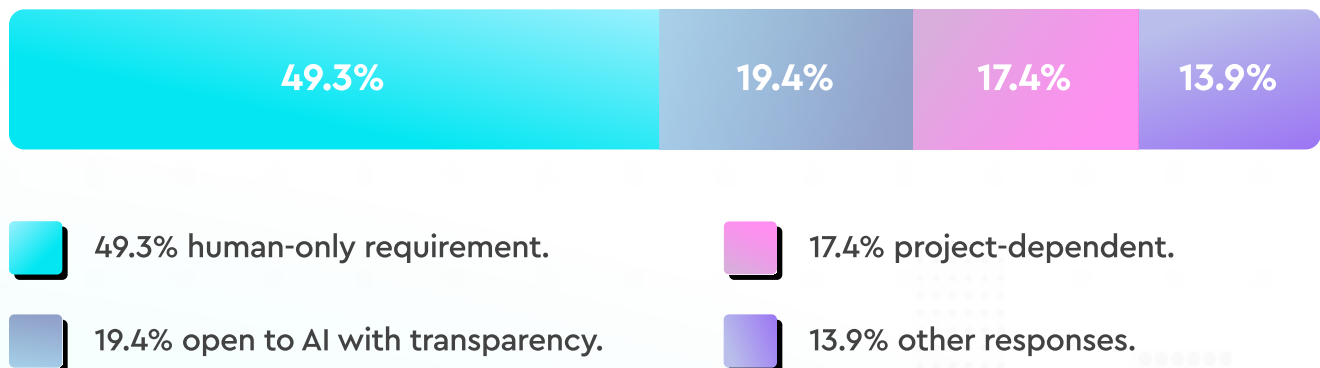
**— María Cecilia Ayalde Ángel**

Business Development Manager at MediaTracks Music



### The preference for human-made music

The following chart shows the breakdown of respondents open to working with AI music:



These differences in openness to AI often come down to context. Some respondents pointed to tight budgets or client pressure as reasons to consider AI-generated music.

*"I would be heavily biased against using AI-generated music, but not 100%. I might only use it under certain budget or client constraints."*



Others mentioned copyright uncertainty and concern for musician livelihoods as reasons to avoid it:

*"I'm concerned that if it were AI-generated, where did the AI take the themes or phrases from? Possible copyright infringement issues."*

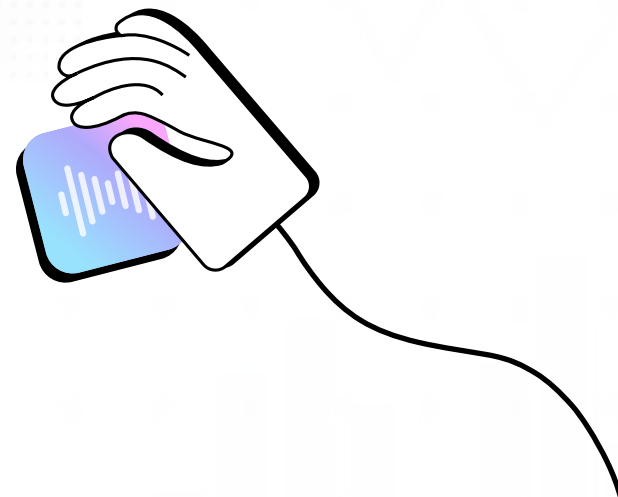


Advertising professionals showed more openness in their responses. They made up the largest group willing to consider AI-generated music, with **35% preferring human-only tracks** and **26% open to AI when it's transparent**. Their answers reflect a pragmatic mindset shaped by client demands, deadlines, and risk control.

Respondents highlighted the importance of clear metadata to confirm that AI tools use licensed models, come from verified, ethically sourced platforms, and don't introduce IP risks. Some mentioned using production details to avoid unlicensed AI content and ensure tracks meet client policies, while one respondent noted that clients expect agencies to show they are using AI, even when doing so doesn't reduce costs.

*"Clients are eager for agencies to be using AI in production, as they believe it is magically going to make every phase of production so inexpensive it's practically free."*

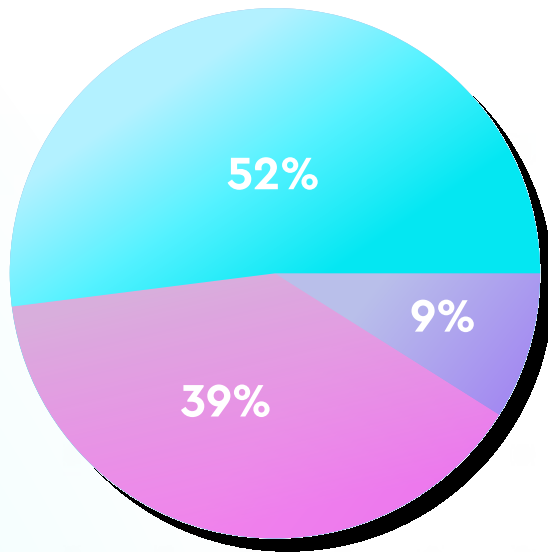
*"As agencies, we do need to demonstrate that we are leaning into and making use of this technology, so the additional metadata—letting producers know if a track is AI-generated and less expensive—could help in this regard."*





## Beyond the tag: the story behind the sound

Would you like more contextual metadata about a track's background (e.g., creator's cultural background, inspiration, or production details)?



### The responses:

- 52% of participants said "yes".
- 39% of participants said "no".
- 9% of answers were conditional.

Professionals described metadata as a working tool for matching music to creative intent and audience. They use it to assess how a track was made, filter by tone or theme, and determine whether it fits a project's message or brand. Others said it helps locate authentic music from specific regions or underrepresented creators when diversity or cultural relevance is part of the brief.

Metadata also supports quality control and compliance. Several respondents said that **background context strengthens collaboration**.

Knowing who made a track gives them more to work with when speaking to clients and helps them explain why a song fits the project.



For respondents, knowing the creator's cultural background was the highest priority because it shapes how audiences connect with music. [Research](#) published in the International Journal of Cognitive Science in 2023 supports this: people internalize the patterns of their own musical culture, so familiar structures feel more predictable and emotionally resonant.

When music drifts too far from those learned expectations, it can feel less authentic or harder to place—a challenge that grows as AI models mix styles from different traditions.

Large-scale listening data confirms this pattern. [Research](#) carried out in Austria and published in 2020 analyzed over 400 million listening events from 55,000 users across 36 countries. The study found that combining acoustic features with cultural and socio-economic data produced far more accurate music recommendations than models using sound alone. In short, **musical taste is cultural, not just individual.**

*"Cultural context shapes how people hear music long before any tag or model gets involved. AI can describe what's happening in the sound, but cultural metadata can give insight into the background and influences behind the track. As AI becomes part of everyday music workflows, combining precise audio analysis with this context will enable music professionals to make better informed decisions."*

— **Markus Schwarzer**  
CEO at Cyanite



This helps explain why professionals value knowing a creator's background. **Cultural context allows them to choose music that feels credible and emotionally aligned with the audience.**

### How would additional metadata affect your music selection process?

Three major themes were found:



Theme 1:

Storytelling & narrative alignment.



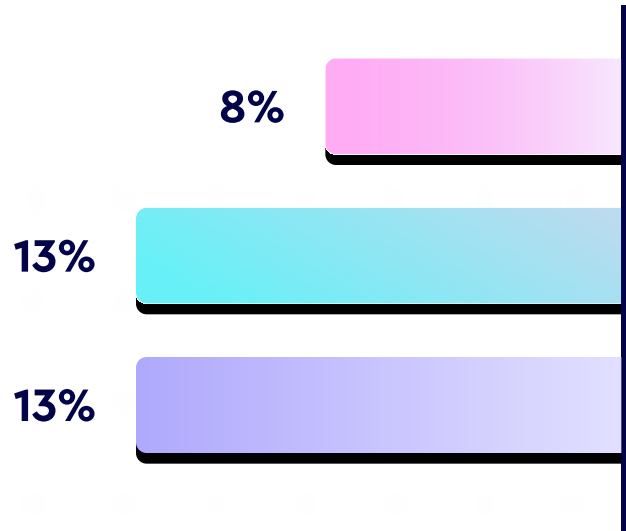
Theme 2:

Cultural authenticity & representation.



Theme 3:

Emotional connection & genuineness.



When asked how additional metadata would affect their music selection process, respondents' answers centered on three recurring themes: storytelling alignment, cultural authenticity, and emotional credibility.

### ▶ Storytelling and narrative alignment

About 8% said metadata helps them connect sound to story. Knowing a track's origin, intent, or creative process allows them to select music that strengthens a narrative or fits a project's emotional arc. It's also used to communicate creative intent in pitches and explain why a particular track supports a campaign or scene.

*"Helps hone in my search knowing the brand's ethos and direction"*

*"To help my music choices more closely match the ethos of the film."*

## ► Cultural authenticity and representation

Roughly 13% said metadata ensures cultural accuracy and inclusion. Professionals use it to verify that music aligns with a project's setting or audience, identify creators from specific communities, or support diversity goals outlined in client briefs.

*"There are some pieces for which the cultural background of the artist is important for authenticity purposes. Also, beyond that, it would help me make more diverse choices."*



*"Sometimes I need music from a specific location or culture."*

## ► Emotional connection and genuineness

13%

said deeper metadata  
builds trust in the  
music itself.

Understanding who made a track and how it was created helps them judge its emotional credibility and feel confident in presenting it to clients or audiences:

*"Music is personal and human. I like knowing who made it, what influenced them, etc."*





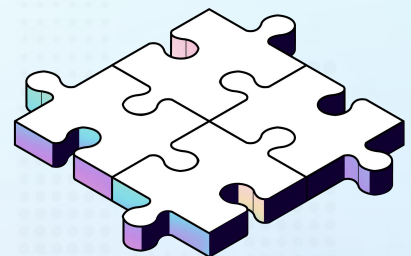
*"To know whether it is created by a human and not some schlocky rip-off generated by something with no emotion, feeling, or connection to humanity."*

Metadata is shaping how professionals make decisions during music selection. They can quickly identify whether a track fits a project's tone, theme, and brief, and get context they can use to explain choices to clients. Respondents said background details—like culture, place, and artist identity—help avoid ill-fitting selections and strengthen alignment with story and audience.

**Several respondents mentioned that metadata also supports due diligence, surfacing rights, creator information, and production methods. This reduces risk in approvals and contracts.**

Others said it adds value in projects focused on representation, where knowing who made the music supports diversity goals and authentic storytelling.

Across responses, metadata was consistently tied to confidence: knowing how a track was made, where it came from, and whether AI was involved helps professionals choose and present music with more certainty.



A stylized illustration of a hand holding the top-left corner of a white rectangular sign. The hand is white with black outlines and is attached to a black line that curves upwards and to the left.

# **What This Means For The Industry**

A stylized illustration of a hand holding the bottom-right corner of a white rectangular sign. The hand is white with black outlines and is attached to a black line that curves downwards and to the right.


**AI transparency has become an industry standard.** 97% of surveyed professionals want to know if a track involves AI, and some client contracts already require disclosure.

The market is divided. About half of buyers will only license human-made music, while others are open to AI if it's clearly labeled. Human catalogs continue to carry strong value, and transparency is now a baseline for trust.

Contextual metadata is the next edge. Over half of respondents want richer track information, especially about cultural background, creative intent, and production context. Origin and credibility are becoming key factors in how music is evaluated and sold.

### Where the industry goes next

Music libraries can use transparency to build credibility and long-term value. Verified human-made catalogs, backed by cultural and creative context, will serve clients who care about trust and storytelling.

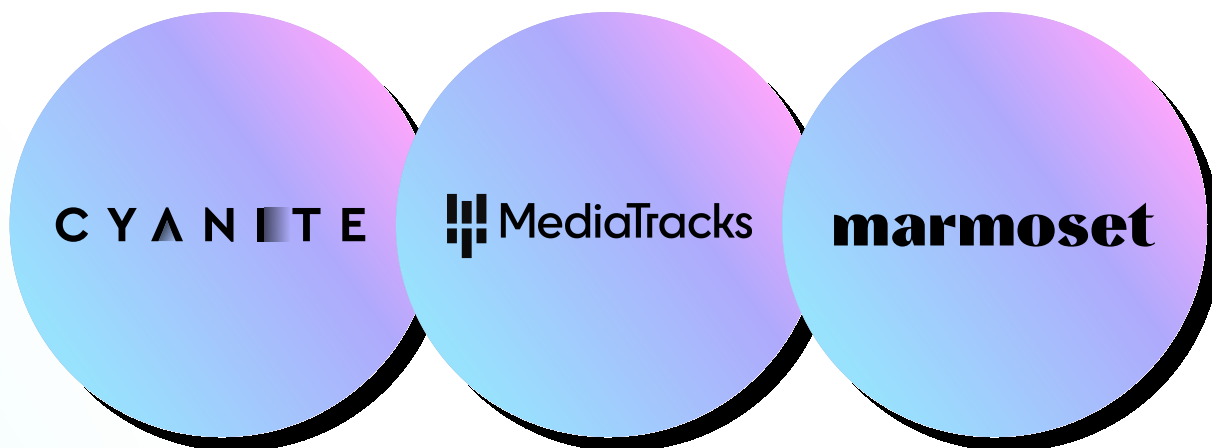


Platforms and tech providers have a chance to lead by making AI disclosure and metadata searchable, giving users a clearer sense of origin and authorship.

For creators, sharing background and intent isn't just self-promotion—it's strategic. 44% of professionals want this information when making selections, and it can determine whether a track makes the shortlist.

Advertisers and filmmakers can strengthen their creative process by requesting disclosure upfront and using metadata to support ethical, story-driven decisions.

# How we contribute to AI transparency in music:



## How Cyanite fits in

Cyanite focuses on what can be heard directly in the audio. Its analysis captures the mood, feel, and structure of a track, giving professionals a clear picture of what they are working with. This information sits alongside cultural or background metadata in catalogs and helps people move through large libraries with confidence and accuracy. By offering a steady, comparable read of the music itself, Cyanite gives each track a fair chance of being found and gives teams the clarity they need when making creative and licensing decisions.

## How MediaTracks fits in

As an artist-centred label, MediaTracks protects its composers, their copyright, and their talent. It's also clear about how it approaches AI, choosing to release only human-made music. The catalog includes background details supported through partnerships with MOBO Unsung, Music Production for Women, Carousel, and Can-

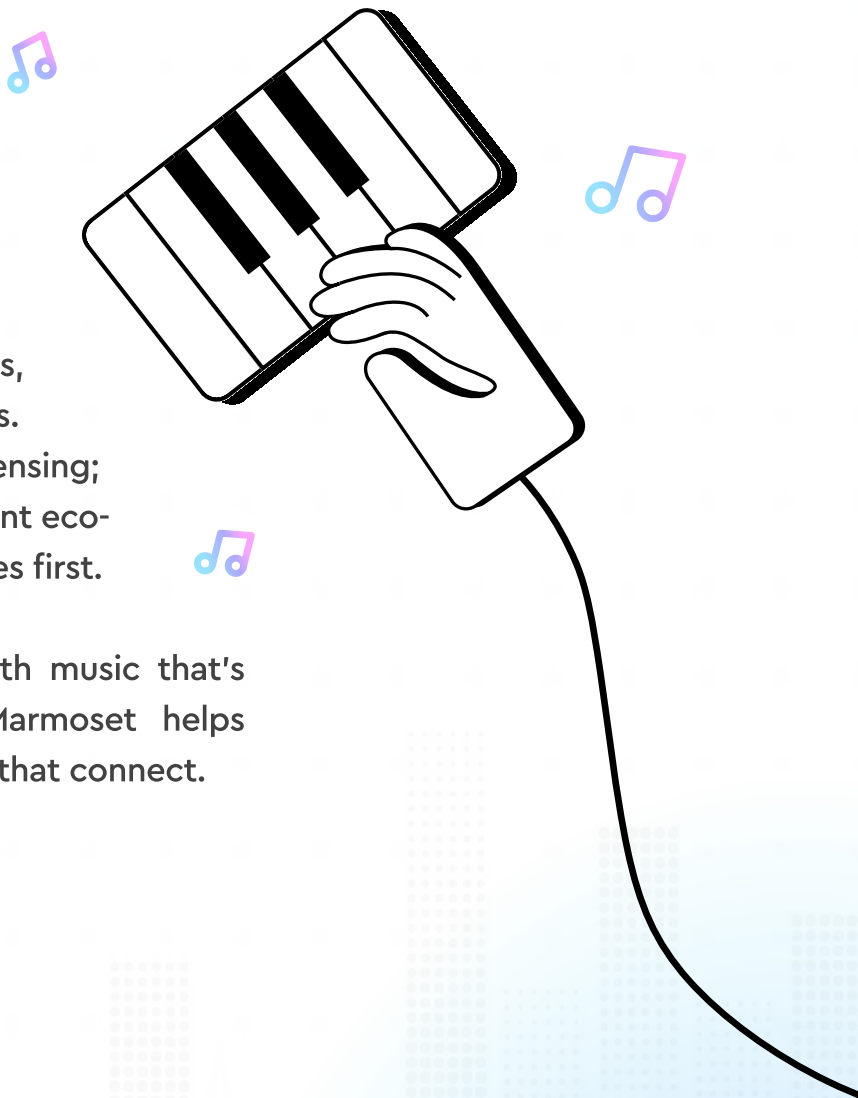


Do Musos, which helps ensure fair access and representation. Writers from around the world contribute to the roster, bringing cultural accuracy and authenticity to each genre and giving clients confidence that every track comes from real artists.

### How Marmoset fits in

Marmoset exists to champion real artists and real human creativity. The agency doesn't represent AI-generated music, only the work of musicians whose stories, experiences, and emotions shape the songs it makes. Marmoset's approach goes beyond licensing; the aim is to build an ethical, transparent ecosystem where community always comes first.

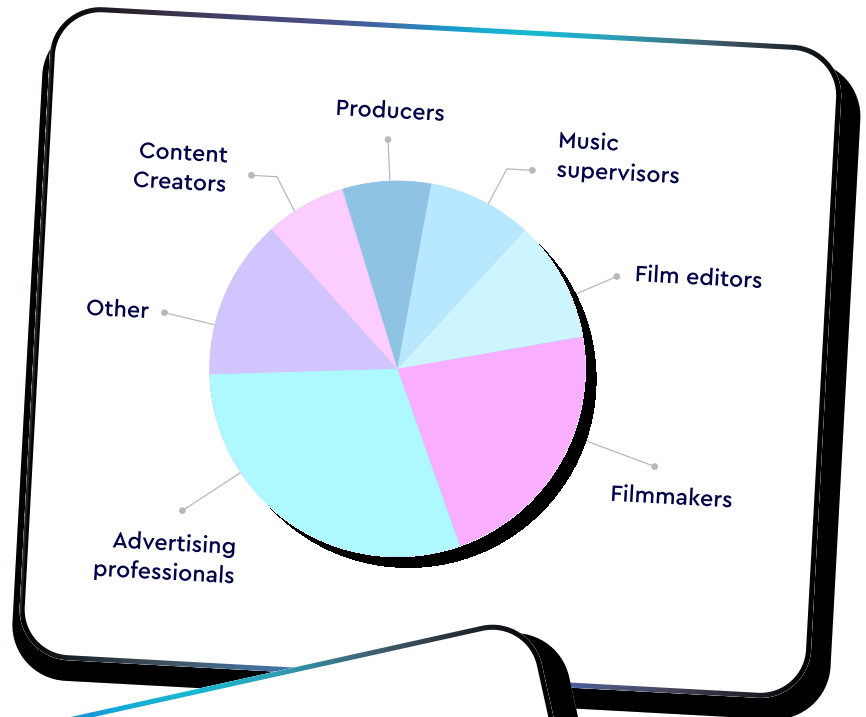
By combining meaningful context with music that's **made by people, not machines**, Marmoset helps creators and clients build soundtracks that connect.



# Methodology & Participants

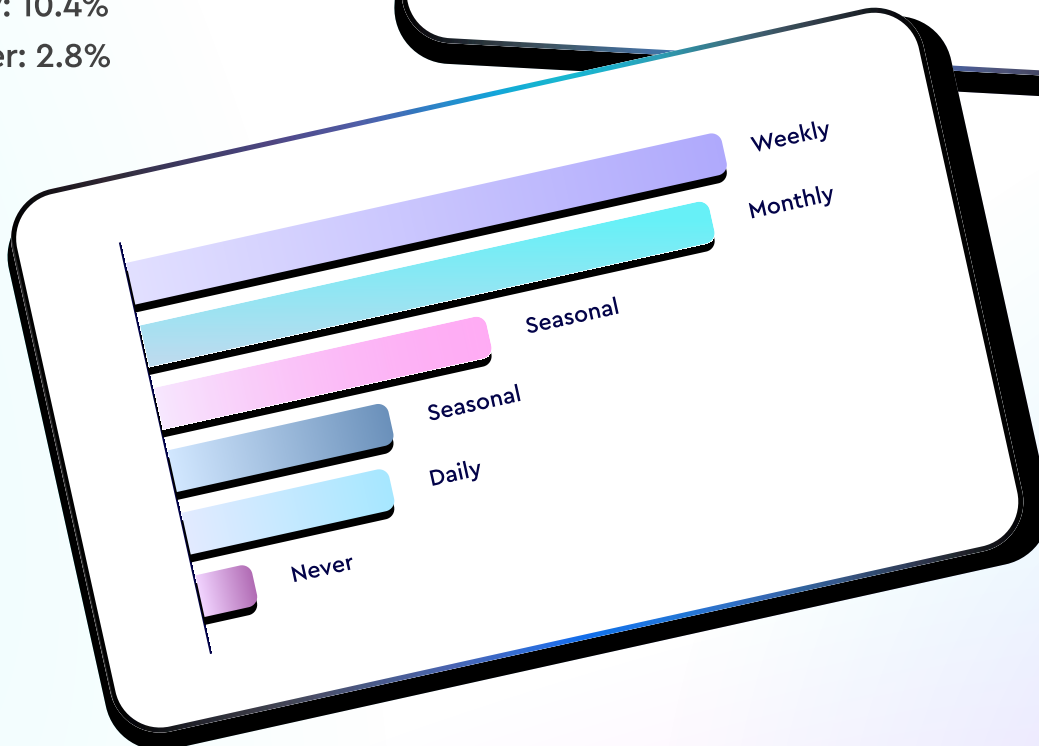
## 1. Respondent profile

- Advertising professionals: 29.9%
- Filmmakers: 22.2%
- Film editors: 10.4%
- Music supervisors: 9.0%
- Producers: 7.6%
- Content creators: 6.9%
- Other roles: 13.2%



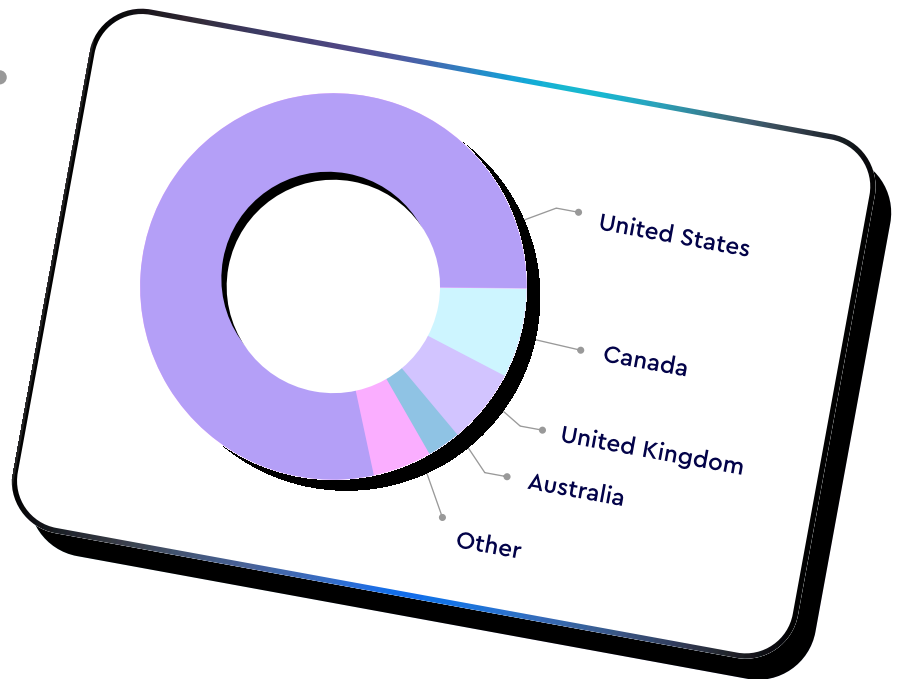
## 2. Search frequency

- Weekly: 29.9%
- Monthly: 28.5%
- Seasonal: 16.7%
- Yearly: 11.1%
- Daily: 10.4%
- Never: 2.8%



### 3. Geography

- United States: 78.5%
- Canada: 7.6%
- United Kingdom: 6.3%
- Australia: 2.8%
- Other: 4.9%



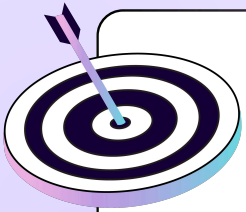
#### Survey Questions

1. What best describes your role?
2. How often do you search for and license music online?
3. What country are you based in?
4. Would you find it useful to know whether a song was AI-generated or human-made when selecting music?
5. If yes, how would this information influence your selection process?
6. Would you like more contextual metadata about a track's background (e.g., creator's cultural background, inspiration, or production details)?
7. If yes, which aspects would be most valuable to you?
8. How would this additional metadata affect your music selection process?
9. On a scale of 1-5, how useful do you think this additional information would be for your work?
10. Any other thoughts on how music catalogs can improve metadata transparency?

**Responses were analyzed through a mixed coding approach combining quantitative and qualitative analysis.** Numerical data was summarized statistically, while open-ended answers were grouped by recurring themes. Ranges reflect overlap between coded categories when respondents mentioned multiple factors.

## CYANITE

Founded in 2019, [Cyanite](#) is an AI-tagging and music search company serving over 200 music companies and 200,000 users worldwide. Their technology offers auto-tagging, similarity, and free-text search designed specifically for music catalogs. Cyanite helps partners organize, analyze, and match music more efficiently, supporting a more transparent and informed creative process.



[MediaTracks](#) is a leading provider of production music and sound design for broadcasters, agencies, and creators. The company collaborates with global networks and independent producers, offering high-quality, licensable music tailored for storytelling and brand communication, with a focus on championing underrepresented voices and protecting real (human) artists.

## marmoset

[Marmoset](#) is a full-service music agency providing meticulously curated music for brands, TV, film, streaming, creators, and more. Marmoset represents a 100% exclusive catalog of diverse and rare independent artists, bands, record labels, and vintage recordings of the highest pedigree. The only certified B-Corp in the game, Marmoset is the first in the industry to give back **10% of profits** to community partners, and the only company to issue an annual transparency report, providing a clear line of sight through the entire organization.

