

Social Media Shenanigans and the Struggling Artist

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Abstract

This article examines how the role of the recording artist has changed in recent years, including, but not limited to, the requirement that most artists must be content creators and have supportive digital metrics prior to signing a record deal; the push of labels and managers to have artists engage online and increase impressions; and the resulting impact on the artist, such as mental health issues. The article concludes with a “how can we do better” section, which includes an onboarding document for newly signed recording artists (akin to an employee manual for new employees) to use and refer to, including social media training, mental health awareness training, other education opportunities, and a listing of “do’s and don’ts.”

Keywords: recording artists, social media, record deals, music industry

Mary Lauren Teague is Assistant Professor of Music Business at Belmont University and Owner of Dotted i Entertainment, LLC, where she manages and advises Nashville creatives. Previously a full-time entertainment attorney at Loeb & Loeb, LLP and currently Of Counsel, she brings her experiences of representing recording artists, legacy artists, songwriters, publishing companies, producers, and other entertainment and media companies to the table in her professor, manager, advisor, and attorney capacities in order to provide exceptional service to her



students and clients. Teague serves as a Board Member of SOURCE (Nashville’s longest running organization for women in the music business) and as Chair of the Troubadour Society Advisory Committee at the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum. She has been honored by the *Nashville Business Journal* as one of Nashville’s “Top 40 Under 40” and named to the “Up Next” list of emerging leaders in entertainment law in *Variety’s* “Legal Impact Report”.

Amy Bryson Smith is Assistant Professor of Music Business and Entertainment at Belmont University. A native of Tennessee, she earned her Bachelor of Business Administration at Belmont University and her doctorate of jurisprudence at Nashville School of Law. She has taught at Belmont University in some capacity for almost twenty years. Prior to teaching full-time, she practiced law in Nashville representing many in the entertainment industry in both business transactions and litigation. At Belmont, she teaches or has taught the courses Music Industry Contract Law, Copyright Law, Intellectual Property Law, Music Business Survey, Business Law I, and Business Law II. She is a member of the inaugural class (2021-22) of the Nashville Entertainment & IP Law American Inn of Court. Among other journals, she has been published in the *Journal of Critical Incidents*, *Journal of the Music & Entertainment Industry Educators Association*, *Midwest Law Journal*, *Southern Journal of Business & Ethics*, and *Southern Law Journal*. She has also worked with PBS creating educational resources to support *Country Music: A Film by Ken Burns*.





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