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# Music Licensing for Brand Videos: TikTok, Meta, YouTube

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## Executive Summary

Music that is cleared for a personal Reel or TikTok is not automatically cleared for a brand video. Each platform ties its music library to the account type, the use (organic or paid) and the destination, and the platforms state those limits in different words. This report maps six music sources against the places a commissioned brand video usually runs, using each platform's or licensor's own terms retrieved on 27 November 2026. This is research, not legal advice.

On **TikTok**, the help centre says businesses cannot use the general music library for commercial usage (ads.tiktok.com), while the **Commercial Music Library (CML)** is intended for organic content, video ads and branded content (ads.tiktok.com). The CML terms limit commercial use of those sounds to TikTok itself (www.tiktok.com), and Germany's collecting society GEMA says the same (gema.de). TikTok's own pages disagree on catalogue size: **1 million** songs (ads.tiktok.com), **600,000+** tracks (ads.tiktok.com) and **1.5 million** tracks (www.tiktok.com). On **Meta**, Instagram says its licensed library is intended for personal, non-commercial use (help.instagram.com) and that certain business accounts lack access. Meta's **Sound Collection** licence covers commercial purposes (www.facebook.com) but only on Meta's own products. Instagram Help counts **over 14,000** songs (help.instagram.com); Meta's Business Help says **nearly 16,000** (www.facebook.com).

On **YouTube**, Creative Commons tracks in the Audio Library require a credit in the video description (support.google.com). The page says nothing on paid ads or use elsewhere, and YouTube states that it cannot give legal guidance on music issues off the platform. Creative Commons treats synching music to moving images as an adaptation, so a "no derivatives" track cannot be shared once it is in a video (creativecommons.org).

**Stock-music subscriptions** are the only listed source whose terms can span several destinations and client work, but only on the right plan tier. Epidemic Sound's Creator plan excludes brand advertising (www.epidemicsound.com), Artlist's Social licence excludes paid media (artlist.io), and Soundstripe's Personal

plan bars commercial brand promotion (www.soundstripe.com). Licences also differ on what happens after cancellation, on channel registration and on editing.

The practical rule: write the music source, licence tier, proof and per-destination scope into the brief, and require per-platform exports unless one licence covers every destination. Check the video provider's current published scope: unless music sourcing and rights clearance are listed there, the buyer or the editor must bring the licence.

## Introduction and Background

A brand video is a commercial work from the moment a business commissions it. Adobe's help page for mobile video editing says a business account, a paid ad or branded content counts as commercial use (helpx.adobe.com), and that a video made for a client, an employer or a brand counts as commercial use the moment it is delivered (helpx.adobe.com). That framing matters because the free music libraries inside social apps are built for individuals. Instagram says the music in its library is intended for personal use, and TikTok says its licences for music outside the CML do not cover commercial use of music in content (support.tiktok.com).

Three layers of rights are involved, and a "licence" from any one source rarely covers all three. A recorded song carries two copyrights, the musical composition and the sound recording, which the US Copyright Office describes as two distinct works (www.copyright.gov). ASCAP, a US performing rights organisation, tells filmmakers there are two rights to clear (www.ascap.com): the synchronization (sync) right, which it describes as the right to pair a song with a visual image (www.ascap.com), and the master use right, the right to reproduce a specific recording (www.ascap.com). A performing rights licence is a third and separate layer; ASCAP states that sync rights are licensed by writers and publishers or their agents, not by ASCAP (www.ascap.com). The Dutch society Buma Stemra adds that existing platform licences do not include synchronisation rights, so a brand or business needs an additional sync licence (bumastemra.nl).

"Royalty-free" does not settle any of this. OneMusic Australia, a collecting-society licensing body, notes that sometimes only the recording is royalty-free while the underlying songs still require ongoing payments to creators, and that truly royalty-free music is rare (onemusic.com.au). Territory adds a further layer. Under the Berne Convention, protection works on national treatment, so copyright is assessed country by country (www.wipo.int); Meta notes that music may not be available in all countries (www.facebook.com).

This report is written for marketing leads, founders and e-commerce operators who commission short videos from an editor or a design-and-video subscription. Check the provider's current published scope before assuming that music sourcing, licensing or rights clearance is included; if it is not, the music licence is something the buyer or the editor has to bring. The sections below separate what each platform or licensor states in its own current terms from what vendor blogs repeat, and label every matrix cell as **Allowed**, **Not allowed**, **Not stated** or **Not confirmed**. No demand or claim-rate data is used.

# TikTok: Commercial Music Library and the General Library

## Capabilities

TikTok runs two separate music pools. The general library serves personal accounts; the help centre states that businesses cannot use it for commercial usage (ads.tiktok.com). The CML is the business pool, and the help page lists three permitted uses: organic content (including duets, reacts and stitches), video ads and branded content (ads.tiktok.com). A TikTok Business Account sees only CML tracks when adding sound in the app (ads.tiktok.com). TikTok's Music Terms add that Commercial Sounds are made available to brands and businesses, unlike ordinary Sounds (www.tiktok.com), and the CML user terms call Commercial Sounds the only sounds made available on TikTok for commercial uses (www.tiktok.com).

Other users' sounds are a separate matter. The help page tells businesses that if they use original sound from other users or other licensed sounds, they should consult their legal team to ensure a proper licence has been obtained (ads.tiktok.com). The Music Terms go further and say a Commercial User should not use an Original Sound uploaded by another user (www.tiktok.com). Trending sounds in the app are therefore not a safe default for a brand account.

## Adoption and Catalogue Size

TikTok's first-party pages give three catalogue sizes. The Ads Help page, last updated July 2025, describes a pre-cleared global library of 1 million songs (ads.tiktok.com). The TikTok for Business blog says more than 600,000 tracks are pre-cleared for royalty-free use in branded content and ads, with no publication date on the page (ads.tiktok.com). TikTok's Creator Academy, last updated 27 July 2026, says the CML has over 1.5 million tracks (www.tiktok.com). This report does not choose between them; a figure should be quoted only after re-checking the page on the day. Browsing is also limited: the web portal displays up to 10,000 Commercial Sounds at a time (ads.tiktok.com) and asks users to select the region where a campaign will run (ads.tiktok.com).

## Strengths and Limitations

The strength is clarity inside TikTok: the library is labelled, the permitted uses are listed, and the Ads Manager video editor's music panel also accepts a local music file (ads.tiktok.com), although that page does not say which of its tabs are CML-cleared, so the licence of an uploaded file stays with whoever uploads it. The limitations sit in the terms. Commercial uses outside TikTok are not permitted and TikTok grants no rights for them, and the terms name posting videos on third-party digital platforms as an example of such use (www.tiktok.com). Sounds may not be used separately from the video they are embedded in (www.tiktok.com), some tracks may carry an additional fee (www.tiktok.com), and tracks may only be used on the platforms designated under "Usable Placements" for the portal (www.tiktok.com). The Music Terms also bar editing or altering the fundamental character of copyrighted music (www.tiktok.com) and use in live streams (www.tiktok.com). If TikTok loses rights to a track, it may take down videos or mute the audio (www.tiktok.com).

GEMA, writing for Germany, explains the same boundary from a rights-holder's side: commercial purposes include recommending or marketing a product, service or brand, or sponsored videos (gema.de); private accounts can still be commercial (gema.de); CML sounds may only be released and shared on TikTok

(gema.de); some songs are approved only for certain countries (gema.de); and well-known songs are rare in the CML (gema.de). These statements are specific to Germany and the GEMA licence, and may not apply elsewhere.

## Meta: Instagram and Facebook Music for Business Use

### Capabilities

Meta offers two pools, and they are easy to confuse. The first is the licensed music library, which Instagram says is intended for personal, non-commercial use (help.instagram.com); to prevent commercial use, certain business accounts and certain types of posts do not have access (help.instagram.com). Instagram's terms make music use subject to Meta's Music Guidelines (help.instagram.com), and those guidelines prohibit use of music for commercial or non-personal purposes unless appropriate licences have been obtained (www.facebook.com). The guidelines also state that nothing in them authorises any use of music on Meta products (www.facebook.com).

The second pool is the **Sound Collection**. Instagram Help says it can be used for commercial purposes like ads (help.instagram.com), and the Sound Collection terms grant a non-exclusive, royalty-free licence for commercial or non-commercial purposes (www.facebook.com). Inside Ads Manager, the music currently consists of royalty-free audio from the Sound Collection (www.facebook.com), and an advertiser selects up to 5 songs (www.facebook.com). Meta's Facebook Reels help tells creators to choose royalty-free audio for brand deals or boosted posts (www.facebook.com).

### Adoption and Catalogue Size

Meta's pages disagree on size. Instagram Help gives over 14,000 songs and sounds (help.instagram.com); Meta's Business Help Center, which is undated, says nearly 16,000 original songs or sound effects (www.facebook.com). The public landing page for the collection says only that audio is free to use in videos shared on Facebook and Instagram (www.facebook.com).

### Strengths and Limitations

The strength is that the commercial pool is named and the licence is short. The limits are equally explicit. The Sound Collection licence covers content distributed on Meta products only, including links to that content embedded in third-party sites (www.facebook.com), and it bars using the audio outside that scope (www.facebook.com). Meta reserves the right to monitor or audit compliance (www.facebook.com). For a video that will also run on TikTok, YouTube or the brand's own site, Sound Collection audio is therefore not a one-master answer. Ads Manager music is also not available for Instagram ads that use existing posts (www.facebook.com), so an editor cannot assume that the in-app music tool is available for every ad format.

Licensed-library tracks carry a different risk. Meta says it may lose rights to music controlled by certain rights holders, and a reel using that song is then muted (www.facebook.com). The Music Guidelines add that content may be blocked, muted or removed if use of the music is not properly authorised (www.facebook.com). Meta pages retrieved for this report did not state rules for partnership ads, whitelisted creator ads or branded-content music; those cells are marked **Not confirmed** below.

# YouTube: Audio Library and Creative Commons Tracks

## Capabilities

The YouTube Audio Library is the platform's free music source. The help page distinguishes a standard library licence that does not require attribution from Creative Commons tracks (support.google.com). For Creative Commons tracks, the user must credit the artist in the video's description (support.google.com). The page states that videos with Audio Library music can be monetised (support.google.com). YouTube's page on claimed music also points creators to the library as a source of royalty-free music for YouTube videos (support.google.com).

## Adoption

No track count or usage figure appears on the pages retrieved, and none is quoted here. The only cadence statement is that new releases are added twice a month (support.google.com).

## Strengths and Limitations

The limits are what the page leaves unsaid. It does not address use outside YouTube, paid ads or business accounts, and it does not name which Creative Commons licence variant each track uses. YouTube states that it cannot give legal guidance, including guidance on music issues that can occur off the platform (support.google.com), and that issues arising from "royalty-free" music from other sources are outside what it takes on (support.google.com). A separate help page for Shorts says library music and sounds there are free to use only for personal, non-commercial use unless the user has the appropriate licences (support.google.com). That sentence does not mention account types, so a brand should treat Shorts library audio as not confirmed for commercial work.

The Creative Commons mechanics matter because the variant decides what an editor may do. A CC BY licence permits sharing for any purpose, even commercially, subject to its terms (creativecommons.org), and requires an indication if the material was modified (creativecommons.org). Creative Commons states that synching music in timed relation with a moving image is always an adaptation (creativecommons.org). Under the BY-ND licence, adapted material may be produced and reproduced but not shared (creativecommons.org), and its legal code defines adapted material as including music synched in timed relation with a moving image (creativecommons.org). Under the NonCommercial variants, the user may not use the material for commercial purposes (creativecommons.org), and Creative Commons' own guidance gives a video-with-NC-song example that may not be used commercially (wiki.creativecommons.org). Because a brand video is commercial and a synched track is an adaptation, only tracks under attribution-only terms are plausible for a brand video, and the editor should confirm the exact variant on the track page. Creative Commons itself says it cannot advise on what is and is not commercial (creativecommons.org).

For YouTube ads, Google's ad policy states that an ad may be disapproved if Google receives a copyright complaint about the ad's content or destination (support.google.com).

# Stock-Music Subscriptions and Editor Tools

## Capabilities

Stock-music licensors sell the licence, not just the file, and each splits its plans by user type and use. **Epidemic Sound** sells tiered plans; its Creator plan excludes digital advertising, marketing or promotion for a brand or company (www.epidemicsound.com), while its Pro plan covers online campaigns (www.epidemicsound.com) and digital ads or boosted social posts on up to 3 monetised channels per platform (help.epidemicsound.com). **Artlist** sells a Social licence that excludes paid media (artlist.io) and a Pro licence that its help centre says covers advertising, paid media, branded content and film (help.artlist.io). **Soundstripe** bars its Personal plan from commercial use to promote a brand, product or service (www.soundstripe.com); its consumer plans cover individuals, not organizations (www.soundstripe.com). **Envato Elements** licenses per download and per project (see Table 2). **Adobe Stock** audio is described as covering social media, websites and digital ads under its Standard licence (stock.adobe.com). **Uppbeat** excludes paid advertising from its Basic licence (uppbeat.io).

## Adoption and Catalogue Size

Catalogue claims come from vendors and are marketing figures: Epidemic Sound and Soundstripe list 55,000 and 58,000+ tracks respectively (Table 3). They are not independent measurements and say nothing about whether a given track fits a given use.

## Strengths and Limitations

The strength is that a paid business tier is the one source here whose licence text names paid ads, client work and a term. The limits are in the details.

- **Client work** needs the right account holder: Artlist's licence lets a freelancer create projects for clients, but only the licence holder can download assets (artlist.io); Envato requires a licence for each project (help.elements.envato.com); Adobe Stock help says an agency can license on a client's behalf but the asset must be licensed separately for each client use (helpx.adobe.com); Canva's licence says a design with content can only be transferred to a single client (www.canva.com).
- **Cancellation** also differs. Epidemic Sound's Business licence says productions completed during the subscription remain licensed (www.epidemicsound.com); Soundstripe says projects may be used in perpetuity but may only be created while a plan is active (www.soundstripe.com); Envato terminates the item licence if the End Product is not completed before cancellation (elements.envato.com).
- **Channel registration** is a recurring mechanism. Epidemic Sound calls it safelisting, the process of connecting videos and channels to an account (www.epidemicsound.com); Artlist stops allowing new channels once a plan expires (help.artlist.io); Soundstripe limits YouTube monetisation to five channels on higher plans (www.soundstripe.com).
- **Editing** is generally limited: Epidemic Sound's Business licence allows cut, loop and fade only (www.epidemicsound.com).
- **Standalone use** is excluded by several licences, for example Adobe Stock's rule that audio must not be the primary value of the end product (stock.adobe.com) and Artlist's bar on static videos or loops combined with its music (artlist.io).

Editor tools carry their own terms. Canva's content licence says Free Music (Non-Commercial) is for personal use only (www.canva.com), while its Pro Music can be used in online ads (www.canva.com) but not in TV, cinema, radio, podcast or billboard ads (www.canva.com); its popular-music licence says no commercial use is permitted on social media (canva.com). CapCut's materials agreement limits library Sounds to personal, non-commercial video (www.capcut.com). An editor who sources music inside an app must therefore check which of these pools the track belongs to.

## Feature Comparison

*Table 1* below is the "music source by destination" matrix. Every cell reflects what the platform or licensor states in its own terms, retrieved 27 November 2026, not what vendor blogs repeat. **Allowed** means the page says so for that use; **Not allowed** means the page excludes it; **Not stated** means the page is silent; **Not confirmed** means the relevant Meta, TikTok or YouTube page could not be retrieved or does not address the point.

| Music source | Organic brand post on the home platform | Paid ad | Own website, email, other networks | Who holds proof |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **TikTok Commercial Music Library** | **Allowed**: organic content, including duets, reacts and stitches (ads.tiktok.com) | **Allowed**: video ads and branded content (ads.tiktok.com) | **Not allowed**: commercial uses outside TikTok are not permitted (www.tiktok.com) | Track choice in TikTok's tool; no separate certificate stated |
| **TikTok general library and other users' sounds** | **Not allowed** for businesses (ads.tiktok.com) | **Not confirmed**: TikTok tells businesses to consult legal (ads.tiktok.com) | **Not stated** | The business |
| **Meta Sound Collection** | **Allowed**: commercial or non-commercial purposes (www.facebook.com) | **Allowed**: commercial purposes like ads (help.instagram.com) | **Not allowed** beyond Meta products and embedded links (www.facebook.com) | Meta's Sound Collection terms |
| **Instagram licensed music library** | **Not confirmed** for business: intended for personal use; some business accounts lack access (help.instagram.com) | **Not confirmed**; Ads Manager music is Sound Collection audio (www.facebook.com) | **Not stated**; GEMA says the right applies to Instagram only (Germany) (www.gema.de) | Not applicable |
| **YouTube Audio Library, standard licence** | **Allowed** for monetised YouTube videos as stated (support.google.com) | **Not stated** | **Not stated**; YouTube gives no legal guidance off-platform | Download record; the terms text is not on the help page |
| **YouTube Audio Library, Creative Commons tracks** | **Not confirmed**: plausible only for attribution-only (CC BY) tracks, with a credit in the description (support.google.com) | **Not confirmed**: depends on the CC variant, not named on the page (creativecommons.org) | **Not confirmed**: ND variants cannot be shared once synched (creativecommons.org) | Track page and CC licence text |

| Music source | Organic brand post on the home platform | Paid ad | Own website, email, other networks | Who holds proof |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Business-tier stock subscription** | **Allowed** where the plan says so, for example Epidemic Pro online campaigns (www.epidemicsound.com) | **Allowed** on Pro or higher tiers: Epidemic (help.epidemicsound.com), Artlist (help.artlist.io) | Per licence: Epidemic Business is worldwide online and perpetual for completed productions | The licence holder's account and channel list (www.epidemicsound.com) |
| **Commissioned or editor-supplied original track** | **Not stated** by platforms | **Not stated** by platforms | Set by the written agreement | Signed assignment or licence; copyright vests initially in the author (www.copyright.gov) |
| **Client-supplied well-known song** | **Not allowed** without licences: two rights to clear (www.ascap.com) | **Not allowed** without licences (www.facebook.com) | **Not allowed** without licences | The client, with sync and master licences |

The matrix shows that the same file can be cleared in one cell and uncleared in the next. The only rows that name paid ads and a term in the licensor's own text are the business-tier stock plans, and even there the tier matters. The matrix also shows why a single export is risky: three platform-library rows are limited to their own platform. Brand and sponsored posts also depend on rows the platforms did not document. Meta's partnership ads, whitelisted creator ads and branded-content music rules were not found in the pages retrieved, and the YouTube Audio Library's standard licence text is not on the help page.

*Table 2* compares the stock and editor-tool licences that were retrievable, using each licensor's own terms. It is a scope comparison, not a ranking, and prices (where shown) are as displayed on the retrieval date.

| Licensor and tier | Brand and paid-ad use | Client work | After cancellation | Notable limits |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Epidemic Sound Pro** (price in Table 3) | Online campaigns and boosted posts (www.epidemicsound.com) | Clients' published URLs can be cleared (www.epidemicsound.com) | Not shown on the plan page | Up to 3 monetised channels per platform (help.epidemicsound.com) |
| **Epidemic Sound Business** (price in Table 3) | Online, worldwide (www.epidemicsound.com) | Up to five end clients per month (www.epidemicsound.com) | Completed productions remain licensed (www.epidemicsound.com) | Cut, loop and fade only (www.epidemicsound.com); channel count differs between pages (help.epidemicsound.com) |
| **Artlist Social vs Pro** | Social excludes paid media (artlist.io); Pro covers advertising (help.artlist.io) | Licence holder downloads assets (artlist.io) | Published projects can continue in the same media (artlist.io) | Pro: up to 3 channels per platform (artlist.io); larger companies need Max Business (artlist.io) |

| Licensor and tier | Brand and paid-ad use | Client work | After cancellation | Notable limits |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Soundstripe Pro** ($39.99 per month or $239 per year) (www.soundstripe.com) | Consumer plans cover individuals, not organizations | Projects created by others are allowed on some plans (www.soundstripe.com) | Used in perpetuity, created only while active (www.soundstripe.com) | No re-download after cancellation (www.soundstripe.com) |
| **Envato Elements** | Licence per download (elements.envato.com); broadcast not allowed (elements.envato.com) | End Product for a client (elements.envato.com) | Terminated if End Product is not completed (elements.envato.com) | One licence per project (help.elements.envato.com); public performance not included for P.R.O. music (elements.envato.com) |
| **Adobe Stock audio** (price in Table 3) | Standard covers digital ads (stock.adobe.com) | Licensed separately per client use (helpx.adobe.com) | Not retrieved | Not stand-alone (stock.adobe.com) |
| **Uppbeat Basic vs Solo Professional** | Basic excludes paid advertising (uppbeat.io) | Basic bars third-party client material (uppbeat.io); Pro names the client (uppbeat.io) | Pro: first distribution must occur during the term (uppbeat.io) | Pro excludes broadcast TV, video-on-demand, radio, cinema (uppbeat.io); credit on free tiers (uppbeat.io) |
| **Pond5 licence** | Worldwide, perpetual licence (www.pond5.com) | Productions for a client are covered (www.pond5.com) | Perpetual licence grant (www.pond5.com) | Individual licence includes $15,000 indemnification (www.pond5.com) |

The table shows that the stated differences between tiers are about who the licensee is and where the video ends up, not about the track. A freelancer or editor holding a personal plan is not a licence for the client's ad, and a client-owned account may not cover work the editor downloads. It also shows how many cells still read "not retrieved": cancellation terms for some plans sit in documents that were not located, and the reader should ask the licensor for a dated PDF for any plan that matters.

## Performance and Benchmarks: What Happens When Clearance Is Wrong

No public benchmark of claim rates, mute rates or dispute outcomes by music source was found, and none is invented here. What can be measured from the platforms' own pages are the mechanisms and timings that decide how much a mistake costs.

- **YouTube Content ID:** every upload is automatically scanned by Content ID (support.google.com). Monetize is the most common policy applied to music claims (support.google.com), and the action can differ by country or region (support.google.com). A claimant has 30 days to respond to a dispute (support.google.com). Crediting the creator does not by itself give the rights to use copyrighted content

(support.google.com). The Audio Library help page also says that copyright-safe tracks downloaded from the library will not be claimed through Content ID (support.google.com); that page still does not address paid ads or use outside YouTube, so those cells stay **Not confirmed**.

- **Meta Rights Manager:** a rights-holder tool that, on first upload of a reference file, scans content posted in the previous 72 hours (www.facebook.com); Meta describes it as its copyright management tool (www.facebook.com).
- **TikTok:** if TikTok loses rights to a Commercial Sound, it may take videos down or mute them (www.tiktok.com); the in-app disclosure setting asks users of non-library music to agree to a Music Usage Confirmation (support.tiktok.com).
- **Paid ads:** Google may disapprove an ad on a copyright complaint about its content or destination (support.google.com).
- **Stock vendors:** clearing depends on registration; Epidemic Sound calls it safelisting, connecting videos and channels to an account (www.epidemicsound.com).

These are tools for fixing problems after launch; none replaces a licence. The cheapest control is upstream: a track list with timestamps and licence proof stored with the project, so a claim can be answered within the dispute windows above.

## What to Write Into the Brief and the Delivery Checklist

### The one-master problem

An editor who exports one master for every channel can carry a platform-scoped track into a place its terms do not cover. TikTok's CML terms bar commercial uses outside TikTok, Meta's Sound Collection terms cover Meta products only, and Adobe's help page says CML tracks are cleared for TikTok only (helpx.adobe.com). The Adobe page adds that none of the free in-platform libraries covers true commercial use, such as a paid ad or a client deliverable (helpx.adobe.com). Two ways out exist: ask for per-platform versions, each with a library track from that platform, or require one business-tier stock licence whose text names every destination. Envato's FAQ shows the level of detail to expect: uploading to YouTube or Instagram is not broadcast (help.elements.envato.com).

### Brief clauses

- **Who supplies music:** state whether the buyer, the editor or a named licensor supplies it. If music sourcing is not in the editor's scope, the buyer or the editor must name the source.
- **Source and tier:** name the library and the exact plan, because tiers differ on paid ads and client work.
- **Destinations:** list each place the video will run (organic, paid, website, email embed, partner reposts).
- **Proof:** require a licence PDF or receipt, the track title and ID, and the account that holds the licence.
- **Territory and term:** record the licence territory and term; copyright is territorial (www.wipo.int), and TikTok's library is browsed by campaign region (ads.tiktok.com).
- **Edits and cuts:** state whether the track may be cut, looped or faded; for example one licensor's Business licence allows cut, loop and fade only (www.epidemicsound.com).

- **Attribution:** state the credit text; Creative Commons tracks on YouTube need a description credit, and Uppbeat free tiers require credit (uppbeat.io).
- **Ownership for commissioned tracks:** get the transfer in writing; a transfer of copyright ownership is not valid unless it is in writing (www.copyright.gov), and a work-made-for-hire agreement for a commissioned work must be signed by all parties (www.copyright.gov).

A short clause can read: "Music for this video is supplied by [party] under [licence and plan]. The licence covers [destinations], [territory] and [term]. Deliver the licence document, track ID list with timestamps, and any credit text with the final files."

## Delivery checklist before sign-off

- **Track list:** every track with title, ID and timestamp.
- **Licence proof:** PDF or receipt, filed with the project files, naming the holder.
- **Channel registration:** channels or URLs added to the licensor's clearing list while the subscription is active, where the licensor requires it (help.artlist.io).
- **Per-platform exports:** one file per destination if any track is platform-scoped.
- **Attribution text:** pasted into the description or caption template.
- **Claim-risk test:** where a platform allows a private or unlisted upload, run one before launch; the platform scans uploads automatically (support.google.com).
- **Disclosure setting:** for TikTok commercial content, confirm that the Music Usage Confirmation was accepted (support.tiktok.com).
- **Exit pack:** copy licence documents out of the vendor's account before cancelling, because several licences stop covering new projects after cancellation (help.artlist.io).

## When to stop and ask a licensor or lawyer

- **Well-known songs:** a commercial video needs sync rights from the rightsholders (www.gema.de) and the master rights of the performers and record producers (www.gema.de). GEMA says it does not manage sync rights in the advertising sector (www.gema.de).
- **Fair use claims:** the US Copyright Office says there is no formula and no safe percentage (www.copyright.gov), that a creative work such as a song is less likely to support fair use (www.copyright.gov), and that it cannot give legal advice to individuals (www.copyright.gov).
- **Influencer and partner reposts:** TikTok tells businesses using other users' sounds to consult legal (ads.tiktok.com); Meta's pages retrieved here did not state music rules for partnership ads.
- **Whitelisted or boosted creator content:** treat as not confirmed until the licensor or platform confirms in writing.
- **TV, cinema, radio and billboards:** several licences exclude them, for example Canva Pro Music (www.canva.com).

# Data Analysis and Evidence

*Table 3* collects the numeric statements from first-party pages, with dates where the page gives one. Prices and catalogue counts change often, so the figures below are as displayed on 27 November 2026; re-check them against the vendor pricing pages before relying on them or before any later republication. It shows how far stated catalogue sizes and prices vary within one company's own pages.

| Item | Figure and source | Date stated on page |
|---|---|---|
| TikTok CML size, Ads Help | 1 million songs (ads.tiktok.com) | Last updated July 2025 |
| TikTok CML size, business blog | More than 600,000 tracks (ads.tiktok.com) | None shown |
| TikTok CML size, Creator Academy | Over 1.5 million tracks (www.tiktok.com) | Last updated 27 July 2026 |
| Meta Sound Collection, Instagram Help | Over 14,000 songs and sounds (help.instagram.com) | None shown |
| Meta Sound Collection, Business Help | Nearly 16,000 songs or sound effects (www.facebook.com) | None shown |
| Epidemic Sound catalogue | 55,000 music tracks (www.epidemicsound.com) | None shown |
| Soundstripe catalogue | 58,000+ original tracks (www.soundstripe.com) | None shown |
| Epidemic Sound Creator, Pro, Business | $179.88, $299.88 and $480 billed yearly (www.epidemicsound.com) | None shown |
| Soundstripe Personal, Pro, Business | $119 per year, $239 per year, $999 per year (www.soundstripe.com) | None shown |
| Soundstripe single-use top tier | All Media from $1,249 (www.soundstripe.com) | None shown |
| Adobe Stock individual plan | From US$29.99 per month (stock.adobe.com) | None shown |
| Meta Ads Manager music | Up to 5 songs per ad (www.facebook.com) | None shown |

Three readings follow. First, the discrepancies inside TikTok's pages (1 million, 600,000+ and 1.5 million) and Meta's pages (14,000 against nearly 16,000) are not errors this report can resolve, because the earlier figure may simply be older; the policy is to quote none without re-checking. Second, stock prices differ in structure, not only in level: Soundstripe's own pricing page headlines plans from $9.99 a month (www.soundstripe.com), while its pricing FAQ lists Personal at $19.99 monthly or $119 yearly (www.soundstripe.com), and this report does not reconcile the two figures. Third, the cheapest plan is rarely the cleared one: Epidemic Sound's $179.88 yearly Creator plan excludes brand advertising, and the plan that covers digital ads is priced higher (www.epidemicsound.com). All prices are as displayed on 27 November 2026 and change often; the vendor's current pricing page is the only valid source.

## Implications and Future Directions

For a commissioning team, the practical implication is that music is a procurement item, not a creative afterthought. Because the platform libraries are scoped to their own platforms, the cost of clearing music moves to the buyer or editor, who must hold a licence that matches the widest destination. Three decisions follow from the evidence.

- **Destinations:** if the video will ever run as a paid ad or on a second platform, the free in-app pools are the wrong default, as Adobe's help page states (helpx.adobe.com).
- **Licence holder:** several licences are tied to the account that downloads the asset, so an editor's personal subscription may not cover a client's launch.
- **Duration:** licences that cover only projects completed during a subscription make a dated exit pack worth requesting.

Library sizes and rules change on the platforms' own schedules, as the July 2025 and July 2026 dates on TikTok's pages show (ads.tiktok.com), so a matrix like Table 1 has a short shelf life. The line between organic and commercial is drawn by use, not by account label: GEMA notes that private accounts can still be commercial (gema.de).

This report does not cover composing or licensing services, or sync clearance for famous songs; those need a music publisher, a label or a lawyer. A video provider's current scope should be checked before assuming it supplies licensed music or clears rights; see the provider's published scope of service.

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### Can brands use the TikTok Commercial Music Library?

Yes, within TikTok. The help page lists organic content, video ads and branded content as permitted uses, but the terms do not permit commercial use outside TikTok (www.tiktok.com).

### What is the difference between the Commercial Music Library and trending sounds for business accounts?

Businesses cannot use the general library commercially, and a business account sees CML tracks only when adding sound in the app (ads.tiktok.com). Other users' original sounds remain the business's own licensing question.

### Can business accounts use Meta's Sound Collection commercially?

Yes. The Sound Collection terms grant a licence for commercial or non-commercial purposes (www.facebook.com) on Meta products and embedded links to them.

### Is the YouTube Audio Library allowed for commercial brand videos?

The help page states monetisation for Audio Library music but is silent on paid ads, brand accounts and use outside YouTube, and it requires a description credit for Creative Commons tracks. Treat it as **Not confirmed** for brand work beyond YouTube.

### Can businesses use copyrighted music in Instagram Reels?

Instagram's library is intended for personal, non-commercial use, and Meta's guidelines prohibit commercial use of music unless the user has appropriate licences (www.facebook.com). Sound Collection is the documented commercial pool.

### Which stock-music licence works for social media ads?

One whose text names paid ads for the plan you hold, for example Epidemic Sound Pro or Artlist Pro (Table 2). Entry plans for personal creators often exclude brand promotion (www.soundstripe.com).

### What licence types exist for royalty-free music?

Licences are split by user type, use, platform, term and client work (Table 2). "Royalty-free" describes how fees are charged, and underlying rights may still need payment (onemusic.com.au).

### What is the difference between a sync licence and a master licence?

A sync licence covers the composition paired with a visual image (www.ascap.com); a master licence covers one specific recording (www.ascap.com). A well-known song in a brand video typically needs both.

## Conclusion

Licence scope follows the destination, the account type and the use, not the phrase "royalty-free". The platform libraries are the cheapest way to add music and the narrowest in scope: TikTok's library is for TikTok, Meta's Sound Collection is for Meta, and YouTube's Audio Library page is silent beyond YouTube. Business-tier stock subscriptions are the main route to one licence that names paid ads and client work, provided the plan tier, the account holder and the term match the brief.

For a commissioned brand video, the brief should name the music source, the licence tier, the destinations, the territory and term, the edit rights and the proof to be delivered. The delivery checklist should confirm a track list, a stored licence, per-platform exports where needed and a claim-risk test before launch. This report is not legal advice; ask a lawyer or the music licensor about edge cases.

## Source links

Links cited in this article, in order of first appearance. Full addresses are provided for readers using extracted text.


1. https://ads.tiktok.com/help/article?aid=10005905
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THE PUBLISHER

# About Tapflare

Tapflare gives companies an on-demand design and web team for a flat monthly fee.

### How it works

Each subscriber has a dedicated project manager who learns the brand, assigns every request to a senior specialist in that kind of work, and reviews the result before it is delivered. Requests are submitted and discussed in the Tapflare portal, each plan includes a daily allotment of design or development time, and the client keeps full ownership of the export and source files.

### What it covers

Graphic design, custom illustration, presentation design, logos and brand guides, video editing and motion graphics, website and mobile-app mockups, and website development, from design mockups to HTML, to drag-and-drop builders or custom code.

### What it is not

Tapflare is not a marketing agency, a media-buying, SEO or copywriting service, a software product or a freelance marketplace. Where a reader needs one of those, the honest answer is to say so.

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