



## **DDEX Expands Creative Capabilities for Music Metadata with New MEAD Standard**

*New standard supports more detailed information on compositions, contributors, artist nicknames, historic chart positions, focus track data, journalistic material, and more*

New York, NY – October 3, 2019 – [DDEX](#), the international standards-setting organization dedicated to improving the exchange of data and information across the music industry, is providing a new level of music metadata capabilities with its Media Enrichment and Description ([MEAD](#)) standard. The MEAD standard enables support for additional types of metadata that do not appear in Electronic Release Notification (ERN) messages, which focus on the core data about releases that labels and distributors provide to DSPs, such as artist name, track title, and duration. MEAD will allow for over 30 types of additional data such as lyrics, reviews, historic chart positions, and focus track information to be communicated through the supply chain, which will support new service options and marketing opportunities, ultimately improving the consumer experience for search and discovery.

For example, with MEAD-driven services, search criteria will be expanded. Right now, a voice search for “the latest Billie Eilish track” would return her most recently released song. However, the additional context provided by MEAD will enable services to take single releases from albums; music video releases; sync placements in advertising campaigns, TV shows, or films; and other events into consideration, ultimately leading to a more accurate result.

MEAD was conceived at the annual DDEX Plenaries in the Fall of 2017, during which DDEX invited representatives from each music sector — including Apple, Amazon, Universal Music Group, Spotify, Warner Music Group, ASCAP, BMI, Pandora, and around 30 other experts covering everything from classical rights to copyright law — to meet and brainstorm on the future of standards development. With the common goal of improving data exchange among all companies that provide metadata, MEAD was developed and implemented in only two years, an exceptional speed for a new standard and a testament to the spirit of cooperation of its inception.

“As music distribution and consumption evolves, so too must our metadata standards. Today, music reaches more people in more places than ever before, and it is imperative that we provide the data necessary to help listeners make connections and drive discovery,” said Mark Isherwood, Secretariat of DDEX. “The MEAD standard is the first step in giving consumers what they are demanding: richer context that lets them find what they want.”

“This particular Plenary brought together 100 people with the shared goal of how to improve music discovery. It was a truly collaborative effort built on a framework of trust,” said Tony Brooke, Board Representative of DDEX and Product Manager, Content Systems at Pandora. “Everyone in the room was

comfortable to freely share thoughts and ideas, which led to a storm of creativity and a reminder of why we were all there in the first place -- for the shared passion of music.”

Mark Isherwood and Niels Rump will present more about MEAD on October 10 from 2-3pm ET as part of the Music Business Association Common Ground webinar series; free registration is [online](#). The next plenary meeting for DDEX members is coming up November 4-6 in Stockholm, Sweden; on November 7, the organization will host the Creator Credit Summit, and on November 8, a seminar on how to implement the most updated Music Licensing Companies Message Suite and Choreography Standard (MLC). Registration for the free November 7 and 8 events, which are hosted by Spotify, is online at [ddex.net/stockholm-creator-credits](http://ddex.net/stockholm-creator-credits) and [ddex.net/stockholm-mlc-workshop](http://ddex.net/stockholm-mlc-workshop), respectively; the plenary sessions are for DDEX members only.

There are six families of DDEX standards: Release Delivery (which includes MEAD), Sales and Usage Reporting, Works Notification and Licensing, Music Licensing Companies' Communication, Linking Works and Recordings, and Collection of Studio Metadata. The use of standard message formatting speeds up the exchange of information and increases the accuracy of data, improving efficiency along the digital value chain and streamlining content available through digital service providers to consumers. All the major digital players — including digital retailers, digital distributors and aggregators, record companies, music licensing companies, music publishers, musical work rights societies, and various technical service providers — use DDEX standards with over 5,000 implementation licenses issued and growing daily. While anyone can implement a standard, only DDEX members can be part of the standard development process — more information on membership online [here](#).

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### **About DDEX**

Formed in 2006, DDEX is an international standards-setting organization made up of leading media companies, music licensing organizations, digital service providers, and technical intermediaries that is dedicated to improving the exchange of data and information across the music industry. To support the automated exchange of information along the digital value chain, DDEX has standardized the format in which information is represented in messages and the method by which the messages are exchanged between business partners. These standards help rights holders, retailers, and technical intermediaries to more effectively communicate information along the digital supply chain. This leads to efficient business transactions, reduced costs, and increased revenues for all sectors involved. DDEX standards are developed and made available for industry-wide implementation. For more information, visit [www.ddex.net](http://www.ddex.net).

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