

## RELEASING YOUR ALBUM ON F-IRE LABEL

### F-IRE LABEL'S NATURE

Unlike other labels operating in music industry, F-IRE Label does not finance album productions (admin, rehearsals, studio hire, recording, print costs, artwork, printing, etc.) Instead, we work like a middle-man between the artist and the distributor and carry out all the work should be done in order to physically and digitally release an album to the retailers via the distribution company.

### COPYRIGHTS

We do not finance your album, so we do not touch your copyrights. When you release on F-IRE Label, you will continue being the sole copyright owner of your album. You will have complete artistic control over virtually every element of the product and you will take on the risks and rewards of investing in your own career. You can freely use your album and sell it at any price on your website, at the gigs, etc.

### ADVANTAGES OF RELEASING ON F-IRE LABEL

- You will retain 100% copyright of your work in any means and continue being the sole owner of your full royalties. You will be able to freely sell your CDs at your gigs and on your website etc at any price without any restrictions.
- You will be able to benefit F-IRE Collective's reputation, which is very effective when you are approaching to press people.
- Your new album will be promoted through F-IRE Collective's network and Record Label's website for free.
- You can enjoy other in-house services that are provided by F-IRE administrators for cheaper.

### COSTS

F-IRE Label, being a part of F-IRE Collective, is a non-profit organisation. We spend all our income to cover our administrative costs and overheads. Also, every year we have to pay a subscription fee for barcodes we allocated to new releases. At the time of signing the contract, we ask a one-off upfront fee of £350 towards barcode fee and administration service. This is the total cost of releasing on F-IRE Label.

### COMISSION FROM SALES

F-IRE receives 10% commission from net total of physical and digital album sales. Also 20% commission is taken from any physical albums sold on F-IRE website (the artist sets the price).

### DISTRIBUTION

F-IRE Label is working with Proper Music Distribution Limited (PMD), which is one of the leading distribution companies in Europe. Releases will be coordinated through Label Manager, Ipek Foster who is F-IRE's contact with Proper on behalf of all artists.

Physical - Albums are distributed in the UK to all major retail stores and some local stores in business with PMD. Artists are allowed to drop their CDs to other local record stores themselves. Physical distribution in other territories is optional and subject to different pricing. We do not recommend physical distribution abroad unless you have an established audience (buyers) or planning to establish a fanbase by playing gigs in that country/territory.

Digital - PMD holds the exclusive rights for the digital distribution. This means, either F-IRE or artists themselves are not allowed to work with another digital distribution company. Albums are distributed to many online music stores

including but not limited to: itunes, Musicnet, Amazon, Gracenote, HMV, Napster, Virgin, Virginmega.Fr, Mp3.com, Hearmusic, Soundbuzz, Emusic, Indie911, Ecast, Gofish, Soundflavor, so forth. Digital distribution is naturally worldwide; however, we can exclude certain territories (countries) or even services (i.e: Spotify).

## PROCEDURE

### STEP 1: AGREEMENT and PAYMENT

Record release agreements consist of 3 pages including a document called "AP2 Writers Exclusion Form". This document is for MCPS-PRS about copyright ownership and royalty collection and states that the artist is the sole owner of the product and F-IRE is not responsible for any royalty collection and payments to artists whatsoever.

- The first step is to sign all three pages of the agreement and post it to:  
Ipek Foster, 58 Charles Street, Croydon, CR0 1TR.

and

- transfer the one-off upfront fee of £350.

Upon the receipt of the fee and agreement, F-IRE will send you rest of the paperwork and guidelines. All CDs to be sold via retailers must have catalogue number (i.e: F-IRECD99) and barcode number / image which are supplied to you at this stage as well.

### STEP 2: ARTWORK DESIGN

To give you the greatest artistic freedom, we have kept artwork requirements to a minimum. These requirements include F-IRE Logo, F-IRE blurb, standard copyright and technical information and barcode. Barcode images, logos and detailed design guideline will be sent to you separately.

You are free to work with any designer. F-IRE's associate company run by Ipek Foster, Art Underground, provide professional, in-house budget friendly / discounted design and visual production service. For more information: [www.artunderground.co.uk](http://www.artunderground.co.uk) | [www.ersinhanersin.co.uk](http://www.ersinhanersin.co.uk)

## PRODUCING YOUR ALBUM

You are responsible for ensuring that your product is of the highest quality in every aspect. F-IRE as a brand only means anything if we are able to maintain the highest levels of artistry and production values. Please remember, once you sell your music in the market, it is no longer 'art' but also a 'product' you aim to sell. From the track quality, to artwork design, from the inner booklet to its case, it is a package. You need to make sure that all these aspects of your 'product' is relevant to your work, original and marketable.

## ISRC CODES

An ISRC code is a unique bunch of numbers, which identifies your track. Whenever your songs are played on the radio, TV, etc. This is the way to track your plays and claim your royalties. To obtain ISRC codes, You need to register to PPL (make sure you tell them you are the copyright holder and owner of your tracks; not F-IRE Label) and then follow the guidelines on their website to use the online software to get your codes. A separate guideline document for ISRC codes will be sent to you. Your sound engineer embeds these codes to your tracks in the master CD during mastering session.

### STEP 3: FORMS & CHOOSING A RELEASE DATE

You will receive 4 forms to fill in - 3 forms are for the distributor and 1 for the Record Label's website. Those forms for the distributor are necessary for booking a release date. The calendar lists PMD's release dates throughout the year. You need to choose one from the list and ensure to deliver these 3 forms minimum 2 months in advance of the chosen date.

### REPLICATION

Once your CD is mixed & mastered and your artwork is completed, the CD is ready for duplication. The economics of CD production mean that there is a relatively small difference in price between a run of 500 and a run of 1,000. Usually we advise you to produce 1000 units in glass master format.

### STEP 4: SENDING PROMOS and INITIAL STOCK ORDER

You will need to send 25 CDs and 2 Master copy to Proper as soon as you received the CDs from replication. They have to receive these promos at least 1.5 months in advance. Once your album is released officially, they send a 'purchase order' each time they need more stock. Please remember that the postage is at your expense. Proper's distribution centre is in Sydenham, South East London.

Stuart Bailey c/o PROPER MUSIC DISTRIBUTION: The New Powerhouse, Gateway Business Centre, Kangley Bridge Rd, London SE26 5AN.

### STEP 5: F-IRE LABEL WEBSITE and STORE

Please make sure you send that form required for the label website before your official release. Your album (if you agree) will be available online on F-IRE Label store. Visitors can buy albums on the website via Paypal. Every time your CD is sold on the F-IRE website, we will let you know about the buyer's details so you can post the CD to the buyer as soon as possible. CD price (7.99 + 1.75 post fee) £9.74 per CD will be paid to you upon the receipt of your invoice.

### YAHOO GROUPS, SALES STATEMENTS and PAYMENTS

An invitation for you to join Label's Yahoo Groups page will be sent upon your album release. Here in 'Files' section, you will be able to access monthly sales (raw documents as it is sent by the distributor). Every three months, there will be a simple excel sheet uploaded. This sheet is easier to read. Artists get paid yearly. At the end of 12-month calendar (usually around September) final annual statement becomes available. Artists invoice the total and get paid after.

### RETURNS / DISCOUNTS

### CALCULATING YOUR NET SALES AND PAYMENTS

There are 3 sections in the sales statement:

- sales account (or returns if "-")
- discounts account
- exports account

The critical thing while calculating your total sales is to know that

Any negative figure in your statement is due to a return, in other words, unwanted/unsold stock sent back from stores or discounts they made. Basically, everytime a store returns a CD or make a discount off the recommended retail

price, you lose money. Therefore, sales account is a positive account whereas discounts and exports accounts are negative. ie: discounts account: -£1.00. that means we have to add £1.00 to total sales.

**Confused? Don't. Actually, the formula is pretty simple:**

Your net sales (both for physical and digital) = your total album sales - returns - discounts - 10% F-IRE commission.

At the end of the year, if somehow returns/discounts of your album are greater than your sales, then you end up owing us money and we send an invoice to you.

**CREATING A BRAND PRIOR TO YOUR RELEASE**  
*LOGO, PROMO PHOTOS, WEBSITE, PRINTED MATERIAL PRODUCTION*

A successful branding and a publicity campaign cannot be successful without some vital visuals. These include professional photos, a well-designed, compact and regularly updated website and other printed materials like flyers and posters. All kinds of visual production including website design are available.

**PRESS & PUBLICITY**

However good your music might be, unless you inform the public about it you will not have much chance of realising sales or getting people to come to your gigs. You need to make sure that you take advantage all of the media opportunities there are – CD reviews, features.

The most effective way to do this is to hire a professional publicist. Expect to pay around £1,000 to publicise a CD. Ultimately, they will send out a press release and promo to their contact list and make follow up calls. But good ones will have existing relationships with the journalists and they may have all sorts of ideas about ways to get publicity that we may not be aware of.

If you are unable to afford working with a professional PR company, F-IRE is offering a basic PR assistance by Ipek Foster. This service comprises posting of 25 CDs with press release attached (that you will need to provide) and electronic press pack email-out to the top 25 journalists. The fee for this service is £125 (cost of postage and stationery not included).

PRESS RELEASE

Whether you work with F-IRE or another professional PR company, F-IRE Label requests proof-read of your press release.

**ONLINE MUSIC MARKETING AND PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN**

Another –and maybe even more effective way- of promoting your new album is to run a publicity campaign on the internet. F-IRE provides this service (via Art Underground) with affordable prices suitable to your budget. This service mainly includes creating and developing your music brand online, creating and managing band profile on major social networking websites and other music related sites, reaching your target audience and publicising your band and new album.