AI-Assisted Songwriting
Best Practices & Key Considerations

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I. Introduction

Context

On October 29th, 2025, Udio – one of the two GenAI music companies that have taken the music industry by storm – released a statement that, in our view, marks the beginning of a new era in music writing and production. The statement titled *"A New Era of Music - Udio with Universal Music Group"*, has created countless reactions across the global music ecosystem, prompting urgent questions about how artists, producers, and institutions should adapt to an industry rapidly shaped by AI.[1]

Andrew Sanchez, CEO of Udio announced on their website: *"I am absolutely thrilled to announce our historic partnership with Universal Music Group. [...] In partnership with UMG, we will be working closely with their extraordinary artists, songwriters and catalog to help bring [music fans'] favorite music onto the platform while providing artists with control over how AI is used to make music and connect with fans."*[2]

Beyond being an unexpected partnership that few anticipated, this event also served as a pivotal inflection point in the ongoing copyright infringement lawsuit facing the AI music generation company, signaling a broader industry shift toward licensed, accountable, and artist-centric AI systems.

With both Udio and UMG targeting 2026 for the launch of their joint platform, the industry now stands on the brink of a fully licensed, closed-loop environment for AI-assisted music creation. This timeline presents a rare strategic window for musicians, songwriters, and producers to gain an early advantage, learn the emerging systems, and position themselves ahead of widespread adoption.[3]

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[1] Sanchez, Andrew. "A New Era of Music - Udio with Universal Music Group." *Udio*, Udio, 29 Oct. 2025, www.udio.com/blog/a-new-era.
[2] IBID
[3] Hiatt, Brian. "Why the Biggest Record Company Is Teaming Up With the AI-Music Company It Was Just Suing." *Rolling Stone*, Rolling Stone, 31 Oct. 2025, www.rollingstone.com/music/music-features/ai-music-universal-music-group-settlement-udio-1235457945/.

Statement of Need

Numerous voices have expressed dissatisfaction toward the partnership from both sides of the music ecosystem. On one hand, a substantial portion of Udio's user base reacted with frustration following the platform's decision to disable downloads during the transition period. This effectively placed user-generated songs inside what Rolling Stone referred to as a "walled garden," preventing creators from exporting, sharing, or distributing their AI-assisted works beyond the confines of the site.

On the other hand, many music fans and industry observers raised broader concerns unrelated to platform access. These included fears of artist and songwriter exploitation, anxieties about AI replacing human creativity, and growing skepticism toward major labels' intentions in steering the direction of AI-powered music. Taken together, these reactions reflect a landscape marked by uncertainty, unease, and the absence of clear guidance for how creators should responsibly and strategically participate in an AI-assisted music creation world.

The goal of this paper is to **ensure that every individual influenced by these developments** – whether songwriter, producer, artist, student, or industry professional – **remains well-informed and equipped with the right resources to assess the impact of AI on the creative process**. By providing clear best practices, ethical considerations, and professional frameworks, this document aims to support creators in navigating a rapidly evolving landscape with confidence, clarity, and artistic integrity.

About the Authors

Teodor Costache and George Lanchoney are undergraduate students at the prestigious Berklee College of Music, studying Film, Game & Interactive Media Scoring and Music Industry Leadership & Innovation, respectively.

Together, they led Berklee's AI Club for over a year, engaging with hundreds of students, professors, and industry leaders about the evolving role of AI in music and creative work. From the beginning, their mission has been to raise awareness by fostering open, informed dialogue

and providing a platform where the community can express questions, concerns, and aspirations about the future of their craft.

Their commitment to meaningful dialogue and community engagement opened doors to connect, speak, and collaborate with leading voices across Boston's creative ecosystem and beyond. Through these experiences, they gained valuable insights into how artists, technologists, and industry leaders are collectively navigating the rapidly evolving landscape of AI in music.

II.   Guiding Principles

Philosophy

*"My business was writing film scores and persuading directors that it was [a] good idea to go and hire a real orchestra [...] and it is a good idea [...] I don't care how good the technology gets. [...] I program the living daylights out of that stuff, and the piece of music becomes laser sharp: the emotional expression of one person – me. And then, when you give it to the orchestra, there is still that focus – but somehow, it **choruses** by the slight[ly] different attitudes [and] emotions of all the other players".[4]* – Hans Zimmer on sample libraries, 2025

In the same way that virtual instruments and sample libraries reshaped professional workflows over the past two decades, generative media now stands poised to become the next generation of musical mockups.

In professional environments, mockups serve a specific purpose: they allow composers and other professional music writers to present a compelling version of a musical idea before committing significant resources. They help clients approve scenes, help artists refine their vision, and help collaborators align around a shared creative and emotional direction. When used correctly, they accelerate the creative process without replacing it.

Generative tools can play a similar role. They can help shape ideas, test variations, explore harmonic landscapes, or express a mood quickly and efficiently. But they are not – and should

[4] Beato, Rick. "The Hans Zimmer Interview." *YouTube*, YouTube, 14 Mar. 2025, www.youtube.com/watch?v=TbeevzNmU1g&t=1400s.

not become – a substitute for the artist's creative and emotional authorship. Instead, they work best when they function as extensions of the creator's imagination: precise when guidance is strong, expansive when exploration is needed, but always grounded in human intention.

Core Creative Principles

The philosophy outlined above leads to a simple but essential understanding: generative tools are most powerful when they expand human creativity rather than attempt to replace it. To support this perspective, we propose a set of core creative principles that guide responsible, intentional, and artist-driven use of AI in the songwriting process. These principles are not rules, but touchstones – a framework that helps creators maintain authorship, clarity, and artistic integrity as they integrate new technologies into their workflow.

1. Human Intention Comes First
 Every creative decision should originate from the songwriter's vision, not from the system's suggestions. AI may provide possibilities, but it is the artist who sets the direction, context, and emotional purpose of the work.

2. AI as an Interpreter, Not an Author
 Generative tools can translate rough sketches, test variations, and reveal musical possibilities, but they do not define the meaning or narrative of the song. Their role is to interpret inputs, not originate the artistic message.

3. Preserve Narrative and Emotional Ownership
 Lyrics, vocal lines, structure, and storytelling must remain fully human-driven. These elements carry the unique perspectives and lived experiences that define an artist's identity – and cannot be meaningfully outsourced.

4. Explore Widely, Commit Deliberately
 Generative systems make rapid experimentation possible, but exploration should never replace discernment. Songwriters should use these tools to widen the range of options, then choose with intention what truly serves the music.

5. Treat Generations as Temporary and Replaceable
  AI outputs should be considered placeholders, references, or mockups – not final artistic statements. They help clarify direction, but they should be shaped, edited, or replaced entirely as the song evolves.

6. Use AI to Enhance Collaboration, Not Replace It
  Mockups generated with AI can communicate arrangement ideas more clearly to musicians, engineers, and producers. The goal is clarity, not substitution. Human performance remains central to musical nuance and expression.

7. Maintain Creative Transparency
  Creators should understand when and how AI influences their process. Being aware of the tool's role helps protect authorship, ensures ethical decision-making, and promotes healthy, long-term practices in the industry.

Together, these principles reinforce a simple but powerful idea: **generative tools are most effective when they amplify the artist's voice, not when they attempt to become it.** By grounding the creative workflow in intention, authorship, and emotional integrity, songwriters can integrate AI in a way that strengthens – rather than dilutes – the expressive core of their work.

III.   Persona & Case Study

Persona

To ground our findings in a real and relatable creative perspective, we focus on a single representative persona: **Celeste**, a singer/songwriter and recent Berklee graduate. Celeste is an exceptional lyricist and topliner who writes her songs with the guitar, blending her strong musical intuition with thoughtful storytelling from her experiences. As an emerging artist navigating the transition from college to the professional world, she embodies many of the hopes, challenges, and questions shared by today's next generation of songwriters.

Case Study

Celeste is riding the metro when she hears an unusual squeak in the rails – a pitched, rhythmic sound that immediately strikes her as musical. She hums it back instinctively and, not wanting the idea to disappear, records a short 10-second voice memo. At this point, the only tools involved are her instinct and her phone, but the important part is that she captures the spark in the moment, without waiting to be "in the studio" or in a formal writing session.

With time left on her commute, she decides to explore the idea rather than let it sit idle. She uploads the memo into her generative music app and gives it a simple prompt: "high-register instrumental riff." The initial results are mixed; one generation washes out the rhythm with excessive reverb, while another interprets the pitch as a synthesized lead rather than an acoustic texture. She refines her prompt, adding keywords like "dry," "staccato," and "raw," and regenerates. After listening carefully to the new batch, she settles on a solo violin interpretation that reflects the aggressive energy she heard when she first hummed the idea.

When she gets home, Celeste downloads the violin audio and imports it into her DAW. She loops the phrase and begins searching on guitar for a chord progression that supports and expands the motif. The system may have provided a stylized interpretation, but the harmonic decisions are entirely hers. Through trial, error, and refinement, she arrives at a progression that feels emotionally honest to what she wants the song to express. In this moment, the AI is not writing for her – it is simply speeding up the translation from intuition to something she can meaningfully work with.

Once she has a harmonic foundation, she exports the chords and the violin line and feeds them back into the generative system, this time to explore stylistic environments. She requests instrumental-only tracks in styles like Pop, Funk, Modern R&B, and Nu-Soul. Her first few attempts result in cluttered arrangements that drown out her guitar work. To fix this, she utilizes negative prompting, explicitly asking the model to exclude "synth pads" and "busy hi-hats." Celeste wants the narrative and emotional arc of the song to remain fully her own, so she keeps the generations instrumental to prevent the system from introducing words, themes, or phrases that might influence her direction.

After this curation process, she finds an instrumental track that strikes a balance between Pop and R&B and feels like a natural extension of her harmonic choices. With this musical context in place, she grabs a notebook and begins toplining and lyric writing. The generative material has given her a cohesive environment to write within, but the melodic arcs, imagery, structure, and emotional core are entirely her creation.

As the song takes shape, she notices that the AI-generated arrangement does not follow the form she now imagines. Her chorus lands at a different moment, her verses require different pacing, and her lyrical flow pushes the structure in a new direction. Rather than bending her song to match the generation, she uses her guitar to build a clean, intentional arrangement from scratch. The AI outputs remain references, not rules. She adjusts chords, shapes transitions, adds a bridge, and completes a set of lyrics that feel specific to her artistic voice.

With the structure in place, Celeste records a simple acoustic version – just voice and guitar. This becomes the "wireframe" of the track, a skeletal layout containing the essential emotional and structural information. She imports it into her DAW and begins layering rough backing vocals and sketching early instrumentation. None of it needs to be polished; the purpose is simply to map the emotional architecture of the song.

Once she has a basic mockup, she returns to her generative app one more time – not to write for her, but to test and communicate arrangement ideas. She exports stems from her DAW and provides a detailed master prompt describing instrumentation, groove, tone, tempo, and overall direction. Listening like a producer, she evaluates the outputs for useful elements: perhaps the bass line in one generation, the drum feel in another, or the mix balance in a third. She ignores 90% of the output, effectively "sampling" the AI for specific textures. No single generation becomes the song. Instead, she extracts ingredients that align with her vision.

She downloads the useful stems and assembles them into a cohesive mockup in her DAW. This version is still not intended for release; it is a communication tool. With strong reference points in place, she sends the project to the musicians she wants to involve – a drummer, a bassist, a guitarist, and a violinist. By providing concrete but flexible stems, she can offer clear direction without restricting creativity. Rather than vague instructions like "make this part funkier," she can point to specific gestures, grooves, or textures and ask collaborators to interpret them in their own way.

Finally, Celeste shares her "rough-rough" mix with an audio engineer, explicitly labeling it as a guide. The engineer uses it to understand her intent and records the band with nuance, dynamics, and interaction that far exceed the generative mockup. The final result feels alive, shaped by human performance and musical sensitivity.

Throughout the entire workflow, Celeste remains the creative center. While she did not necessarily save time in the aggregate – she spent hours auditing and refining AI outputs – she saved significant mental energy by avoiding "blank canvas paralysis." The generative tools functioned as accelerators that helped her move from intuition to clarity. They allowed her to explore stylistic possibilities, refine arrangement choices, and communicate with collaborators more effectively, all while keeping full control over her artistic voice.

IV.   Applied Techniques

In this section, we outline a series of practical techniques that, in our view, most effectively enhance the creative workflow without compromising artistic integrity. Each use case illustrates how generative music tools can operate as creative accelerators – not by replacing human musicianship, but by supporting songwriters in developing ideas more efficiently, exploring new possibilities with intention, and communicating more clearly with collaborators. These approaches demonstrate how modern tools can expand the songwriter's creative reach while keeping human judgment, authorship, and emotion firmly at the center of the process.

1. Memo to Idea

With this technique, songwriters can turn fleeting moments of inspiration into fully realized creative seeds. By capturing a small snippet of imagination – like a melody hummed into a phone on the go – and then letting a generative tool polish it, they open up a new layer of possibility. This approach isn't about replacing human creativity, but about giving those initial ideas a chance to shine earlier. It helps the artist hear their rough concept in a more refined form, which can be a powerful psychological nudge to explore it further.

In other words, this technique helps songwriters not to overlook ideas that might feel too raw at first. Hearing a more polished version of a simple memo can be a catalyst, encouraging the artist to invest more time and creativity into that idea. It gamifies the early stages of songwriting, giving them more reasons to be playful and adventurous. Ultimately, it's about expanding the artist's perception of what's possible, and ensuring that no good idea gets left behind just because it wasn't fully formed at the start.

2. Style Preview

Style preview is a powerful tool that empowers artists to take their initial acoustic demos and effortlessly explore how those songs might blossom in different genres. Instead of painstakingly crafting multiple full-scale demos, songwriters can use AI to quickly test the waters – hearing their track as a pop anthem, a soulful R&B groove, or even a unique fusion of styles they might never have imagined. This approach isn't just a shortcut; it's a doorway into new creative landscapes, allowing artists to reimagine their music in a variety of contexts with minimal effort.

For independent songwriters, this technique expands their horizons and encourages them to experiment with new sounds and arrangements they might not have considered otherwise. For professional songwriters or those working with a range of clients, it offers a practical way to tailor a song to different tastes and market niches. By previewing a song in multiple styles, they can more easily present it to collaborators or clients who have specific preferences, ensuring that their music can resonate in the widest possible way.

3. Temp Backing Tracks

Temp backing tracks give songwriters a creative sandbox – a space to quickly drop in a simple instrumental base and start playing around with their ideas. It's like having a musical sketchpad where they can test out a melody, a lyrical hook, or a chord progression without worrying about perfecting the final details. The idea is to have a quick and flexible environment that lets them capture inspiration on the fly, ensuring that no creative spark is lost.

Ultimately, as the name suggests, these backing tracks are just temporary. They're not meant to be the final arrangement or the polished form of the song. Instead, they serve as a stepping stone – a way for the songwriter to experiment, iterate, and refine their ideas before replacing

the temp track with a more fully realized arrangement. It's all about giving them the freedom to play and explore different possibilities until they find the direction that feels right. In the end, the temp track is simply a creative launchpad that turns rough ideas into structured song elements.

4. Temp Instrumental Parts

Temporary instrumental parts serve as a powerful tool for idea mediation. By dropping in AI-generated drum beats, bass lines, or other temporary elements, songwriters can quickly build a rough musical environment in their DAW. This lets them hear how different instruments interact and keeps the creative momentum flowing. It's essentially a way to experiment and layer ideas without having to manually craft each part from scratch. The goal isn't to create a final piece but to spark creativity and generate a fuller soundscape that can inspire new directions and ideas.

Once these temporary parts are in place, they also become a valuable means of idea communication. When sharing a work-in-progress with collaborators or clients, these temp tracks help convey the intended tone, rhythm, and energy of the piece. Even if the songwriter isn't a master drummer or bassist, these placeholders allow other musicians to understand the creative vision more clearly. In the end, these temporary parts are simply a bridge meant to be replaced, but crucial in guiding the song toward its fully realized form.

5. Mockup Enhancement

Mockup enhancement is the final layer of polish that turns a well-crafted arrangement into a persuasive, professional-sounding demo. Once a songwriter has locked in their form, lyrics, and instrumentation, they can use AI music tools to elevate the realism of their mockup. By replacing less convincing virtual instrument sounds with more lifelike, nuanced AI-generated parts, the mockup becomes a far more compelling representation of the song's potential. This means collaborators, clients, and producers can focus entirely on the creative vision rather than getting distracted by the technical limitations of a rough demo.

In other words, mockup enhancement is about doing justice to the songwriter's skills and ideas. By presenting a more polished version of the track, the songwriter can share their work

confidently, invite meaningful feedback, and ensure everyone involved understands the full potential of the song. It's a temporary step meant to bridge the gap between concept and final production, making sure that the heart of the music is heard and appreciated without any technical distractions.

6. Creative Experimentation

In this approach, songwriters can leverage AI not just to swap instruments or test small variations, but to engage in broader creative experimentation. By quickly trying out different instrumentations – such as turning a piano melody into a violin line or a guitar riff – creators can find the timbres that resonate best with their vision. Similarly, by applying creative constraints – like exploring a jazz-inspired chord progression or a minimalist arrangement – they can quickly test variations and see which one stays most honest to the song's core identity.

This kind of experimentation isn't about replacing human creativity; it's about enhancing productivity and creative freedom. Instead of spending hours manually reworking a demo for one variation, songwriters can use these tools to quickly iterate and then choose the direction that feels most authentic. In the end, it's still the songwriter's artistic intuition that guides the final decision.

V. Key Considerations

Criteria Overview

Across online social platforms and within Berklee, people have repeatedly voiced similar concerns about generative AI technologies and their extremely quick development. Given the updates to Udio's policies (mentioned in the prior section), we have chosen to specifically evaluate Suno given their prominence in generative AI art conversations, Berklee's close proximity to the headquarters, legal and media scrutiny, large user base, high investment from venture capital firms, and the recent virality of various music creators using the platform. We hope that this evaluation allows users to be well-informed in their decision to use Suno's tools given their personal and artistic values. For this project, we have gathered six criteria following

extensive interaction with numerous musicians, music hobbyists, and other creative professionals who have expressed concerns and dissatisfaction over generative AI technology:

1. Environmental Impact
2. Data Sourcing Transparency
3. Human-Centric Design
4. Industry Diversity in Leadership
5. Community Engagement & Support
6. Revenue Opportunities for Artists

The "Environmental Impact" section will assess whether the company acknowledges and mitigates the environmental effects of large-scale model training and operation. This includes the extent to which they have publicly addressed the environmental cost of their AI models, their implementation or support of sustainability initiatives (e.g., efficient training, carbon offsets, renewable-energy data centers), and their measurement and/or disclosure of their energy usage and/or carbon footprint. Some key indicators of positive performance for this metric include public sustainability commitments, transparent reporting, partnerships with green data centers, and energy-efficient model research and development.

The "Data Sourcing Transparency" section will evaluate the company's clarity and ethics in data collection, licensing, and artist compensation. This includes how their dataset is sourced and documented, if and how they license and/or fairly compensate rights holders for training data, if there are mechanisms for artists to opt in or out of their intellectual property being used in the model training process. Some key indicators of positive performance for this metric include clear dataset documentation, partnerships with labels/PROs, published licensing terms, and ethical data-use statements.

The "Human-Centric Design" section will discuss and determine if and how the platform empowers human creativity and the threats it may pose to human-made art. This includes how much creative control is given to the user (e.g., structure, instrumentation, mix, prompt detail), investment in research and development to enhance artist control and customization, and how their stated mission addresses their artistic goals and target markets. Some key indicators of positive performance for this metric include advanced editing options, meaningful parameters, DAW integration, and educational and/or creator-first messaging.

The "Industry Diversity in Leadership" section will analyze the diversity and domain balance within the company's leadership and advisory team. This includes the amount of professional musicians, artists, and educators in key leadership or advisory roles, their mix of backgrounds (e.g. technical, business, artistic, etc.), and their racial, gender, cultural, and disciplinary diversity. Some key indicators of positive performance for this metric include multidisciplinary teams, creative professionals in leadership, inclusion of ethics or arts advisors, and public diversity commitments.

The "Community Engagement & Support" section will examine how the company supports, educates, and collaborates with its user community. This includes their distribution of learning materials, involvement in educational programs, partnerships with institutions, their responsiveness to user feedback, and the extent to which they seek advice and co-create with artists and developers. Some key indicators of positive performance for this metric include active forums, office hours, tutorials, ambassador programs, open feedback loops, and educational outreach.

The "Revenue Opportunities for Artists" section will evaluate whether the platform enables or restricts income generation for creators. This includes direct or indirect revenue streams for artists using the platform, their creation of new opportunities and enhancing those that already exist, and the extent to which their licensing, attribution, and royalties are clearly defined. Some key indicators of positive performance for this metric include creator monetization tools, transparent revenue models, partnership programs, and royalty distribution systems.

Methodologies

Earlier in the year, our AI production class had the opportunity to visit the Suno headquarters in Cambridge, MA and talk to some key people in the company, including machine learning specialist and researcher Christian Steinmetz and Chief Music Officer Paul Sinclair. Although we came away having gained their perspective on these issues and their philosophy as a company, it prompted us to further research their practices. By watching many interviews of Suno employees and executives, thoroughly examining their website, and reading many articles discussing their practices and philosophies with primary references, we were able to obtain lots

of relevant information which give users the insight they need before deciding whether or not to use Suno for their purposes. Primary sources were valued above all else throughout this process, highlighted by the influence of our class trip on the published results. After our research, we compiled all of our data and condensed them into key findings for each criteria based on the aforementioned subcriteria. For the purposes of concision and privacy, not all information we learned from our visit is included, but the results accurately reflect all of our findings without disclosing any confidential information.

Results

1. Environmental Impact

As with any major AI-based company, there is a significant amount of energy consumption needed to power the technology, especially in the training process. In our research process, we could not find any public statement or acknowledgement of any sort of environmentally-focused impact or corrective initiatives. In a recently obtained pitch deck by Billboard, it was revealed that Suno has spent $32 million on compute with roughly 7 million tracks generated on the platform every day.[5] According to Mureka, the energy cost of creating 1 minute of AI-generated music is 0.05 to 0.1 kWh.[6] Assuming the average song generated is 3 minutes, this equates to roughly 10.5 to 21 GWh per day in energy consumption just for song creation alone. With this in mind, the energy used to power Suno's song creations are estimated to emit between 4,250 to 8,500 tons of carbon dioxide emissions – roughly the same as a year of driving for 1,000 typical passenger vehicles[7] – per day based on data from the US EIA.[8]

2. Data Sourcing Transparency

[5] Robinson, Kristin. "Suno Creates an Entire Spotify Catalog's Worth of Music Every Two Weeks, Says Investor Pitch Deck for $250M Fundraise." Billboard, Billboard, 24 Nov. 2025, www.billboard.com/pro/suno-creates-spotify-catalog-music-two-weeks-pitch-deck/.

[6] Mia. "The Environmental Cost of AI Music: How Much Energy Does Creativity Consume?" Mureka AI, Mureka AI, 3 Nov. 2025, www.mureka.ai/hub/aimusic/environmental-cost-of-ai-music/.

[7] EPA Staff. "Greenhouse Gas Emissions from a Typical Passenger Vehicle." *EPA*, Environmental Protection Agency, 12 June 2025, www.epa.gov/greenvehicles/greenhouse-gas-emissions-typical-passenger-vehicle.

[8] EIA Staff. "How Much Carbon Dioxide Is Produced per Kilowatthour of U.S. Electricity Generation?" Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) - U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), U.S. Energy Information Administration, 11 Dec. 2024, www.eia.gov/tools/faqs/faq.php?id=74&t=11.

Perhaps most infamously, Suno has been under significant media scrutiny for their use of large amounts of copyrighted material in their training dataset, leading to a major lawsuit from RIAA.[9] In the aforementioned pitch deck sourced by Billboard, Suno spent roughly $2,000 in total on training data (compared to $32 million on compute) to make their flagship music generation model.[10] In order to source millions of songs for training, Suno allegedly downloaded a large portion of these songs from YouTube in an illegal practice known as "stream-ripping", leading to another class action lawsuit brought to court by independent country artist Tony Justice.[11] Currently, there are no ways in which to see the objective, specific musical influences on an output generated by the platform. However, a recent deal between Suno and Warner Music Group suggests that this will change with artists voluntarily licensing their likenesses and content for fan interaction and engagement.[12] As of now, the details of this deal are still largely unknown, but major changes to the transparency and provenance of the platform's generations seem to be imminent.

3. Human-Centric Design

As demonstrated in the previous sections, there are many ways to use Suno in a manner which centers around the creative vision of the user. Recently, the release of Suno Studio allowed for new capabilities of stem separation, single-track modification & creation, and assignments for tempo, pitch, and volume.[13] The user can also upload an audio file as a reference to transform it into something inspired by the upload with various high-level controls to dictate the nature of the output. As with any diffusion-based music model, the same output is virtually impossible to

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[9] Connelly, Rose. "Record Companies Bring Landmark Cases for Responsible AI Against Suno and Udio in Boston and New York Federal Courts, Respectively." *RIAA*, Recording Industry Association of America, 24 June 2024, www.riaa.com/record-companies-bring-landmark-cases-for-responsible-ai-againstsuno-and-udio-in-boston-and-new-york-federal-courts-respectively/.

[10] Robinson, Kristin. "Suno Creates an Entire Spotify Catalog's Worth of Music Every Two Weeks, Says Investor Pitch Deck for $250M Fundraise." Billboard, Billboard, 24 Nov. 2025, www.billboard.com/pro/suno-creates-spotify-catalog-music-two-weeks-pitch-deck/.

[11] Dalugdug, Mandy. "Suno Faces Another Allegation of 'Stream-Ripping' from YouTube… This Time in Class Action Led by Indie Artist." Music Business Worldwide, Music Business Worldwide, 24 Sept. 2025, www.musicbusinessworldwide.com/suno-faces-another-allegation-of-stream-ripping-from-youtube-this-time-in-class-action-led-by-indie-artist/.

[12] Shulman, Mikey. "A New Chapter in Music Creation." Suno, Suno, 25 Nov. 2025, suno.com/blog/wmg-partnership.

[13] Schwartz, Eric Hal. "I Tried Suno Studio the New Platform That Mixes AI Music Generation with Hands-on Editing – like GarageBand, but Smarter." TechRadar, TechRadar, 30 Sept. 2025, www.techradar.com/ai-platforms-assistants/i-tried-suno-studio-the-new-platform-that-mixes-ai-music-generation-with-hands-on-editing-like-garageband-but-smarter.

achieve twice, leading to polished artistic precision being largely impossible. Also, the new launch of Suno Hooks – a TikTok-like page focused on short videos created by users with Suno-generated music in the background – suggests the company may be pivoting to become a more social media-style vertically-integrated creation and consumption platform.[14] It is not known where the research and development focus is with regards to the user interface and experience, but our recent trip to Suno – as well as a recent interview with CEO Mikey Shulman – revealed that they are focused on building "something for a billion people."[15] In contrast to this, their blog post about their deal with Warner Music Group suggests that they will still be focusing on Suno Studio to appeal to professionals.[16]

4. Industry Diversity in Leadership

Given the nature of the company, it is expected that some professional and/or formal ties to music exist for the founders. However, there are no known current or formal professional musicians within the executive ranks of Suno, but Martin Camacho – co-founder and president of Suno – has said that he has been playing piano since age 3,[17] along with Shulman who has been playing piano since age 4 and bass in bands since high school .[18] Perhaps unsurprisingly, the company is mainly comprised of software engineers and machine learning specialists focused on improving the quality of the model. In fact, the company was founded as "a beautiful accident" according to Shulman when the future founders realized the potential of AI in music applications after working together on an audio-based machine learning project at Kensho Technologies.[19] Currently, there are no women in leadership positions and no public DEI initiatives present at the company, indicating their priorities lie mostly in technical development. However, given the nature of startups, this is to be somewhat expected and can certainly change in the future.

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[14] Suno Staff. "New Feature: Hooks." Suno Help, Suno, Sept. 2025, help.suno.com/en/articles/8049409.

[15] Tangermann, Victor. "CEO of Song-Generating AI App Says People 'Don't Enjoy' Making Music With Instruments." Futurism, Futurism, 13 Jan. 2025, futurism.com/suno-ai-ceo-making-music.

[16] Shulman, Mikey. "A New Chapter in Music Creation." Suno, Suno, 25 Nov. 2025, suno.com/blog/wmg-partnership.

[17] MGMT Boston - The Lantern. " Martin Camacho, Co-Founder & President at Suno." YouTube, YouTube, 8 Sept. 2025, www.youtube.com/watch?v=mnlB5-0Kqmo.

[18] Yang, Peter. "Inside Suno, the AI Music App You Won't Be Able to Stop Listening To | Mikey Shulman (Suno)." Behind the Craft, Creator Economy, 26 Jan. 2025, creatoreconomy.so/p/inside-suno-the-ai-music-app-you-wont-stop-listening-to-product.

[19] IBID

5. Community Engagement & Support

Compared to other AI companies, Suno does not seem to be very involved in community outreach and engagement. Suno does have an active blog, Discord, and sponsors the Boston AI Music Meetup, but these initiatives are largely one-sided with minimal conversations between members of the company and the music community at large. For developers, there is no public API, SDK, or technical ecosystem they can contribute to. Apart from some individual advisors from local educational institutions, there are no current partnerships with nearby schools or community-involved organizations. Given the ongoing legal scrutiny and intense research, this is somewhat expected and can easily be changed in the future.

6. Revenue Opportunities for Artists

As mentioned previously, Suno has allegedly trained on millions of copyrighted work without licensing or compensation to the creators with many musicians arguing that this has directly affected the value of their artistic output while jeopardizing their careers. Currently under the new agreement with WMG, only paid users can download content, but there is nothing restricting them from using these downloaded works in commercial contexts. US copyright law states that no creation of artificial intelligence can be copyrighted but does say that protection for the human-made parts is possible if accurately detailed when filing for copyright.[20] This leaves Suno's music in a legal gray area in which ongoing debate persists with no proposed solutions being feasible on a large scale. As mentioned previously, there is expected to be new revenue opportunities from WMG-signed artists to license their likeness and content for generations, but it is unclear how this will work in practice. This also does not consider any WMG artists not opting in to this new feature, let alone all of the non-WMG and independent artists affected by AI-generated music.

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[20] Zirpoli, Christopher T. "Generative Artificial Intelligence and Copyright Law." Congress.Gov, Library of Congress, 18 July 2025, www.congress.gov/crs-product/LSB10922.

VI.   Conclusion

Final Recommendations

As the conversations around AI and creativity continue to evolve, one theme becomes increasingly clear: while generative systems are often described as "just another creative tool," similar to a guitar or a paintbrush, their real value lies in something more specific. They are best understood not as tools for creativity, but as **tools that enhance creativity**. Their strength emerges when they act as interpreters of human intention, not as authors attempting to replace it.

When used responsibly, these technologies can accelerate the earliest stages of idea formation, help translate rough concepts into clearer artistic directions, and facilitate collaboration by giving creators better ways to communicate their vision. But this benefit only exists when the artist remains at the center. AI must remain an interpreter – shaping, previewing, or expanding upon ideas – not the originator of narrative, structure, storytelling, or emotional meaning. Outsourcing authorship to a model may be tempting, especially when speed is rewarded and convenience is readily available, but doing so abandons the uniquely human qualities that define art: lived experience, emotional nuance, authenticity, and creative purpose.

Instead, knowing how to use these tools – understanding their parameters, limits, and best applications – can meaningfully deepen one's creative process. Whether through memo-to-idea translation, style previews, temp tracks, or mockup enhancement, AI can open new paths for exploration when traditional methods fall short. In this sense, the "more you give, the more you get" remains true: the more musical knowledge, songwriting skill, and storytelling experience an artist brings to the process, the more powerfully these tools can serve them. Nothing fundamental about creative authorship changes; the craft remains rooted in human imagination, not computational output.

Mockups, temp tracks, and replaceable generations – whether created by sample libraries or by AI – have always been provisional aids. They are meant to guide, not finalize. AI simply extends these longstanding practices by allowing artists to iterate more fluidly and devote their time to creative decision-making rather than technical programming that will inevitably be replaced in the final production process.

Ultimately, whether an artist chooses to use these tools depends on their personal values – creative, ethical, and environmental. Understanding AI's energy consumption, data-sourcing practices, and the broader implications of its adoption is essential for making an informed choice. Our goal in this report has not been to endorse or condemn any particular company, including Suno, but to provide transparent, research-driven information so that creators can make decisions aligned with their own artistic priorities and moral frameworks.

It is also important to contextualize our findings: many of Suno's practices fall in line with emerging norms across the AI industry. Our intention is not to single them out, but to highlight the practices, limitations, and responsibilities becoming increasingly common in this new technological landscape. As the industry continues to evolve – legally, artistically, and socially – artists deserve both clarity and agency in determining how these tools fit into their workflows.

In the end, generative AI will shape the future of music only to the extent that human creators allow it to. When used thoughtfully, it can broaden creative horizons, strengthen collaboration, and unlock ideas that might otherwise remain dormant. But the heart of the work – its meaning, its story, its emotional truth – remains firmly in human hands.

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