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MUS349 Music Business
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Record Labels

1. What are the advantages a major recording label has over independent labels? What advantages do independent labels have?

The recording industry has shifted over the years, but a large investment is still required in production, distribution, and marketing. The advantage a major label has over an independent label is that powerful artists prefer to work with established personnel that has a well-organized distribution network. Also, larger firms can easily formulate a team of about 100 persons to work on a new release or an album, which provides access for calculated market value, promotion, tours, video production and more. Additionally, the advantage of an independent label is that they can develop brand-name awareness and consumer loyalty, which is rare among major labels. The majors are conservative companies that tend to be behind in staying up to date with changes in the music industry.

2. What are the pros and cons of recording with an independent label as compared to a DIY career?

Recorded music is the reason why recording labels exist and how the industry has catapulted since 1894, when the first commercial disc appeared in the United States market. Today we can evaluate many pros and cons of recording with an independent label as compared to a DIY career. At this time, I can state that some pros are independent labels are often absorbed by major labels. Also, independent labels eventually can become a major label as this is how most major music companies started. Additionally, major labels often look to the indies to discover the “next best thing in music” and that could be exactly what the recording artists need to move forward in their career. Some cons can be that if you choose a DIY career this means that you would not have the necessary resources to transform your music and brand worldwide. Independent companies have access to networking with the radio, TV, and many people to help with promotion. A DIY career consists of one or two persons, the artist, and the manager; these factors cannot help in creating a strategic marketing plan for a successful career.