

The piper who calls the tune with storePlay

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Dean Cherny ... 'I can create a program with some authenticity and longevity.' Photo: Josh Robenstone

JESSICA SIER

There's still money in music, says Dean Cherny, the creator of a new app that pipes ahead-of-the-curve music into retail stores.

Each playlist costs \$30 and is multiplied by the number of stores requiring music.

It's a business of scale; low cost, but requires high volume as Cherny takes care of all the royalty payments necessary in the broadcasting of music.

"It's easy to play what's happening on the radio but we're trying to create a soundscape that suits the instore merchandising and where the brand wants to be," says Cherny, founder of Marketing Melodies and creator of storePlay.

"I try and make programs that are a bit aspirational."

There are four types of royalties that need to be paid for instore music.

The artists need to be paid, and this is through the record company, once for the duplication of the work and then once for the public performance of the work. The writers of the music are paid by their publishers, and then there's a fee to APRA, which the stores are supposed to pay for a public performance of the work.

Cherny has set up deals with Universal, EMI, Warner, Inertia, Ministry of Sound, Mushroom and Shock as well as independent record labels.

"It's all about getting the numbers," says Cherny, who has been in the music business for more than 25 years.

"It's a six-figure sum that we're paying annually to the record labels. We pay far more substantial amounts being a commercial product than the Spotifys of the world do."

But Marketing Melodies and the storePlay app seem to be getting the numbers, no problem.

In the first 18 months the app has been picked up by major Australian businesses including Sass + Bide, Hudsons Coffee, Virgin Mobile, Kookai and most recently Kathmandu, all of which are able to select playlists via the app and tailor the shop's ambiance to keep shoppers in the store longer.

"I'm a DJ; I'm involved in Fashion Week and I work with designers," Cherny says. "Having an understanding of what's inspiring them means I can create a program with some authenticity and longevity."

Using the website, businesses are able to sign up, pick what type of playlist they think represents their demographic, download the free app from iTunes and then sign in. Every month new music arrives on your device and the fee is debited from your credit card. storePlay is only available in Australia and New Zealand, but Cherny says he is looking overseas for opportunities to expand.