



SONY MUSIC



Global Giant Sony Music Entertainment Turns to Cloud-based Licensing Management Platform for Style Guide Delivery and Product Approvals

In-house music merchandising division uses Mediabox-DAM (digital asset management) and Mediabox-PA (product approvals workflow) to streamline licensed product development for ecomm, retail, and tour merch of its rapidly growing roster of artists.

AN OVERVIEW



THE
THREAD
SHOP

Sony Music Entertainment's company, The Thread Shop, combines experienced in-house apparel designers with Sony Music's world class Creative Group to provide individualized design services focused on enhancing artist revenue and branding. They design, manufacture and market fashionable and functional merchandise and lifestyle goods that reflect the vision and aesthetic of its artist and brand partners, including A\$AP Ferg, Bob Dylan, DJ Khaled, Foreigner, Joan Jett, Lil Nas X, Maluma and Ozuna, among others.

2019 was a year of rapid growth for The Thread Shop. In August, the company announced they'd acquired the music merchandise division of The Araca Group, a full-service theatrical production and entertainment merchandising company whose roster included a range of contemporary and iconic music artists such as Led Zeppelin, P!NK, Shania Twain and Zayn.

Then just a few months later, The Thread Shop landed two more incredible deals that took their expansion to monumental heights. The first was an agreement with Authentic Hendrix LLC and Experience Hendrix L.L.C. for the rights to design, develop and distribute exclusive Jimi Hendrix merchandise worldwide.

On the heels of that deal came the second, a new partnership with Apple Corps LTD, the company founded by The Beatles in 1968 to oversee the band's creative and business interests, that secured the rights for The Thread Shop to develop new merchandise, licensing, retail and e-commerce opportunities for The Beatles in North America.

“ *Product approvals were all done via email and we delivered assets via WeTransfer. Having to cherry pick assets and send via WeTransfer was definitely the biggest pain point and very time consuming.* ”



ABOUT SONY MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT

Sony Music Entertainment is a global recorded music company with a current roster that includes a broad array of both local artists and international superstars. The company boasts a vast catalog that comprises some of the most important recordings in history. It is home to premier record labels representing music from every genre. Sony Music Entertainment is a wholly owned subsidiary of Sony Corporation of America.



THE PROBLEM

Prior to 2019, The Thread Shop conducted product approvals through email, and style guide assets were delivered via WeTransfer. Natalie Becerra, the Licensing Coordinator for Sony Music/The Thread Shop, recalls, "Having to cherry-pick assets and send via WeTransfer was definitely the biggest pain point and very time-consuming."

The Thread Shop faced numerous frustrations when conducting their licensing business via email, beginning with the inherent file size limitations. They relied on WeTransfer, and although that is a convenient service, it was difficult to track what assets were sent to which licensee, especially with multiple versions and file formats in the mix. Not only was it time-consuming to cherry pick assets for each licensee, but it created a secondary problem. The Thread Shop was missing out on a way to track and analyze organic trends, for example most viewed or downloaded assets, that could be captured if licensees were invited to choose the assets for themselves from a wider selection of options.

Reviewing and approving merchandise via email further encumbered The Thread Shop team. With long threads of back and forth emails, it was difficult to keep track of feedback from their own reviewers and from the artist managers. Consolidating the right stakeholder feedback to send to the licensees was tedious and required constant vigilance. If something slipped through the cracks, it led to costly delays.

Despite these pain points, The Thread Shop managed all right coming into 2019. But a turning point came when they signed all those additional artists to their roster. Each new deal came with huge art libraries and consistent licensing requests, and The Thread Shop knew they'd finally outgrown their current processes. There was just no way to keep up.

The Thread Shop needed an efficient solution that provided a unique artist-friendly experience with open collaboration, that was easy to use and fast to implement.

They turned to MyMediabox.

THE SOLUTION

The Thread Shop was referred to MyMediabox through colleagues in the licensing industry. 125 leading licensors and agents currently utilize Mediabox systems. With 55,000 licensee end users logging in worldwide, it's the most widely tested licensing software on the market.

Time was of the essence. Mediabox-DAM and Mediabox-PA were rapidly implemented according to The Thread Shop's specifications, so that they could transition their workflows away from email, as quickly as possible.

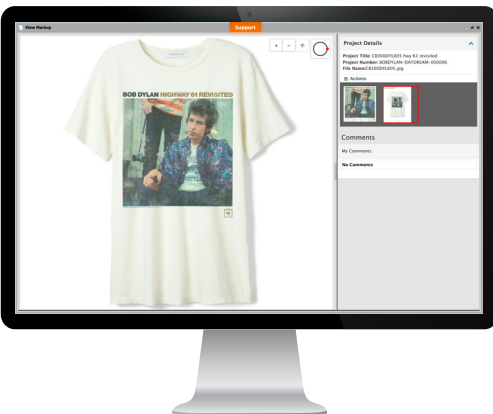


MEDIABOX-DAM

Digital Asset Management / Style Guide Delivery

With Mediabox-DAM, The Thread Shop is able to manage all their artists' libraries in one, centralized online location. Each catalogue of iconic artwork, photos, logos, album cover art, lyrics, and more is organized into secure folders. Custom metadata tagging, combined with an intuitive elastic search engine, makes any asset easy to locate and download.

Each licensee only sees the folders that The Thread Shop grants them access to. Browse rights per user are defined by date range for limited access, with the option to include download rights. And the "Popular Asset Activity Report" let's The Thread Shop know what files were downloaded by each user per day, by IP address, etc. They're able to see the organic trends and know which assets are resonating most with the licensees.



MEDIABOX-PA

Product Approvals

Mediabox-PA allows The Thread Shop's entire product approval process to take place in one centralized, online location, from completion of their custom-configured approval form through concept and pre-production stages. It's a flexible tool that adapted beautifully to The Thread Shop's workflow. Reviewing submission files and marking up the artwork are easy with robust creative tools, and automatic email notifications when actions are required mean The Thread Shop never misses a new project or submission.

THE OUTCOME

“*Licensees eased into using the system so seamlessly. A lot of them had already used MediaBox and the onboarding period was so simple. And when we got artist managers onboard to use the system as reviewers without hiccup, it was exactly what we needed.*”

So, what do style guide delivery and product approvals look like at Sony Music now?

Natalie says, “Style guide delivery is super easy. Being able to grant licensees access to specific art folders depending on rights is the biggest perk. For product approvals, licensees submit everything for every artist via PA.”

While The Thread Shop has onboarded some artist managers on MediaBox as reviewers, they plan on slowly introducing the platform to the rest. For now, they still email certain designs for stakeholder approval, but the projects are managed in PA. “It’s great having one spot where I can keep track of everything,” adds Natalie.

“The biggest win is definitely saving time on keeping approvals organized now that the system does it for us, plus not having to dig through our internal drives for specific assets.”

“*It’s allowed us to focus our time on fleshing out licensing programs for more of our artists.*”

THE BENEFITS



Key Benefits of Mediabox-DAM



Asset Management/Reporting: The Thread Shop maintains full control over their libraries of digital assets, and they can pull real-time data reports across all assets, users and rights to identify and analyze activity trends.



Security/Rights: User access is password protected at the property/brand and folder levels. The Thread Shop assigns Browse rights per user that are defined by date range for limited access, and they have the option to include download rights.



Search: Robust search engine and meta tagging capabilities allow The Thread Shop's licensees to conduct simple keyword searches or use advanced options for refined results.



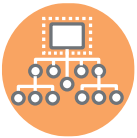
Collections: Private folders allow each licensee user to save their favorite assets, so there's no need to search over and over for the same thing or download every asset, "just in case."



Key Benefits of Mediabox-PA



Role-based Approvals: The Thread Shop controls their users' access rights by property, project, Licensee company, category and date range.



Custom Workflows: They're able to create unlimited approval workflows and stages by type of product.



Creative Tools: The Thread Shop team and the artist managers review and markup artwork with integrated creative tools and commenting functionality.



Email Notifications: System generated emails alert users when actions are required.



SOME FINAL WORDS

We asked what's one thing Natalie would want someone who is considering Mediabox software to know?

“ *The system is absolutely what you make of it; you can use as many or as little tools/features as you find fit, and it will still be worth it. For me, it's being able to grant art access by folder, being able to give browse access vs download access, and just being able to review the assets before downloading. It's also being able to filter product approvals by property/artist, being able to hover over the design to get a preview and being able to bulk approve submissions. You'll always find a solution to your problems while working in MediaBox.* ”



MyMediabox is THE Industry Leader in IP Licensing Software

125+ leading Licensors and 55,000 licensees use MyMediabox platforms, making it the most widely tested licensing software in the world. **We'd love the chance to show you why it's so popular!**



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