# SoundCloud’s Terms update allows AI training on independent music without consent



In February 2024, SoundCloud made a significant update to its Terms of Use that has sparked concern among independent musicians. The new language permits the use of user-uploaded content for training artificial intelligence models unless a separate agreement indicates otherwise. This means that anything from well-known tracks like Lil Uzi Vert's “XO TOUR Llif3” to lesser-known bedroom covers could be utilised in the development of AI technologies without individual consent.

The relevant passage highlights this shift: "In the absence of a separate agreement that states otherwise, you explicitly agree that your content may be used to inform, train, develop or serve as input to artificial intelligence or machine intelligence technologies or services as part of and for providing the services." The document clarifies that music owned by third-party rights holders, such as major record labels, will not be included in this provision without their explicit agreement. Consequently, while established artists like Drake and Morgan Wallen enjoy protection, many independent creators on the platform are left vulnerable.

This legal revision has raised eyebrows, particularly as the newly introduced language appears to have been appended five days after the official amendment date, potentially indicating an effort to sidestep considerable backlash. The urgency of this move is further underscored by the growing trend of music platforms turning to AI-driven technologies to enhance user experience and aid artists in music creation. For instance, SoundCloud has partnered with companies like Fadr, Soundful, and Voice-Swap to offer tools that incorporate AI to assist musicians in uploading songs produced with AI assistance directly to the platform. These partnerships are designed to provide artists with innovative resources while simultaneously navigating the complexities of copyright and artist rights.

In parallel, the issue of content ownership and AI training is not isolated to SoundCloud. For instance, Sony Music has publicly declared its intention to opt out of any data mining or web scraping that could be associated with AI training, reaffirming its commitment to protecting artists’ rights and ensuring proper credit and compensation. This indicates a growing awareness within the music industry about the potential implications of AI on artistic ownership and revenue streams.

Moreover, developers and users of APIs, such as those offered by SoundCloud, must adhere to strict guidelines that limit the use of user content for AI purposes. Such regulations are a response to the evolving landscape where the line between creative input and AI-generated output is increasingly blurred. As platforms continue to push the boundaries of technology, the importance of clearly defined terms and protections for artists has never been more apparent.

The ongoing conversations around these updates reveal a critical tension in the music industry as it grapples with the meteoric rise of AI tools alongside traditional concerns about copyright, ownership, and fair compensation. Independent artists, in particular, need to navigate this landscape with vigilance, as the very platforms designed to elevate their music may also expose them to unprecedented risks.

As the landscape evolves, keeping a close watch on these developments will be essential for artists seeking to ensure their rights are upheld while leveraging the new opportunities presented by AI technologies.

**Reference Map:**

* Paragraph 1: (1), (2)
* Paragraph 2: (1), (3)
* Paragraph 3: (5), (6)
* Paragraph 4: (7)
* Paragraph 5: (4)
* Paragraph 6: (1)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.slashgear.com/1855945/soundcloud-uses-music-to-train-ai-tos-changes/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.slashgear.com/1855945/soundcloud-uses-music-to-train-ai-tos-changes/> - An article discussing SoundCloud's February 2024 update to its Terms of Use, allowing user-uploaded content to be used for training AI models. The update specifies that content without separate agreements can be used to inform, train, develop, or serve as input to AI technologies. It also clarifies that content owned by third-party rights holders will not be used for AI training without their agreement.
3. <https://developers.soundcloud.com/docs/api/terms-of-use> - SoundCloud's API Terms of Use document outlining restrictions on the use of user content accessed through the API. It prohibits using the API to create derivative works or to train AI technologies without explicit authorization from the content owner. The document emphasizes respecting usage restrictions set by uploaders and obtaining necessary licenses for such uses.
4. <https://soundcloud.com/terms-of-use> - SoundCloud's Terms of Use page detailing the rules and guidelines for using the platform. It includes provisions against impersonation, harassment, unauthorized access, and misuse of user content. The document also addresses data security measures and the consequences of violating the terms, including potential termination of accounts and legal action.
5. <https://press.soundcloud.com/234082-soundcloud-partners-with-fadr-soundful-and-voice-swap-to-introduce-artist-first-ai-integrations> - SoundCloud's press release announcing partnerships with Fadr, Soundful, and Voice-Swap to introduce AI integrations that allow artists to upload songs created with assistive AI tools directly to SoundCloud. The integrations aim to support artists with easy access to innovative tools and reflect SoundCloud's commitment to empowering artists through technology.
6. <https://press.soundcloud.com/244375-soundcloud-unveils-six-new-ai-powered-tools-to-democratize-music-creation-for-all-artists> - SoundCloud's announcement of six new AI-powered tools designed to democratize music creation for all artists. The tools include Tuney, Tuttii, AlBeatz, TwoShot, Starmony, and ACE Studio, each offering unique features to assist artists in remixing, editing, generating beats, creating custom samples, and producing vocals. The release also highlights SoundCloud's commitment to ethical AI practices.
7. <https://www.sonymusic.com/sonymusic/declaration-of-ai-training-opt-out/> - Sony Music's public declaration opting out of any text or data mining, web scraping, or similar uses of their content for training, developing, or commercializing AI systems. The declaration reaffirms Sony Music's commitment to respecting artists' rights and ensuring proper credit and compensation for content used in AI applications.