



Film Music Magazine
Film & TV Music Salary and Rate Survey
2004 Edition

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the new 2004 edition of Film Music Magazine's Salary and Rate Survey. This survey has been compiled based on extensive research, interviews, and information gathered from professionals throughout the industry. The survey data listed is current as of September 2004.

Beginning with the original publication of this survey in 2000, it has served as the industry standard in terms of an overall survey of working rates in real-world industry situations. We're especially excited to present this year's newly expanded survey, including the industry's first comprehensive survey of music and song licensing rates for film and television. Music licensing represents a major portion of the music market for film and television now, and we're proud to provide detailed information on licensing scenarios and typical licensing rates for a wide variety of production types. The survey also includes a new section on composing music for Video Games, another booming market sector.

The survey includes data provided by leading industry agents, filmmakers, composers, contractors, orchestrators, music editors, music supervisors, musicians, scoring mixers, conductors, and officials from various unions, guilds, and orchestras.

IMPORTANT SURVEY NOTES

- All rates and working conditions included were limited to film and television projects in the United States, primarily in Los Angeles and New York
- In calculating average pay rates for each section, it was observed that there currently exist extremely high and low rates that in rare instances are charged based on unique characteristics of different productions. Examples of these situations include when work is done in exchange for some other product or service or is traded and when work is done for close personal friends or relatives. It was determined that the survey would not include these extreme rates in calculating average rates, and would concentrate on what the majority of professionals tended to charge for different types of productions at different budget levels.
- While the data in this survey is intended as a guideline that may be used to help determine typical fee ranges for various types of projects, this survey is not intended as a pricing guide or as a means to put a value on the work of professionals in the industry. The rates in this survey can vary significantly depending on a number of factors present in the hiring decision for each category, including experience, reputation, credits, and the specifics of each project.

**FILM & TELEVISION MUSIC SALARY AND RATE SURVEY
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FILM MUSIC MAGAZINE 2004 FILM & TV MUSIC SALARY AND RATE SURVEY FILM & TV COMPOSERS

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Composing for film and television has undergone a dramatic transformation over the last twenty years. With the advent of digital samplers and low-cost digital recording technology, the recent trend has been towards the self-contained composer in most low and medium budget projects. Large projects often utilize a live orchestra, in many cases with the addition of electronic samples, but especially in television productions, projects utilizing live musicians are becoming a rare breed.

Today composers are expected to own a well-equipped digital recording studio complete with samplers, mixing equipment, video lockup, and let's not forget a comfortable couch for the director or producer to preview music with picture.

In terms of finances, there are two types of deals that are common for scoring projects:

- The "package" deal - composer pays for all production costs, including studio, orchestration, music prep, musicians, engineers, etc. and delivers finished, produced music.
- The "creative fee" deal - composer receives a separate creative fee for composition work only and the production company pays all associated costs involved with the production, recording and mixing of the music.

In the days when most scoring projects involved live orchestra, creative fee deals were the usual form of deal structure, however now they are usually the domain of mid and upper budget film work and a few television shows that use moderate sized live orchestras (for instance, the *Star Trek* series and *The Simpsons*). Most television shows and low to low-mid budget films now offer package deals where the composer must deliver a completely produced score and bears the responsibility of all music production costs.

Performing Rights royalties (collected and paid by ASCAP, BMI and SESAC in the United States) can be a major source of income for television and film music and in many cases can amount to income over the life of the composer of many times the original creative or package fee. These royalties are also paid to the composer's descendants (children and grandchildren) so deals that are made by composers for performing rights royalties can have consequences (or benefits) for generations.

With a few notable exceptions, composers retain the "writer's share" of performing rights royalties and the "publisher's share" is a point of negotiation in the composer agreement. Typically network television and medium to high budget films will demand and get the publisher's share, whereas low budget film production companies may allow the composer to keep this share as a negotiating point (usually for a lower creative fee).

HOW PAID

Composers are usually paid on a per-project basis. In some cases, composers are paid from profits of a project (called "points").

**FILM MUSIC MAGAZINE 2004 FILM & TV SALARY AND RATE SURVEY
COMPOSERS - CONTINUED**

TYPICAL PAY RATES

The following are typical rates paid to composers for projects in each category

FILM

Type of Production	Low Budget	Medium Budget	High Budget
Studio Feature (creative fee)	\$50,000	\$150,000-\$250,000	\$500,000-\$1 million+
Studio Feature (package)	\$40,000-\$60,000	\$175,000-\$200,000	\$350,000-\$1 million+
Indie Feature (creative fee)	\$5,000	\$50,000	\$125,000+
Indie Feature (package)	\$5,000-\$10,000	\$50,000-\$70,000	\$100,000+
Documentary Film (package)	\$7,500-\$10,000	\$30,000-\$50,000	\$70,000-\$100,000
Guerrilla Indie Feature (package)	\$3,000-\$5,000	\$20,000-\$25,000	\$30,000-\$50,000
Direct to Video Film (non-studio) (package)	\$4,000-\$6,000	\$15,000-\$20,000	\$35,000-\$50,000
Student Film	\$0 (costs only)	\$3,500	\$7,500

TELEVISION

Type of Production	Low Budget	Medium Budget	High Budget
TV Movie Of The Week (package)	\$10,000-\$25,000	\$30,000-\$50,000	\$75,000+
Network 60 min. drama series (package, per-episode)	\$8,000-\$10,000	\$15,000-\$18,000	\$25,000+
Cable 60 min. drama series (package, per-episode)	\$6,000-\$8,000	\$14,000-\$16,000	\$23,000+
Cable 60 min. nature program (package, per-episode)	\$5,000-\$8,000	\$10,000-\$15,000	\$20,000-\$25,000+
Network 30 min. animation series (package, per-episode)	\$3,500-\$5,000	\$10,000-\$15,000	\$30,000+
Network 30 min. comedy series (package, per-episode)	\$3,000-\$5,000	\$6,000-\$8,000	\$10,000+
Cable 30 min. comedy series (package, per-episode)	\$2,000	\$3,000-\$5,000	\$10,000+
News Package (local package deal, one station)	\$5,000-\$7,500	\$10,000-\$12,500	\$15,000-\$30,000+
News Package (national basic cable package deal or multiple local stations)	\$10,000-\$15,000	\$20,000-\$30,000	\$50,000-\$75,000+
News Package (national network)	N/A	\$50,000-\$70,000+	\$100,000- \$200,000++

**FILM MUSIC MAGAZINE 2004 FILM & TV SALARY AND RATE SURVEY
COMPOSERS - CONTINUED**

TELEVISION ADVERTISING

Type of Production	Low Budget	Medium Budget	High Budget
Regional/Local Ad Jingle (creative fee in major market, package in smaller markets)	\$2,000-\$3,500	\$8,000-\$10,000	\$15,000+
National Ad Jingle (creative fee)	\$5,000-\$8,000	\$25,000-\$30,000	\$50,000+
Regional/Local Ad post scoring (package)	\$2,000-\$3,000	\$4,000-\$6,000	\$8,000+
National Ad post scoring (package)	\$3,000-\$5,000	\$6,000-\$8,000	\$12,000+

OTHER PAY FACTORS

- Publishing (ownership of music) that composer retains
- Composer's participation in soundtrack album royalties (guaranteed inclusion of score music, etc.)
- Deferred compensation agreements based on distribution and/or profits of film
- Ad Jingle fee above does not include arranging or production costs

FILM MUSIC MAGAZINE 2004 FILM & TV MUSIC SALARY AND RATE SURVEY VIDEO GAME COMPOSERS

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

With the advent of digital samplers and low-cost digital recording technology, the trend has been towards the self-contained composer who may or may not utilize live instruments. Today, video game composers are expected to own a well-equipped digital recording studio and are expected to be familiar with current artistic and technological areas of video game composing.

In terms of finances, there are two types of deals that are common for scoring projects:

- The “package” deal - composer pays for all production costs, including studio, orchestration, music prep, musicians, engineers, etc. and delivers finished, produced music.
- The “creative fee” deal - composer receives a separate creative fee for composition work only and the production company pays all associated costs involved with the production, recording and mixing of the music.

Since the sale of a video game does not involve a public performance, performing rights royalties are not generally considered a significant source of income for video game composers unless the music from the game is utilized in other ways that generate this type of royalty payment.

TYPICAL PAY RATES

The following are typical rates paid to video game composers:

MULTIMEDIA

Type of Production	Low Budget	Medium Budget	High Budget
Package. CD-ROM or Interactive Game (30 minutes of music.)	\$18,000	\$30,000	\$45,000

OTHER PAY FACTORS

- Bonuses may be made based on additional Stock Keeping Units / SKU's. When they are paid, they are normally based on unit sales reaching 500,000, 750,000 and 1 million plus.
- Cross-Platform Bonus Payment. Composers are often paid bonus payments when a game is released on a platform other than the original release platform. For example, if a composer provides music for a game released for the Sony Playstation and later that same game is released on the XBOX, the composer may be given an additional \$5,000.00 to \$10,000.00 for the additional release.
- In certain cases involving large-scale orchestras and/or choruses, costs for live music production are not included in the package fee and are paid separately by the game company for the scoring stage, engineers, musicians and related expenses.

Special thanks to Bob Rice of FBI (four bars intertainment) for assistance with this section.

FILM MUSIC MAGAZINE 2004 FILM & TV MUSIC SALARY AND RATE SURVEY MUSIC AND SONG LICENSING

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Songs of all styles and genres can lend great aesthetic value to almost all film and television productions, not only for the emotional content and mood they may convey, but particularly in establishing times and places as a familiar reference for viewing audiences. Instrumental hits, past & present, can also achieve this effect.

Current hits, classic standards of all stature and even unreleased songs are regularly licensed for use in film & television productions— including feature films, made-for-television movies, direct-to-video features, dramatic and comedic episodic television programs, documentaries, soaps, promos and music for advertising.

Most typically, songs are preexisting works and require a synchronization license with the copyright owners of the song to legally use the intellectual property (words & music) in a film or television production. Additionally, a master recording license is required if the film & television producers wish to use the original or other preexisting sound recording associated with a particular song. This can entail two separate but related negotiations— particularly if the owners of the song copyright are different than the owners of the master recording— which can often be the case.

What is commonly called a “sync & master license” is actually the sum of two negotiations: one for use of the song and one for use of a preexisting sound recording of the song. In some instances, the producers of a film or television production may successfully negotiate a sync license with the song’s copyright owner(s), only to find the cost of using the original sound recording to be prohibitive. The producers may opt to commission a new recording of the song (at considerably less expense than the cost of the master license) if they feel the new recording will play effectively in their production.

These factors make the licensing of songs an utterly “a la carte” business— and the relative value and expense of one song in contrast to another within a film or television production can be vast, to say the least. The following are typical fees for song licensing in general categories, but there are always exceptions to regular standards & practices based on a number of dynamic factors. The figures utilized here are the sums of both the “sync” and “master” licenses. It should also be noted that use of a song in a film’s promotional trailer is a separate negotiating point.

The following figures are not inclusive of any re-use fees which may be due for certain usages of music recorded under American Federation of Musicians (AF of M) union recording agreements which stipulate re-use fees paid to recording musicians in some cases.

**FILM MUSIC MAGAZINE 2004 FILM & TV SALARY AND RATE SURVEY
MUSIC AND SONG LICENSING – CONTINUED**

FILM

Type of Production	Low Budget	Medium Budget	High Budget
Studio Feature (high-end popular song or instrumental hit)	N/A	\$30,000-\$100,000	\$150,000-\$250,000+
Studio Feature (mid-line popular song or instrumental hit)	N/A	\$10,000-\$20,000	\$30,000-\$50,000+
Studio Feature (generally unknown or unreleased song or instrumental music)	\$500-\$1,000	\$1,500-\$2,500	\$5,000-\$10,000+
Indie Feature	\$0-\$500	\$1,000-\$1,500	\$2,000+
Documentary Film	\$0-\$500	\$1,000-\$1,500	\$2,000+
Guerrilla Indie Feature	\$0-\$250	\$500-\$750	\$1,000+
Direct-to-Video Movie	\$250-\$500	\$1,500-\$2,500	\$5,000+

TELEVISION

Type of Production	Low Budget	Medium Budget	High Budget
TV Movie Of The Week (Network)	\$1,000-\$2,500	\$5,000-\$10,000	\$20,000-\$30,000+
TV Movie Of The Week (cable)	\$0-\$500	\$1,000--\$2,000	\$3,000-\$5,000+
TV Series Episode (Network)	\$2,500-\$5,000	\$10,000-\$15,000	\$20,000-\$25,000+
TV Series Episode (National Cable)	\$1,500-\$2,500	\$5,000-\$7,500	\$10,000-\$15,000+
Daytime Drama (Soap Opera)	\$0-\$500	\$1,000-\$1,500	\$2,000+
Music for Advertising	N/A	\$50,000-200,000	\$500,000-\$1,000,000++

FILM MUSIC MAGAZINE 2004 FILM & TV MUSIC SALARY AND RATE SURVEY MUSIC SUPERVISORS

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The role of music supervisors is constantly changing. Currently, music supervisors are involved with suggesting, choosing, and negotiating rights to use existing music in films, working with record companies, composers, and other parties who have roles in the music for a project, and managing the overall musical budget and production for a project.

HOW PAID

Music supervisors are usually paid with a package fee for their services during the course of a project. In some cases, higher budget films awards "points" or a percentage of profits to music supervisors.

In rare situations, music supervisors have an ownership interest or royalty interest in the music included in a project. These financial interests, considered by many to be controversial, are not reflected in the rates below.

TYPICAL PAY RATES

Type of Project	Typical Pay Rate
Television Series	\$2,500-\$3,500 per episode
Low Budget Independent Film	\$0-\$15,000
Low Budget Feature Film	\$5,000-\$50,000
Medium Budget Feature Film	\$30,000-\$125,000
High Budget Feature Film	\$150,000-\$275,000

Special Note: The above rates include very wide ranges as the amount of work the music supervisor is asked to do from one film to another can vary widely depending on the amount of music clearance involved, the amount of time for management/coordination that is required, and whether the music supervisor is an individual or a company providing additional manpower and services.

FILM MUSIC MAGAZINE 2004 FILM & TV MUSIC SALARY AND RATE SURVEY ORCHESTRATORS

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Orchestrators receive music from composers in the form of handwritten or computer printed scores, MIDI files, or a combination of these. The primary role of an orchestrator is to assist the composer in delivering a fully orchestrated score from the composer's sketch or score. The composer's score may be minimal or almost fully orchestrated, depending on the skills, preferences, and time allowed the composer for each project.

HOW PAID

Orchestrators are generally paid on a per-page basis, where a page is generally equivalent to 4 bars of fully scored music. MIDI transcription work (translating MIDI files into workable sketches or preliminary scores) is charged in addition to orchestrating rates. Conducting the orchestra at recording sessions may be included in the fees, or charged in addition to orchestration fees (See Conductors Section)

TYPICAL PAY RATES

American Federation of Musicians union page rates for orchestration range from \$26 to \$60 depending on the size of the orchestra and the project budget.

Typical rates for premium orchestrators can range from \$75 to \$100 per page depending on the project budget and the complexity of the music.

MIDI transcription and editing may be charged on a flat rate depending on the extent of editing and transcription that are necessary, or may be charged on a per page rate. The American Federation of Musicians has established minimum scale rates for MIDI transcriptions - see AF of M rate documentation for complete details

FILM MUSIC MAGAZINE 2004 FILM & TV MUSIC SALARY AND RATE SURVEY CONDUCTORS

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Conductors are hired when live orchestras are used for recording sessions and the composer does not wish to conduct the orchestra. In some occasions, the orchestrator hired for the project will serve as the conductor and may be paid separately for conducting or conducting services may be included with the payment for orchestration. In many cases, an independent professional conductor is hired to conduct the orchestra.

In addition to coordinating the music with the film (the actual conducting of the orchestra according to the tempos specified by the composer), a conductor helps an orchestra realize the dramatic and emotional content of music, works with the orchestra to evoke the most powerful, dramatic performance possible, and conveys the needs and requests of the composer to the orchestra. Conductors also assist with making changes needed in the music and work to bring the music to performance readiness as quickly as possible.

HOW PAID

Conductors are paid for each recording session they conduct at. Pay may include advance preparation for some cues where the music is provided to the conductor in advance of the recording session so that the conductor may be better prepared to work with the orchestra.

TYPICAL PAY RATES

The American Federation of Musicians scale for conducting is 200% of player "scale" wages for a single performing musician for each session. In many cases, custom and practice is to pay the conductor 300% of player scale wages.

FILM MUSIC MAGAZINE 2004 FILM & TV MUSIC SALARY AND RATE SURVEY RECORDING MUSICIANS

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Professional musicians who record music for film and television often reside in one of the following recording centers:

- Los Angeles
- New York
- London
- Seattle, WA
- Europe (various countries including Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and others)

In Los Angeles, a large percentage of music is recorded under the American Federation of Musicians (A F of M) union contracts, which has many rates for different types of television and film projects. All rates assume an orchestra of approximately 30 pieces.

TYPICAL PAY RATES

Locality	Musician Session Hourly Pay	Notes
Los Angeles A F of M Union Motion Picture scale	\$83.95	No buyout available. 3 hour minimum session in most cases. Note: additional payments may be required for "new use" and "re-use" of music. See AF of M for details
Los Angeles AF of M Union Low Budget Theatrical Film Scale.	\$58.15	No buyout available. 3 hour minimum session in most cases. Entire film budget not to exceed \$29,500,000. Notice required. Note: additional payments may be required for "new use" and "re-use" of music. See AF of M for details
Los Angeles - Non Union	\$60.00	Buyout included. Subject to negotiation for each project
London – British Musicians Union	\$91.45	Includes buyout of standard additional usages
Seattle, WA	\$60.00	Complete buyout included
Salt Lake City, UT	\$50.00	Complete buyout included

FILM MUSIC MAGAZINE 2004 FILM & TV SALARY AND RATE SURVEY RECORDING MUSICIANS - CONTINUED

Additional Notes:

1. These rates do not include any mandatory union health & welfare and pension charges, nor do they include contracting fees, payroll taxes and fees, any federal or local taxes, doubling, cartage, travel costs, or any other associated costs. This table is designed to compare the basic hourly rate for musicians in the locales listed, but is not meant to be used to calculate final costs for recording in these locales since these associated costs are not included.
2. Under union recording contracts: Doubling: 1st double – 50% additional to basic rate. 2nd double – 20% additional to basic rate for second and each additional double.
3. The term “buyout” is used to indicate that the music recorded is not subject to any future payments to musicians as a result of the music being used on soundtrack albums, videocassettes, or other forms of media.
4. Under AF of M rules, other types of film and television productions may qualify for “Low Budget” status. These may include motion pictures produced for basic cable and long-form television films, 90 minutes or longer, and motion pictures initially released direct-to-video that are 61 minutes or longer.
5. Motion pictures produced for pay cable / premium cable (HBO, Showtime, etc.) may be approved for “Low Budget” status on a case-by-case basis, subject to prior written approval by the American Federation of Musicians. Initial notice to all contracted musicians is also required under low budget agreements sanctioned by the Federation.
6. These rates do not take into account the overall proficiency and ability of different orchestras to produce finished music; different orchestras can and will be able to generate different amounts of finished music per hour of recording time due to varying degrees of talent and experience.
7. In some cases union rules limit the number of minutes of finished music that can be used per hour of recording time. Additionally, there are also A F of M policies determining musician breaks within 3-hour sessions and between double (6-hour) sessions.

FILM MUSIC MAGAZINE 2004 FILM & TV MUSIC SALARY AND RATE SURVEY AGENTS AND MANAGERS

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Professionals throughout the film and television music industry are represented by agents and managers, including composers, music supervisors, music editors, orchestrators, contractors, songwriters, performing artists, and more.

The terms agent and manager are sometimes used interchangeably, but often there are some important distinctions. As generally used in the industry, the terms have the following meaning:

AGENT - Often licensed by the state where they practice business. Commission rate may be subject to state limits. Work is usually centered around finding jobs and negotiating rates, terms, and handling/negotiating necessary legal documents such as contracts, deal memos, etc.

MANAGER - Rarely licensed by governmental authorities. Work is usually involved with overall promotion of an artist's career, and can go beyond that of an agent as managers are concerned with all career aspects of an artist (including film and television work, live performances, publicity, recording work, and more depending on the artist).

Professionals throughout the film and television music industry are represented by agents and managers, including composers, music supervisors, orchestrators, contractors, songwriters, performing artists, and more.

HOW PAID

Generally as a percentage of the total payment negotiated for the client. Ranges of pay for agents for composers differ based on the type of deal negotiated - package vs. creative fee (see "Composers" above for a description of these deal types). In many cases, laws restrict agents to charging no more than 10% commission. In light of this, some agents are labeling themselves as "managers" or undertaking more extensive manager duties in cases where they charge more than 10% commission.

TYPICAL PAY RATES

Creative Fee Deals

For creative fee deals, agents and managers typically charge 10% - 15% of the creative fee negotiated.

Package Deals

For package deals, agents and managers typically charge between 7.5% and 10% of either the entire package fee or the composer's "net" (profit to the composer)

**FILM MUSIC MAGAZINE 2004 FILM & TV SALARY AND RATE SURVEY
AGENTS AND MANAGERS - CONTINUED**

Commission on Performing Rights Royalties and Performing Rights Advances

In Los Angeles, agents generally do not charge commission on performing rights royalties received by composers. However, in cases where agents negotiate an advance from ASCAP, BMI or SESAC as part of a project, this may not be the case.

Commission on Publishing

In some cases, agents do publishing "deals" where the composer receives a publishing interest (ownership) in the music that is written for a film and television project. In these cases, an additional commission, fee, or bonus is sometimes paid to the agent based on the specifics of the deal.

FILM MUSIC MAGAZINE 2004 FILM & TV MUSIC SALARY AND RATE SURVEY MUSIC EDITORS

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The basic duties of a music editor include those tasks necessary to facilitate application of music to picture. These duties may include: (1) working with the composer, director and/or producer to create organizational music documents, (2) track and coordinate music to be written, (3) preparation of timing notes and other related documents, (4) executing the "temp track" for the project, (5) assisting or supervising recording sessions, (6) preparation of the final audio files for the dubbing stage, and (7) representing the composer at the dubbing sessions. Final duties may include the preparation of performing rights music cue sheets for submission to ASCAP, BMI, and SESAC. Music Editing is done both under a Union (Music Editors are part of the IATSE union, along with Film Editors) and non-union scenarios.

IATSE designates particular titles and functions within productions, including Supervising Music Editor, Coordinating Music Editor, (temp) Tracking Music Editor, Scoring Music Editor, Assistant Music Editor, and Apprentice Music Editor.

HOW PAID

Union music editing jobs for film generally pay by the week, and typically are not inclusive of any equipment rental costs and cartage. Episodic TV is typically paid by the episode, not necessarily on a weekly basis. Union scales vary for low-budget film & TV projects in contrast to the standard rates. Non-union music editing jobs are usually flat-fee package deals for lower budget productions which include all necessary music editing services for an entire project. The overall music budget for a project can be a determining factor in the pay for music editors.

TYPICAL PAY RATES

Weekly fees	\$1,500 per week - \$5,900 per week (average mid-budget feature fees are 2,500-4,000 per week depending on whether the music editor is an individual or a company providing additional services)
Equipment rental charges	\$600 per week - \$2,500 per week
Package Deals	Varies widely depending on type of project and duties required. For low budget independent films, package deal can be from \$1,000 - \$10,000. Most larger projects are charged on a weekly basis (see above). Equipment rentals may be included or charged separately.

Note: Union music editing rates also require additional pay (150% pay on Saturdays, 200% pay on Sundays), additional benefit payments (can be up to 30%) and equipment and room rentals are charged additionally.

FILM MUSIC MAGAZINE 2004 FILM & TV MUSIC SALARY AND RATE SURVEY CONTRACTORS

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Basic services of contractors include hiring musicians and assisting with music production budgets. Additional services of contractors can include making arrangements for the recording studio or scoring stage, supervising the orchestra at recording sessions, interfacing with the music preparation personnel to schedule various sized orchestras for a project, and payroll services.

On union scoring projects, it often falls to the contractor to negotiate with the filmmaker or production company to sign the American Federation of Musicians Assumption Agreement, which provides for the filmmaker to make future payments to the musicians who recorded music for a film. These future payments can be based on the film's profit and whether the filmmaker wishes to make new uses of the music in a soundtrack album, videotape release, etc.

HOW PAID

Contractors are generally paid as a percentage of union "scale" wages for each recording session they contract for. In non-union situations, contractors typically charge a percentage of wages paid to musicians or charge a flat fee per recording session. If contractors perform payroll functions (including preparation of checks, forms, and processing of deductions and taxes), an additional fee is charged.

TYPICAL PAY RATES

The minimum fee for a contractor on a union recording session is set by the American Federation of Musicians at 200% of scale wages paid to a single performing musician.

The standard practice of many contractors is to charge another scale (total fee would be 300% of scale) if the orchestra is large and not hired for multiple sessions, or if the contractor is not receiving income from another source on the film (i.e. music licensing, payroll, production fees, etc.).

A few large, high-profile contractors charge 400% of scale for projects, generally high-budget feature films.

A charge of 2.5% - 5% is charged by contractors for payroll services.

FILM MUSIC MAGAZINE 2004 FILM & TV MUSIC SALARY AND RATE SURVEY SCORING MIXERS

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Scoring mixers, also known as recording engineers, are responsible for managing the technology involved with recording and mixing music. Scoring mixers are often expected to be extremely knowledgeable about a wide range of technology including microphones, room acoustics, analog and digital recording technology, audio processing equipment, speakers, and computer hardware and software including sequencing programs.

Another important function of scoring mixers is as a technical consultant to composers and music editors. This can include assisting with equipment selection and purchase, installation of equipment in the composer's studio, problem solving, and system/studio design.

HOW PAID

Scoring mixers are generally paid on a per-hour basis for their services during the set-up, recording, and mixing of music. Additional fees may be charged for travel and work outside the studio such as equipment consulting and purchasing.

TYPICAL PAY RATES

Type of Work	Rate Per Hour
Demo Recordings	\$40-\$60
Low Budget Projects	\$40-\$60
Medium Budget Projects	\$50-\$80
High Budget Projects	\$75-\$150
Premium Scoring Mixers	\$2,000-\$3,000 per day (9 hours)

Notes

1. For most projects, the minimum session length is 3 hours.
2. "Premium Scoring Mixers" refer to extremely experienced industry veterans. These rates are applicable to high-budget studio film projects. Premium scoring mixers often require that specific equipment be rented from them for use at sessions; these equipment rentals can often be more than the cost of the scoring mixer.
3. Rates for entry level assistant engineers and 2nd engineers range from \$10 - \$15/hour.

Special thanks to Michael Stern for assistance with this section.