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by Matthew Bernstein

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If you are anything like me, you probably do a lot of things over and over again hoping for different results each time. Some people call it insanity – I call it optimism. Ever since Spotify came to the U.S., I have been holding out hope that music from one of my favorite classic rock bands, Led Zeppelin, would become accessible. Every few days, I would log in to Spotify and search for Led Zeppelin, and each time the results would come up empty. In any case, it appears that the day will soon be upon us when the Zeppelin tunes we all know and love will all be available for our Internet streaming pleasure. More importantly, I am neither insane nor a hopeless optimist.

According the New York Times, the band is in the process of negotiating with several streaming services for the right to stream their entire catalog of classic rock music. While many classic acts (such as the Beatles, Pink Floyd, and others) continue to be hesitant to partner with streaming services, Led Zeppelin’s willingness to do so represents a major endorsement of the services as an integral way that people listen to music in the foreseeable future.

Spotify, which recently partnered with Metallica (another band that has long been skeptical of their music on the Internet), is one of the biggest players in the music streaming industry, and it would not be surprising for Led Zeppelin to sign a deal with them. In charging users a small subscription fee for unlimited access to an extensive library of music, Spotify is able to attract a large worldwide user base and generate enough revenue to provide substantial royalties to rights holders and artists. If Led Zeppelin, one of the biggest bands in rock history, were to partner with the service, this user base would likely see significant increases and even more money would be generated.

Another interesting development is a recent decision by the Copyright Royalty Board to increase the music royalties that must be paid by Sirius XM satellite radio. According to the New York Times, the decision will gradually raise the rates from the current eight percent of Sirius XM’s gross revenue to eleven percent in 2017. While the decision does not affect the rates for Internet radio, those rates are only in place through 2015, and it is possible that this decision could be influential in bringing about higher royalty rates for Internet radio in the long run.

Each of these developments makes the future of the music industry an exciting prospect. Whereas the Internet used to be an enemy of the recording industry, it appears that it may grow to be a great asset. Through these developments, people worldwide will continue to gain cheap access to all of the music they want while rights holders can receive the payment they deserve.