



2009 Nashville Recording Studio Survey

University of North Alabama Department of Entertainment Industry

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The Department of Entertainment Industry at the University of North Alabama conducted its annual Nashville-area recording studio survey this past summer. Below are a summary of the results:

Almost half of the businesses surveyed are single-studio facilities. While most (52%) studio owners and managers reported that they have multiple studios, almost half stated they operate a single-studio facility. Additionally, only 28% said their facility included more than two studios.

The facilities owned or managed by the respondents have been in operation for an average of 15 years. The longest-operating facility in the survey has been open for 35 years and was also one of the largest (in terms of number of studios) facilities included in the survey.

Studios are seeing mostly independent artists, publishing companies, independent producers, and independent songwriters come through their doors. 49% of studio owners and managers stated that independent artists are their primary clients, while most also have publishers, independent songwriters, and independent producers as clients.

Most respondents operate their business as Sole Proprietorships (36%). Respondents also reported operating their businesses as Limited Liability Companies (29%) and Corporations (25%) as well.

Two-thirds of respondents say they've produced demos for their clients in the past year. Almost every studio owner or manager that responded stated they've produced country music (93%) as well as gospel (79%) and rock (66%) in their facility in the past year.

Most studios employ few full-time employees. 69% of respondents said they employ two people or less (including themselves). Most do not employ part-time employees either (only 38%).

The primary uses of studios in the Nashville area are for music production and audio editing. Mastering followed in popularity. No respondents indicated that they offer multimedia or web audio design services and very few (10%) offer CD or DVD authoring.

Less than one-third of the studios surveyed offer 24-track multitrack analog recording. Continuing the year-to-year trend, most facilities (90%) offer Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) multitrack formats.

One-quarter of respondents state that their facility grossed \$50,000 or less in the previous tax year. Over two-thirds of respondents state that their facility earned less than \$150,000 in the previous tax year.

Studio owners and managers see the advent of inexpensive home recording studios, the general malaise of the economy, smaller record label budgets, illegal downloading, and the increased cost of doing business as the biggest threats to the survival of their facility. More importantly, these owners and managers indicate that in order to stay competitive, they are focusing on customer service, doing more to market themselves, lowering their rates, and focusing on creating a higher-quality product compared to home studios.

Please check <http://www2.una.edu/jehearn/research> for complete results of this year's results as well as previous year's results.

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