

**If you didn't create it *all by yourself*,
you probably can't "just use it" -
even though "everyone does it."**

- Did you know that you can't just play music from your iPod at a public (or private) event without buying a license?
- Did you know that you can't just download images from websites and include them in your PowerPoint?

If you want to play music, pictures or video for your event, unless it meets the standard for the gray line that constitutes "fair use" you'll probably need a license for "public performance" of that work of art.

I know that I take a very conservative approach to media use. Others may have a more permissive view - but I'd rather err on the side of not misusing someone's rights.

**Here's a good article -
Primer on Copyright and Fair Use**

<http://www.citmedialaw.org/blog/2008/primer-copyright-liability-and-fair-use>

But this is educational - so I don't have to pay, right?

Lots of people believe that if it's for educational purposes, or for a non-profit, that no license is needed. The standard for "fair use" is not black and white, but

- Just because you're using the material for education does not mean that you don't need a license.
- Just because you're using it in a non-profit (like a church) does not mean that you do not need a license!

OK - so how much does it cost to buy a license?

Rights to copy media can be VERY expensive.

If you use <http://www.Corbis.com> or other licensing options, you can spend a fortune!

Licenses can be procured through <http://www.ASCAP.com> or <http://www.BMI.com>.

Free Options

Also, for free pictures, consider <http://wikipedia.org> or <http://flickr.com>, or [Wikimedia Commons](#) material - be sure to search based on the [Creative Commons](#) license, and provide attribution.

Take the time to read the [Creative Commons](#) licenses and make sure that the owner of the image, music or video permits you to edit or share, and what form of attribution is acceptable. Is this a hassle? Perhaps, but it's a LOT cheaper than buying a license.

Another source for free pictures is photos taken by government employees as a regular part of their work - this includes a TON of image data from [NASA](#) and [US Government archives](#)

There are less well known sites that offer licenses for public performance and distribution. I have purchased some music for use in my materials from <http://www.pond5.com>. others have used <http://www.fiver.com> and still others have had music composed and performed as a "work for hire" by a local musician who gives all rights to the person who hired him or her.

How can I create basic drawings?

www.clker.com is a great site for creating basic drawings to be used in your presentation. It's free - the only caveat is that your work automatically becomes public domain.

What about YouTube, Pandora, and other "sharing" sites?

My understanding of this is that while these sites may have paid the media owner for the use of the material - they track and pay based on number of views - each time you load it on your browser counts as one person watching it. If you play that for a room full of people, that's a public performance. The owner of the material should be paid for each person who views it. As a result, use like this should be avoided.

Disclaimer

I am not a lawyer, and nothing in this document should be considered legal advice. Consult with an attorney who specializes in intellectual property law to be sure that your media use complies with copyright law. The author grants permission reproduce copies of this document provided that my contact information remains in tact.