Roblox signs music partnership with Sony

Virtual world-building platform Roblox has signed a deal with Sony Music Entertainment. The deal extends an existing collaboration that included a 2020 Lil Nas X concert inside Roblox as well as a 2021 virtual dance party with Swedish artist Zara Larsson.

A press release says the agreement will include "innovative music experiences for the Roblox community that offer a range of new commercial opportunities for Sony Music artists to reach new audiences and generate new revenue streams around virtual entertainment," although a Roblox spokesperson told *The Verge* that the company was not announcing any specific events or experiences at this time. A spokesperson says Roblox is in talks with other record labels as well.

Roblox has grown dramatically in recent years, particularly with young users. The platform — a system for creating games and other virtual experiences for either profit or personal entertainment — reported 43 million daily active visitors in May. Lots of these experiences incorporate music, including through an official Roblox "boombox" item. Roblox and other "metaverse"-style worlds like *Fortnite* have also played host to live virtual concerts and launch parties, particularly during the coronavirus pandemic.

Roblox's popularity has earned it positive *and* negative attention from the music industry. The National Music Publishers' Association (NMPA) sued the company last month for allegedly enabling piracy, accusing Roblox of profiting when users upload copyrighted songs and share them within Roblox experiences. Roblox settled claims with one plaintiff in mid-

June, signing a “strategic agreement” with music label BMG. At that time, NMPA CEO David Israelite said that “having some deals with some labels and publishers to host music events is in no way legally adequate” for the platform.

In today’s announcement, Roblox emphasizes that “Roblox respects the rights of all creators and uses advanced technology to screen all uploaded music. Roblox has no tolerance for repeat offenders and quickly responds to all submitted DMCA requests.” The company declined to specify on the record whether Roblox’s deal will include a license that covers users playing Sony music in experiences — something that major social media platforms like YouTube have enabled.

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