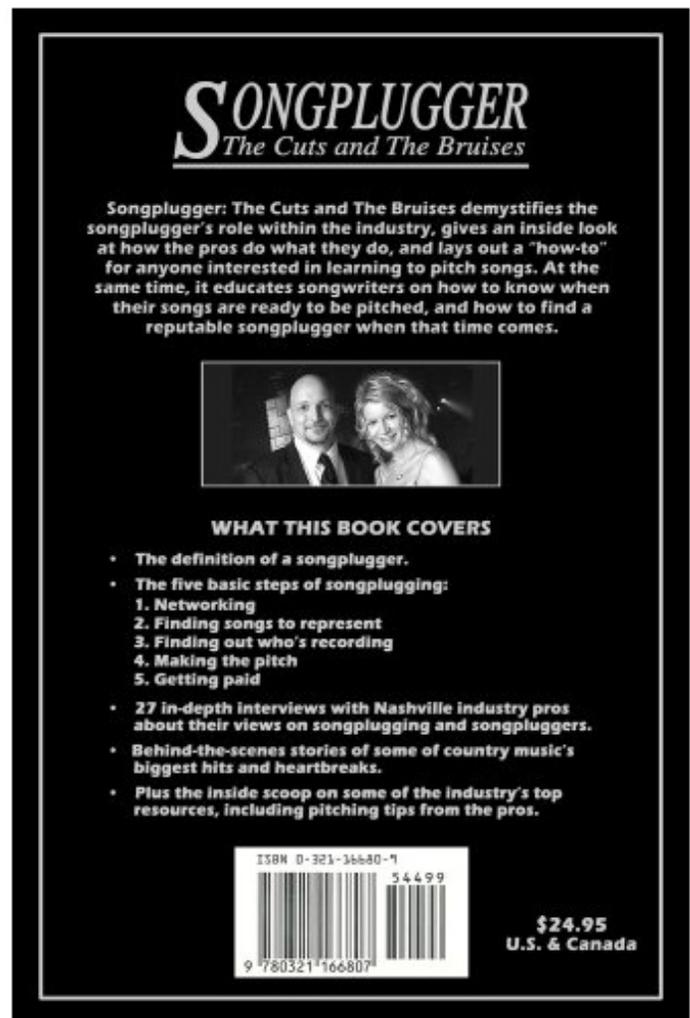
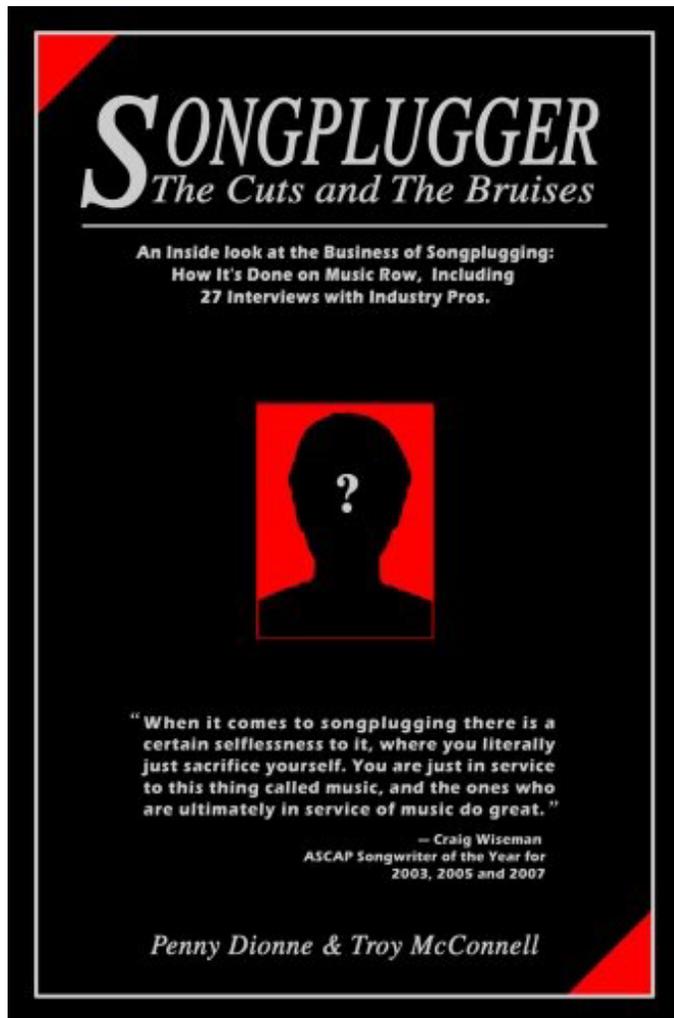


**Songplugger: The Cuts and the Bruises** was first published in 2008 as a 400 page 'how-To' on pitching songs in Nashville, and included interviews with 27 of the industry's top pros. The book-release party was held at BMI Nashville, and it received a write-up in Country Weekly Magazine sometime the following year.



**Troy McConnell & Penny Dionne Celebrate Book Release at BMI**



[Click Here to see the post on BMI's website](#)

## About the Authors

With over 35 years of combined music business experience, this dynamic duo has seen its share of success. Penny is a respected publisher, owner of Little Vixen Music, and a pro songplugger currently representing catalogs from such notable songwriters as Chris Wallin, Steven McClintock, Thom Shepherd, Mary Ann Kennedy, Moke Cameron, Troy McConnell, Jai Josefs and, previously, Bluewater Music. She was profiled in the publisher edition of *Music Row* magazine's "Row File," November 2005. Her professional memberships include CMA, CCMA, SOLID, NSAI, WCS, NARAS, ASCAP, SOCAN and she is the Vice President for the Woman's Music Business Association (WMBA). Beyond her many music business successes, she volunteers on the events committee of the Nashville Humane Association and was instrumental in putting together the hugely successful 2006 Ryman concert that featured Emmylou Harris (accompanied by Mary Ann Kennedy and Pam Rose), Paula Cole, Mindy Smith and Patty Griffin — to raise needed funds for a community outreach spay and neuter program called ROVER. Penny is also a frequent speaker at music industry workshops and seminars, and lives and works in Nashville. Visit her website at: [www.LittleVixenMusic.com](http://www.LittleVixenMusic.com)

Troy is a twenty-one-year Nashville veteran and has seen success as a songwriter and producer, as well as running a very successful multimedia company. Having been a staff writer in his early years in Nashville, he has written with such luminary Nashville writers as Craig Wiseman, Tommy Lee James and Chuck Cannon, and has shared the songwriting stage with such artists as Tim McGraw, Lari White and Garth Brooks. Among Troy's producing credits was a 1995 artist development project that landed the young artist a major recording contract. Troy continues to write and produce, but his talents have taken him beyond the country music scene and into the world of multimedia, having written a national jingle for Bridgestone/Firestone tires and winning a video award for his work with the corporation that owns Denny's restaurants. Currently, Troy is in the process of launching a new copyright protection organization called SOCP International. [www.socp-intl.com](http://www.socp-intl.com)



Photo by Paul Wharton

# SONGPLUGGER

*The Cuts and the Bruises*



**An Inside Look at the Business of Songplugging:  
How It's Done on Music Row,  
Including 27 Interviews with Industry Pros**

Plus Behind-the-Scenes Stories of Some of Country Music's Biggest Hits and Heartbreaks.

*Penny Dionne & Troy McConnell*

“The first time I saw that whole process of a song being written, tweaked up a little bit, demoed, pitched, put on hold, cut on a record, and then played on the radio I thought to myself, *Count me in!*”

— Chris Oglesby

# Table of Contents

<b>Intro.....</b>	<b>1</b>
(My Background and Reasons for Writing This Book)	
Introduction to Songpluggers.....	1
My Reasons for Writing This Book.....	1
What I Hope to Accomplish .....	2
My Background.....	2
How I Became a Professional Songplugger.....	6
Who I Represent Today .....	8
Intro Wrap-up .....	8
<b>The Surveys .....</b>	<b>9</b>
(A Starting Point)	
Songwriter Surveys.....	9
Songplugger Surveys .....	11
<b>The Origins of Songplugging .....</b>	<b>15</b>
(In the Beginning)	
Don't Quote Me, But .....	15
The First Songpluggers.....	15
Two Early Versions .....	15
Born from Nobility .....	16
Credit and Thanks.....	16
<b>Nashville Songpluggers.....</b>	<b>19</b>
(Defined and Explained)	
The In-house Songplugger.....	19
The Independent Songplugger .....	19
David Ross, on How Songplugging has Changed .....	20
<b>The Five Steps to Songplugging.....</b>	<b>23</b>
A Quick List of the Various Aspect of Pitching Songs:	
1. Networking .....	25
2. Finding Songs to Represent .....	37
3. Finding out Who's Recording.....	43
4. Making the Pitch.....	53
5. Getting Paid .....	77
<b>Chapter 1: Networking.....</b>	<b>25</b>
(Researching and Making Connections)	
The Heart of Songplugging.....	25
Great Networking Skills .....	25
• Researching Contacts.....	25
• Making the Connection.....	31
Basic Networking Etiquette .....	33
• The Do's and Don'ts.....	33
How to Get On the Inside .....	34
Chapter Wrap-up .....	35
<b>Chapter 2: Finding Great Songs to Pitch.....</b>	<b>37</b>
(Clients and Catalogs)	
The Holy Grail.....	37

In-house vs. Independent .....	38
• How In-house Pluggers Find Songs.....	38
• How Independent Pluggers Find Songs.....	39
Chapter Wrap-up .....	42

### **Chapter 3: Finding Out Who's Recording .....** 43

(Tip Sheets, Publications, and Other Resources)

About Tip Sheets .....	43
Tip Sheet Example.....	45
Industry Tip Sheets .....	46
• Music Row Fax.....	46
• Pitch This Music .....	47
Pro Only Tip Sheets and E-mail Notices .....	47
• Record Label Tip Sheets.....	47
• In-house Publisher Tip Sheets .....	47
• Producer Tip Sheets.....	47
Tip Sheets for Additional Genres.....	48
• New On The Charts .....	48
• SongQuarters .....	48
• Song Link .....	49
• SongBridge.....	49
Pitching Services for Songwriters.....	50
• Taxi.....	50
Other Resources.....	50
• Songplugger Groups .....	50
• Your Personal Network.....	50
• Artist Managers.....	50
• Record Label Websites .....	50
• Artist Websites.....	51
• MySpace Websites.....	51
• Music Publications.....	51
Chapter Wrap-up .....	51

### **Chapter 4: Making the Pitch .....** 53

(From Song Selection to Pitch Reports)

The Five Steps of Making the Pitch:

Choosing the Songs .....	53
• Playing Great Songs.....	54
• Casting for a Pitch.....	55
• Do's and Don'ts .....	56
• Making Your Comp CD.....	58
Setting up the Drop-off or Meeting .....	59
• The Introduction Letter .....	59
• Email.....	62
• Voice Mail .....	62
• Do's and Don'ts .....	63
The Meetings and Drop-offs.....	64
• Drop-off.....	64
• Do's and Don'ts .....	65
• Emailing MP3s .....	66
• Drop-off or MP3 Follow-Up.....	67

- The Face-To-Face Meeting..... 68
- About Holds..... 70
- Do’s and Don’ts..... 72
- The Nuances of Pitching..... 73

The Pitch Report..... 74

- Do’s and Don’ts..... 75

Chapter Wrap-up ..... 75

Pitch Report Example..... 76

**Chapter 5: How Songpluggers Get Paid..... 77**

(The Cost of Doing Business)

A Songplugger’s Reputation..... 77

Why Pluggers Expect to Get Paid..... 77

Why Hire an Independent Songplugger..... 78

Why the Mystery and Confusion..... 78

The Common Elements of an Agreement..... 79

Seek Professional Advice on Contracts ..... 81

Chapter Wrap-up ..... 82

Examples of Songplugging Agreements..... 83

- Agreement 1..... 83
- Agreement 2..... 85
- Agreement 3 (Exhibit A)..... 87
- Agreement 3 (Exhibit B)..... 90

No One Works for Free ..... 92

**The Commercial Country Filter..... 93**

(How to Know if Your Songs are Ready)

About the Filter..... 93

How to Tell if Your Songs are Ready (four steps)..... 93

Quotes from Chris Wallin..... 95

**Choosing an Independent Songplugger ..... 97**

(What to Look for and What to Avoid)

Things to Look For..... 97

Things to Avoid..... 98

**Chapter 6: The Cuts and the Bruises..... 99**

(The Triumphs and Tragedies of Songplugging)

A Sampling of Stories About Songs that Got Cut, and Some that Didn’t;with More Cuts and Bruises Stories In the Interviews.

Jody Williams – Cut ..... 99

Scott Hendricks – Cut..... 100

Dan Hodges – Bruise..... 100

Darrell Franklin – Bruise..... 101

Cliff Audretch III – Cut..... 102

Steve Seskin – Bruise..... 102

Chapter Wrap-up ..... 103

**Chapter 7: Interviews and Short Bios..... 105**

27 Interviews with Industry Pros on the Subject of Songplugging and Songpluggers

Sherrill Blackman..... 107

Shereé Spoltoré ..... 239

Ralph Murphy .....	115	Tara Austin.....	245
Scott Gunter .....	123	Stephanie Wright.....	251
Doug Johnson.....	133	Dan Hodges.....	261
Craig Wiseman.....	143	Anastasia Brown .....	275
Steve Seskin .....	157	Frank Rogers .....	285
Troy Tomlinson.....	169	Darrell Franklin.....	297
Buddy Cannon.....	183	Jeremy Witt .....	307
Cliff Audretch III .....	191	Missi Gallimore.....	311
Jody Williams.....	199	Kirk Boyer.....	317
John Ozier .....	209	Steve Markland .....	327
Kim Wiggins .....	217	Chris Oglesby.....	339
Rundi Ream.....	223	Chris Wallin .....	349
Scott Hendricks .....	229		

<b>Afterward.....</b>	<b>359</b>
The Changing Nashville Industry.....	359
Riding the Roller Coaster.....	359
Passing It On .....	359
A Labor of love .....	360
My Wish for the World .....	360

<b>Appendix.....</b>	<b>361</b>
• Glossary .....	361
• Resources and Contact Information .....	365
• Events, Publications and Services .....	367

<b>Index.....</b>	<b>369</b>
• General References .....	369
• Name References .....	371
• Song References.....	375
• Artist References.....	377
• Business and Organization References .....	379

<b>Order Pages .....</b>	<b>381</b>
• CD .....	381
• Book.....	382

