

Why Credits Matter

A personal anecdote on Grammy nominations, rule changes, and the real cost of missing credits — not just awards, but the marketing value of a lifetime's work.

Originally published on Jaxsta.com

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SUBJECT · RECORDING ACADEMY CREDITS ·

This is NOT a "poor me" complaint, I'm doing quite well, thanks, and I am not looking for sympathy. I just want to point out that this happens at every level and illustrate why it matters.

In the 2019 Grammy nominations, I was not properly credited for several projects that I worked on. Through various situations, the details of which I have not delved too deeply into, my credits were not correct.

I did receive a nomination for Record Of The Year for Ariana Grande "7 Rings", but I did not receive a nomination for Album Of The Year for Ariana's "thank u, next" album even though I did work on every song on that album in the exact same role that I played for the "7 Rings" song.

The same goes for Best Pop Vocal Album 2019; I should have received a nomination

for Ariana Grande "thank u, next" as well as for Taylor Swift "Lover" albums.

"I did work on every song on that album in the exact same role that I played for the '7 Rings' song."

— ON THE ARIANA GRANDE
NOMINATION MISS

I know the details of the Taylor Swift miss. The record label or management used an old label copy for the credits from a past album. I was listed as Engineer for Mix, which due to a rule change was not eligible for a Grammy nomination. The label copy submitted for the "Lover" album specifically changed the copy to say "Engineer" which is eligible for a Grammy Nomination; they just didn't use the right copy.

You see, the Recording Academy changes rules fairly regularly to allow or disallow certain work titles to be entitled to a nomination. Knowing this, we followed the new rules, but someone dropped the ball somewhere.

In 2016, Serban Ghenea and I received Grammy Nominations and won awards for Album Of The Year for Adele's "25". We worked on two songs on the album.

In 2018, Serban and I did not get nominations or awards for Album Of The Year for Kacey Musgraves "Golden Hour". We worked on two songs on the album.

THE RULE CHANGE TIMELINE

2016 — Adele "25"	2 songs = WIN
2018 — Kacey Musgraves "Golden Hour"	2 songs = NO NOM
Rule changed to	33% minimum

The difference is that they changed the rules in the meantime from anyone who worked on the Album Of The Year to anyone who worked on at least 33% of the playing time of the Album.

Now these rule changes are neither bad or good. The Academy, of which I am a

member, makes the decisions based on whatever criteria they choose. But what does matter is how and how accurately you are credited to be eligible for "Music's Highest Award".

Back to the Ariana Grande "thank u, next" album nomination. You see they credited me as Assistant Mixer for 9 songs and Mix Engineer for 3 songs. Assistant Mixer is not eligible for a Grammy nomination but Mix Engineer was at that time, but is not now. I did not get an eligible credit for working on at least 51% of the album by playing time, as is required to receive a nomination.

"Assistant Mixer is not eligible for a Grammy nomination but Mix Engineer was at that time, but is not now."

— ON SHIFTING ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Because label copy credits were not entered correctly, I was not among the engineers and producers nominated for Best Pop Vocal Album of 2019, despite working on all of the songs on two of the nominated albums.

Missing credits also happen regularly. You would not know that I mixed the following:

UNCREDITED MIXES	
Dotan	"Numb"
Dotan	"No Words"
Dotan	"Letting Go"
HOKO	"Hellogoodbye"

You would not know because someone didn't properly enter the label copy credits.

You see this is not just about awards.

Accurate credits are the greatest marketing tool that we have for music creators and technicians. If you don't get the proper credit, and have that credit listed somewhere that is easily accessible, then your work loses that marketing value. You build a body of work and a career based on

what you have done in the past. Based on your credits.

"Accurate credits are the greatest marketing tool that we have for music creators and technicians."

— THE CORE ARGUMENT

Not only can you not properly claim the value of your work, but someone else can say it is theirs because there is no place to check their veracity.

Getting the credits submitted and label copy attached correctly and officially is a hard enough task, so I am grateful that Jaxsta has been created to, at the least, give us a place to find and search those (hopefully) accurate official credits.