



PRIMARY WAVE
MUSIC



CASE STUDY

Preserving Sun Records' Legacy: Where Rock and Roll was Born

Historic record label Sun Records produced music from Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis, Roy Orbison, Carl Perkins and more that were at the forefront of defining rock and roll, country and blues. In 2021 Primary Wave, the leading private music publishing company, acquired legendary Sun Records and all of its master recordings. Their acquisition ensures these iconic recordings and assets are preserved for future generations.

PRIMARY WAVE / SUN RECORDS ARCHIVE

CHALLENGE

Prepare Sun Records' historic recording collection for re-release in celebration of the iconic music label's 70th anniversary.

SOLUTION

IMES digitized and converted audio recordings; removed mold and contamination; and stored physical assets in private vaults and climate controlled facilities.

RESULTS

- Sun Records historic legacy as the place "where rock and roll was born" was preserved for future generations of music fans.
- Ensured Primary Wave's ability to monetize Sun Records assets via new marketing, branding, digital strategy, licensing, synch opportunities, and film & TV production initiatives.

PRESERVE THE PAST, PROTECT THE FUTURE.

A collection dating back seventy years faced challenges such as degradation due to its age and mold contamination. Primary Wave enlisted Iron Mountain Entertainment Services (IMES) to help organize, store, digitize and restore their historic collection.

An IMES expert worked on-site in Nashville to assess the condition of the collection and create a plan to decipher what condition the tapes were in, what content was actually on the tapes, and whether the collection was cataloged correctly. Once Primary Wave moved the collection to New Jersey for archiving, IMES expert handlers matched them to the original inventory and organized the contents into two private vaults and climate-controlled storage with custom racking system to safely house their master recordings, original contracts, demos, and other papers.

PROTECT, PRESERVE AND PROMOTE CONTENT

Physical remediation techniques were used to repair the original blank leader tape that served to provide dead air between songs. Contamination such as mold, which had formed from the tapes being stored in a basement, was also remediated with patented techniques on several original master recordings. Finally, the master recordings were digitized to ensure their longevity and seamless future retrieval.

In October 2022 Primary Wave will unveil the restored Sun Records archive at its 70th anniversary celebration and pay homage to the innovative artists and industry professionals who helped shape and transform music in the 20th century and beyond.

“ There are many companies that have the capability to digitize older tapes, but we knew we needed the best partner to help us restore and care for the Sun Records collection. IMES has the history of success, the experts, the facilities, and the unique processes that ensured the successful preservation of these fragile, priceless assets. ”

— Donna Grecco

Vice President of Creative and Assets

