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Big Music vs Digital Audio

p2pnet.net News:- "Technologies that let people record satellite and Internet radio broadcasts digitally are opening a new front in the recording industry's war on music piracy," the Associated Press says [here](#), .



Scott MacLean

In fact the front, such as it is, has been open for quite a while.

J.D. Lasica wrote back in [May](#), "The Recording Industry Association of America has discovered that digital radio broadcasts can be copied and redistributed over the Internet.

"The horror."

Yep. And the MPAA's Jack Valenti or RIAA's Mitch Bainwol, and others of their ilk, would be the ones expressing it - the horror, that is.

The AP story was sparked by Scott MacLean, a Canadian who developed [TimeTrax](#) so he could record straight to his PC in WAV or mp3 format from his XM Satellite Radio's PCR receiver which, he points out on his [site](#), is, "available for under \$50, plugs into a USB port on your PC and lets you tune into over 120 digital audio satellite channels, featuring music, talk, comedy and news".

Digital radio means [pure digital sound](#) without the kind of interference you can get on 'normal' radio, together with

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text information, such as data on who and what you're listening to, playing back as it happens on a tiny screen.

With digital radio, you can also pause, rewind and record live radio music programs and later convert the songs to mp3s for playback.

To beleaguered Big Music, therefore, it's an absolute horror-show - yet another example of 21st century technology that doesn't fit into 1970s business models and so must be stomped. *Really* hard.

TimeTrax is, then, evil and wicked. It records individual - *individual*, mind you - mp3s, each tagged with the artist and song name and with the ID3 written with the same information and, "Leave TimeTrax recording overnight, and in the morning you will end up with a directory full of several hundred mp3 files, each perfectly cut and edited."

The horror.

"Since the TimeTrax program debuted on the Internet earlier this month, XM retailers like St. Louis' XMFan.com saw a crush of demand for the PCR units, which first hit the market about a year ago for under \$50," says AP, also stating:

"PCR receivers were selling for upwards of \$300 on eBay on Tuesday, and the founder of the company that distributes TimeTrax said XM's lawyers had written him asking that he stop selling the program."

StationRipper

But that's not all the long-suffering multi-billion-dollar music bizniz has to contend with.

There's also Greg Ratajik's StationRipper.

When we wrote about it [in April](#), StationRipper was available from Ratajik's site. But these days, as a mark of its popularity, it's on Download.com as v 1.10.

"Record internet radio stations as an MP3 file with this capture utility," says Download. StationRipper is going like the clappers with a popularity rating of 97%.

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The horror.

The Big Four record label cartel hates digital radio and all that stuff that goes with it.

Music fans could "cherry-pick" songs off the air and redistribute them over the Internet, the labels anguish through their RIAA (Recording Industry Association of America),".

So they sicced their RIAA onto the FCC (Federal Communications Commission) in an attempt to browbeat the latter into protecting Big Music's perceived copyright interests.

"The widespread unauthorized copying of music facilitated by DAB [digital radio] will also threaten the newly developing legitimate music distribution industries, such as iTunes, and will reduce the diversity of music available for broadcasting as the record companies have fewer resources to devote to new talent," says the RIAA.

It's difficult to see how cookie-cutter 'product' from the Big Four record label cartel could be less diverse than it is, but anyway, "In time" digital audio "may also jeopardize the radio broadcast industry as consumers use the recording capability to cut out commercials."

Oh *NO!* Cut out commercials?

The horror.

(Wednesday 1st September 2004)

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