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Thursday, 29 March 2007

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POLL SHOWS RIAA ACTION FAILED TO DETER STUDENT DOWNLOADERS

Written by Hannah Young

Tuesday, 27 March 2007

Students surveyed say copyright laws need updating

A national survey conducted over the weekend revealed the majority of college students think musicians don't suffer from illegal downloading.

The survey, conducted by SurveyU, showed 60 percent of the participants thought revenue from concerts and other sources made up for musicians' financial loss due to illegal downloading. UW-Madison freshman Sarah Klowden agreed.

"Even if a person downloads, in the long run they will contribute to musicians in different ways, like going to a concert or buying a CD," she said.

The survey was a response to second wave of pre-litigation letters the Recording Industry Association of America sent out March 21. Sixty-six of the letters were sent to students at UW System schools.

Even with this increase in copyright enforcement, only one of six students surveyed said they plan on changing their downloading behavior. This attitude is common among UW-Madison students.

"I don't think people will stop downloading until they hear of someone they know getting a letter and even then it depends on the severity of the consequence," Klowden said.

The survey also showed the majority of students think the government needs to update copyright laws for the digital age.

UW-Madison sophomore Steven Weiss said he thinks the government needs to take illegal downloading more seriously.

"They're going to have to start cracking down and making serious laws for illegal downloading or people will keep doing it," Weiss said.

Since music became available to download illegally, the RIAA and the recording industry have been wrestling with the issue of this generation's downloading habits. A majority of survey participants think illegal downloading is a chronic problem for today's students.

"Illegal downloading is a part of our generation," Weiss said. "It's not because we are college students, it's because we were raised with it."

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