



Students React to RIAA Legal Action

Welcome Back?

Students returning from Spring Break received an unexpected welcome as the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) renewed a legal campaign against students sharing music files on campus networks. Over 400 students at 13 campuses nationwide have received 'pre-litigation' letters from attorneys acting on behalf of the RIAA and major record companies.

Slowly Getting Up To Speed

In a poll conducted over the weekend of March 24th, 2007 among a nationally representative sample of 500 college students, nearly half of students (47%) were unaware of the renewal of the anti-piracy campaign.

Declining Fortunes

Revenues within the music industry have been dropping with analysts citing single song purchase models as well as file sharing networks as causes for the decline. While 45% of students admit to purchasing less music, only 18% say that they are purchasing more music than in the past. Average monthly music purchases vary greatly depending on gender, with male college students spending, \$18.33 and female college students spending \$15.51 per month.

While nearly all students (98%) have at least one song that was acquired without payment, more than half (57%) of digital music held by U.S. college students was purchased as a CD and ripped for personal use or purchased online.

Q: We'd like you to guesstimate the number of songs you own as well as their source.

AVERAGE NUMBER OF SONGS PER STUDENT BY SOURCE	ALL RESPONDENTS	MALE	FEMALE
PURCHASED	1073	1420	828
Ripped from your own CDs	849	1,097	673
Purchased from iTunes	118	129	111
Purchased from other online vendors	106	194	44
NOT PURCHASED	800	1,080	603
Ripped from the CDs of others or copied from the digital library of others	427	552	338
Downloaded without payment	373	528	265
TOTAL LIBRARY	1,873	2,500	1,431
PERCENT OF MUSIC PAID FOR	57%	57%	58%



The Digital Rights Battleground

While the impact of the RIAA legal action may not have immediate implications for the majority of U.S. college students, this is one of many skirmishes that will redraw the battle lines around digital rights.

Students themselves are divided across a number of polar opposite statements (called a semantic differential scale), with a majority consensus on only three of seven arguments.

Analysis

“The Millennial Generation (those born between 1982 and 2002) is the first to grow up within a completely digital environment and are now finding themselves living on the fault lines of the changing digital rights landscape” stated Dan Coates, Co-Founder of SurveyU.

“File sharing isn’t the pernicious vice of a few bad apples – it’s a generational expression of digital entitlement.

Boomers burned bras and draft cards - Millennials burn playlists.”

Q: The debate regarding digital rights within the recording industry involves a number of arguments that can be made on both sides of the issue. Which of the following points do you agree with?

Statement	Agree	Neu-tral	Agree	Statement
Musicians suffer when music is downloaded without being paid for	22%	19%	60%	Musicians don't suffer since their growing fan base buys concert tickets and makes other financial contributions to their success
College students are chronic traffickers of illegal downloads	26%	19%	55%	College students are the same as everyone else when it comes to copying or downloading music without purchasing it
The government has provided a clear and equitable framework for the rights of digital property owners	14%	34%	53%	The government is out of step with copyright issues in the new digital era and needs to redefine fair use
The music industry is exercising their legal right to protect their property	34%	24%	42%	College students are a convenient target for the greed of large record companies
Downloads that are not paid for constitute theft	35%	32%	33%	Downloading music without paying for it isn't currently legal, but should be
My school should support the rights of the recording industry	19%	45%	36%	My school should protect me from the recording industry
I am well informed about the legal issues surrounding digital rights	35%	33%	31%	I am not very well informed about this issue and wish that someone could fully explain it to me



What Should Schools Do?

When asked if they thought that their school would comply with the forwarding of 'pre-litigation' letters, 39% of students thought that their school would, 15% felt that their school wouldn't and 46% were unsure what their school's response would be. An insignificant number of students in the poll had received pre-litigation letters, although 4% of those polled were in direct contact with a fellow student who had received one.

Will It Make Any Difference?

While slightly less than one in six (16%) of college students plan on changing their behavior in the future to favor more legal downloads, an equal number plan on reducing their legal purchases and the vast majority (68%) do not plan on changing their music purchasing habits as a result of the legal actions taken by the RIAA.

Who's At Risk?

When asked how concerned they were about the RIAA legal action, college students had the greatest concern for friends, followed by themselves and their families.

Personal Reaction To Letter?

When asked how they would react if they were to receive a pre-litigation letter from a law firm representing the recording industry, nearly half of students (46%) would seek legal advice, while more than one-third (37%) were unsure what they would do. Little more than one in ten (11%) felt that they would immediately take the offer of settlement proposed within the pre-litigation letters.

Q: How concerned are you about the RIAA's recent approach to reducing illegal downloads when it comes to yourself, your friends or your family?

	CONCERNED	NOT CONCERNED
My friends	43%	57%
Myself	33%	67%
Members of my family	23%	77%

Permission to cite or copy statistics contained herein is granted as long as proper attribution is given to SurveyU.



Methodology

Methodology

Five hundred online interviews were conducted between 5:00pm Eastern on Saturday, March 24th and 5:00pm Eastern Monday, March 26th.

Respondents were part of the SurveyU national panel of U.S. college students. Results were weighted to reflect the demographic composition of college students nationwide.

Recruitment

The SurveyU community has been meticulously constructed within the United States and Canada. We recruit participants into our online panel on a campus by campus basis using poster campaigns, college newspaper ads and local social networks. We obtain admissions data from each academic institution, enumerating student populations according to:

- Gender
- Undergraduate / Graduate
- Part Time / Full Time
- Major / Concentration
- Year of Study
- Race

This bottom-up methodology enables levels of accuracy and projectability on campus, state, regional and national levels that was previously impractical or impossible - either online or offline.

Interaction

Students join an active community that mirrors their technology preferences and rewards their participation.

Text messaging is used to alert students to survey opportunities, to virally recruit others and to conduct weekly FlashMob Surveys - an innovative, mobile web-based survey of college students.

Respondents are given points for completing surveys. Points can be exchanged for:

- * Amazon Gift Certificates
- * iTunes Gift Cards
- * PayPal Cash Transfers

In conjunction with GlobalPark, students of survey methods have the ability to create their own surveys and administer them to fellow students.