

INFO-TECH ARTS

Assignment #1

Desk-Top Publishing Project

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Digital technologies have continually been enhanced over the past 50 years. With the enhancement of digital technology, there has also been an increase in the illegal process known as music piracy. Music Piracy has been considered to have negative effect on the music industry. How have programs such as 'Limewire' decreased record sales?

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TASK & QUESTION

Task: *Devise and answer an appropriate question addressing one aspect of how digital technologies have impacted on music.*

Question: *Digital technologies have continually been enhanced over the past 50 years. With the enhancement of digital technology, there has also been an increase in the illegal process known as music piracy. Music Piracy has been considered to have a negative effect on the music industry. How have programs such as 'Limewire' decreased record sales?*

Subsequent Questions:

1. Does Music Piracy really have a negative effect on the music industry?
2. Are there any positive effects on the music industry?

Abstract:

Music Piracy is on a continuous uprise, and is unlikely to cease any time soon. 'Limewire,' and other P2P programs are becoming easier to use to download illegitimate copies of music. CD burning, is another leading process in the piracy world. Between the constant uprise in P2P technologies, and the use of CD burning technologies, new artists are going to continually find it harder to make a living in the recording industry. Putting a stop to piracy will more-than-likely not happen any time soon, so preventative measures need to be taken to decrease the availability of pirate music.

Section 1.0 – Introductions

Section 1.1 – Introduction #1

Music Piracy refers to the process in which there has been a deliberate infringement of copyright laws. In general, there are two (2) main types of piracy; Physical and Internet. (MIPI: Music Industry Piracy Investigations, 2010, Online). Many internet based applications can heavily contribute to the piracy world. Programs including ‘Limewire,’ and even ‘Youtube,’ adversely affect the music industry. How have these programs adversely decreased record sales?

Section 1.2 – Introduction #2

As aforementioned, Music Piracy can generally be classed into two areas; Physical Piracy, and, Internet Piracy. MIPI states that Physical Piracy consists of 3 sub-classes – Simple Piracy, Counterfeits, and Bootlegs. (MIPI: Music Industry Piracy Investigations, 2010, Online).

- **Simple Piracy** – the packaging of the pirate copy is different from the original. They are often compilations, such as “greatest hits,” of a specific artist, or a collection of a specific genre, such as dance tracks.
- **Counterfeits** – the packaging of the pirate copy resembles the original as closely as possible. The record companies’ trademarks are reproduced in order to mislead the consumer into believing that they are buying an original product.
- **Bootlegs** – these are unauthorised recordings of live or broadcast performances.

Internet Piracy is the form of piracy where music is posted and transmitted to a world-wide audience via the internet. This occurs without permission from the rights holders. This form of piracy can occur through various forms including: websites; email; or through peer-to-peer file transfers.

According to MIPI: Music Piracy Investigations, “The use of unauthorised sound recordings on the internet is a significant problem which has implications world-wide.”

Section 2.0 – Music Sales – Ever-Decreasing Due to Illegal Downloading

Record sales are believed to continually be on the downfall with the uprise of Illegal Music Downloading. John Mayer stated "We sell about 40 per cent less albums than we did three or four years ago because of illegal downloading." (MIPI: Music Industry Piaracy Investigations, 2010, Online).

Programs such as ‘Limewire,’ are claimed to be the source of illegal downloading. Music Industry Professional, and Pop-Vocalist Natalie Gauci stated on MIPI: Music Industry Investigations that “it is hard knowing that people are illegally downloading your songs when they could just as easily go and buy them.” Many other music industry professionals agree with Gauci. Peter Waelbroeck of ECARES, Free University of Brussels, and Martin Peitz, of the University of Mannheim suggest in their analysis of music downloading’s role on the current decrease in CD sales that, “many in the music industry believe internet piracy has reduced sales of legitimate CDs.” Furthermore, they also state that “many analysts claim that the current downturn in CD sales is due to the uncontrollable increase in P2P technologies.” (The Effect of Internet Piracy on CD Sales, 2003, Online)

It seems that P2P technologies are going to continue to develop, increase in popularity, and become easier to use. With this knowledge, it is likely that CD sales will continue to decrease. A 2007 blog-post on the website punknews.org suggested that the CD buying population had cut their purchasing by almost 17%. However, they go on to further state that “although CD sales have decreased drastically, digital sales have seen an upward movement.” Programs such as Itunes have become a more popular source of buying music, it seems.

Although the music industry has seen a drastic decrease in CD sales due to P2P programs such as ‘Limewire,’ Sales from Itunes will hopefully begin to become more popular, and provide an increase to artists sales.

Section 3.0 – Music Sales – Ever-Decreasing due to Illegal Burning

Since the inception of the CD in 1982, and the CD-Burner in 1988, CD burning has become ever-so-popular. Because of this, there seems to have been a constant decrease in CD sales. Although the Audio Home Recording Act of 1992 states that copyright holders can’t sue users for making personal copies of a recording, it however, does not allow users to mass-produce illegitimate copies for private sale.

Even though the Act does not allow mass-production of illegitimate copies, it seems this is the case in many households. Gone are the days where one would have to physically go and buy a CD from a store. Now, apart from just downloading from internet-based programs, people are able to also mass-produce with ease. Many people are likely to occasionally buy a CD, burn it and give a copy to friends and family.

Information sourced from ARIA: Australian Recording Industry Association concludes that CD burning has had a drastic, negative effect on the downturn in record sales. According to ARIA’s research, “More than 80 % of people who received burnt CDs say that they would ‘rarely’ or ‘never’ buy a copy of a burnt CD they had received. More than 50 % of file sharers tend not to buy music they have downloaded.”

By burning illegitimate copies of CD’s, recording artists are going to lose money. However, ARIA suggests that “ultimately it is the consumer that is going to be at a loss. With copying rampant there is diminishing motive to invest in music production or risk supporting new talent. File-sharing and CD burning contributes to the slow but steady weakening of the local and international music industry.”

Although CD burning is highly unlikely to seize entirely, it does need to decrease in order to allow new artists to emerge.

Section 4.0 – Conclusion

Section 4.1 – How does CD Burning & Illegal downloading impact on Record Sales?

Overall, the ever-improving technological world has impacted greatly on the Music Industry. Programs such as ‘Limewire,’ and the process of CD burning have become extremely popular over the last few years. Due to these popularities, Music artists world-wide have a lot more trouble selling their albums these days as, P2P technologies make it much easier to download them quicker, and much less expensive than buying them for a store.

Section 4.2 – Final Conclusion

P2P technologies will continue to improve over time. Unfortunately for recording musicians, this also means that CD sales are likely to plummet even further. As John Mayer said on MIPI, 40% of his CD sales has already been depleted. In 5 years time, it is possible that his, and other artists sales will plummet to a very low amount.

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