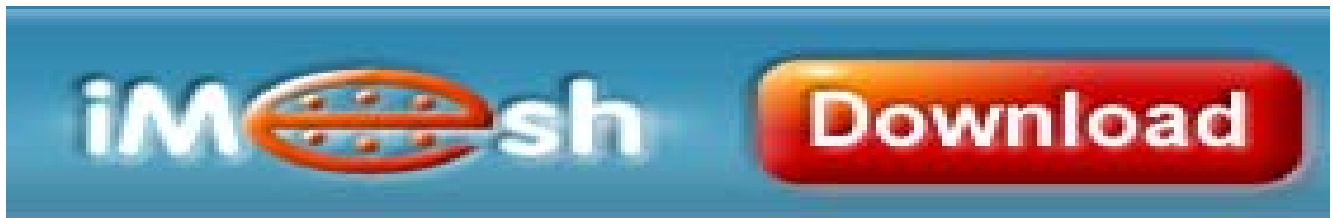


# Media Downloads

Group Leader: Celeste Matheny

Editor: Timothy McMahon

Writers: Nick Maskey, Celeste Matheny, Tiana Mckay, Timothy McMahon, Lauren McClave, Julia Mitchell, David Maynard



# Group 8

# File Sharing Programs Vs. Record Labels

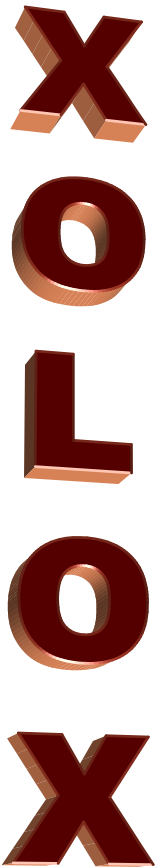
By: Nick Maskey



Is downloading a music file from a File-Sharing Program a form of modern day piracy, or should music be free to whom ever has an internet connection? Ever since MP3s and other compressed audio formats became popular in the 1990s, court battles like the notorious one between the RIAA (Recording Industry Association of America) and Napster have been waged. But who is in the right, the record labels or the file-sharing public (Gasser 2003)? The Record labels have done everything from legitimate court battles to flooding major file-sharing programs with bogus files of popular artists. Darrell Smith, the father of the popular file-sharing program, Morpheus, says that he first noticed the problem about a year ago. It's more prevalent in the last three months, he adds. It's gotten real, real, real, severe. Three major labels have admitted to uploading decoy files to popular programs like Morpheus, Kazaa and Grokster that will look just like the popular song, but are actually just long silences or a single part of the song repeated over and over (Chmielewski 2002). None of these methods have worked very well because there are so many other file-sharing programs out there that people can turn to if one gets shut down or overly frustrating with bogus files. So some record labels decided that if they couldn't beat them, that they'd join them by creating services like PressPlay (Sony and Universal) or MusicNet (BMG, EMI, and Warner). However, they were not about to start a file-sharing program that would further decrease their sales revenue, so naturally these sites would require paid subscriptions. Also, just to maintain the programs, they would have to pay extra workers and buy web space, and many other extra expenses. Yet the record labels still failed to grasp the reason why their revenue is being killed by popular file-sharing programs like Kazaa and Morpheus. It is because their download programs are free of charge. Currently, these record label-derived programs are faltering and are slowly being suffocated by the shadow of the free file-sharing programs (Gasser 2003). In the end, I do not think that any tactics to get rid of file-sharing by the record labels will work. There are just too many services out there to be taken care of. Even if all the programs were some how eliminated, what about the web pages devoted to nothing but MP3 files for anyone to download? The amount of web pages on the internet is nearly infinite, how could they regulate all of them? So even though they are fighting a losing battle, I do think it is a justified fight which will at least decrease the amount of piracy that occurs online.

# **XOLOX : The Place To Get All of Your Media Needs.**

**By: Celeste Matheny**



Most people have heard of the file-sharing programs like Kazaa, Morpheus, Napster, and Bearshare. Although, the program Xolox is a newer and not so known system, it provides all of the same things as many of the other popular programs offer . It has been made for both beginner and expert file-sharers to be able to download all sorts of media including music, films, games, photos, stories, information, reviews, and more. Xolox is an easy way of downloading the media because it automatically sets your computer for fast and easy installation and connects with a simple one-click control.. It will keep searching the system until it finds what you are looking for and it will download it even if you are not at your computer. It will also allow you to perform multiple searches so you can get everything you want in a smaller amount of time. Many of the other programs tend to take a lot of time when they are downloading your information and they also can cut off in the middle of the transfer. Xolox tries to speed things up more than other systems and it will automatically resume any broken or unfinished downloads. Xolox is a very secure program because it will scan all files for viruses, pre-view files, and auto-ban servers hosting fake files and it is also equipped with a parent-controlled adult filter for family use. The quality of the program proves to be sufficient because it works with all file types with no bit rate limits to assure you the highest quality possible.(xolox.nl) With all of these great attributes you would think that Xolox's popularity would be shooting through the roof. Many of the CNET users do not agree that Xolox is everything it says it is. In a poll asking whether or not the users liked the Xolox program only 47% gave it a thumbs up while the other 53% did not like it as well as the other programs. (download.com) Whether or not Xolox becomes as popular as the other file-sharing programs it still provides just as much media for the public. It still is a fairly newer and less experienced site but its quality and motives are good and only time will tell on what it will amount to in the future.

## **Why Not Download Movies?**

**By:Tiana McKay**

Music isn't the only thing that can be downloaded from the Internet that is causing controversy. Recently, there has been an interest in downloading whole movies. While there are the obvious benefits to downloading, it is not without drawbacks. Unless your computer's Internet connection is very strong and has the capacity to handle such an enormous download it could take hours or days. Often audio and video tracks for a movie must be downloaded separately then synchronized by the consumer. Also, the picture quality is the same as watching a VHS on the television screen and does not have the clarity of a DVD. That is how things stand now, but the way technology is advancing there is no guessing what the future may bring. Despite these drawbacks there are still quite a few people who go to all extremes. So, what is all the fuss about? Just as illegal download sites like Napster, iMesh, and Scour have created waves in the music industry, in the same way sites like DivX (Sweeting, 2001), and other options on popular music sites like Scour, are causing alarm in the movie industry. The big movie industries are sweating because they have seen how downloading piracy got out of control for music. The controversy stands on moral grounds of stealing (Wendy, 2000). Protagonists believe that this is the perfect opportunity for the industry to promote. Downloading movies has not yet exploded and production companies can still take control (Herznandez, 2002). Some are already doing so by creating legal download sites with a pay-per-download arrangement. This does not improve the quality or length of time it takes, but consumers will be clear of a guilty conscience. There is also an online service called Netflix that is a cheap, delivery rental service. The price for downloading a movie from MovieLink LLC is a little more than renting a VHS, but with a viewing time limit of 24 hours. Alan Goldstein wrote in an article to the Dallas Morning News that he compared downloading movies from MovieLink using a DSL connection and it took just as long to drive to the nearest Blockbuster. He remarked that there was a greater selection at the rental store and in DVD, which has better picture quality (Goldstein, 2002). It is more difficult to download movies than music, so the question is: Why download movies? It is not for convenience, accessibility, or cost. My opinion is that people do it because it is illegal and they are used to downloading music.

## **Taking a Look at BearShare** **By: Tim McMahon**

There are many different file-sharing programs today one of those is BearShare. BearShare isn't that much different from other file-sharing programs such as Morpheus and Kazaa. BearShare does offer something different with multi-segmented downloading (slyck.com/bearshare). This allows you to search for a file by using something other than the file's name. BearShare does not require any password or username, so there is no hassle of going through a bunch of steps to get into the program. When downloading files there will be a bar next to every file, if the file has a green bar next to it then you will be able to download this file successfully, if the bar is red or clear you probably

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won't be able to get it (slyck.com/bearshare). The file's downloading progress can be monitored by clicking on "Downloads" on the bar across the top. You can go to the "monitor" window and see how many times your shared files have been searched (slyck.com/bearshare). BearShare has some differences from other file-sharing programs, but is mainly the same.

I don't see a problem with file-sharing programs such as BearShare. Sure, music and movie industries might lose some money because of these programs but I don't think any of them are going to go out of business because of them. I think they are a good way for small bands to get their music heard by a large group of people. I have used BearShare and I found that I could find a wide variety of files but couldn't download them with the same speed that I could download files on Morpheus. I think more people will get tired of the lack of diversity that Morpheus offers and start to use programs like BearShare.

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## How Users Benefit from Kazaa By: Lauren McClave

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With the creation of file-sharing system like Kazaa it has taken the music industry by storm. Its excessive popularity has made Kazaa the number one peer to peer software application in the world (Kazaa). On Tuesday March 11, 2003 Kazaa had just received its 200 millionth download of its software (Kazaa). With the Kazaa software music lovers can download music as well as movies, software, and video games. These new features have appealed to the general public. In a CNN report it is established 14 million copies of Kazaa software is downloaded each month (CNN). Kazaa remains to have "the most downloaded, the largest number of users, and is the fastest growing" (Kazaa).

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Kazaa has created much controversy with the recording industry. The Kazaa software allows people to download free music files in the form of mp3s which violates copyright laws set by the record labels. After the shut down of Napster, people started to find another server. The Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) has been trying to close down file sharing software like Kazaa and its counterparts. The RIAA feels CD sales have dropped because of the creation of these programs. New statistics show that CD sales have declined two years in a row. In 2002 CD sales dropped 7.2% from 397 million to 369 million dollars (Blake). An RIAA spokesman expressed "piracy as the primary reason from the decline in sales" (Blake). Pirating is the illegal copying and selling of audio recording (Roman 155). By having these downloading sites it is stealing money away from the record industry because customers are downloading music instead of buying the CD's.

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Other possible cause for the fall of CD sales could be the increase of the price of CDs and the popularity of other forms of entertainment. The price of CD's rose 7.2% from \$13.04 to \$14.19 in between 1999 and 2001 (Blake). This has steered people away from buying a CD to listen to one song when they can download their favorite song for

free. In 2001, this was the first time when blank CD's outsold the number of recorded CD's (Warner). Other forms of entertainment that have risen over the past few years are video games, DVD's, and the internet. These new activities have occupied the time of millions of people. These new forms of media or the increase of downloading sites like Kazaa and Morpheus could have lead to the decrease of CD sales.

What has made Kazaa software different from other competitors like Bearshare and I-mesh? By using these sites people can download music but what makes Kazaa different is that people can download movies, software, and video games too. The advantages of Kazaa include its vast amount of material that is made available for users. Kazaa offers more than 800 million files to pick from (CNN). This makes searching and finding material easier when more quantity is made available. A special feature of Kazaa is that it allows users to pause and finish their downloads at different times (Movies, Music and Games Under One Roof). If someone has to leave their computers they are given the option to stop downloading and can pick up where they left off next time. This is an appealing option for users because they don't have to sit and wait for the downloads to be completed. In a study between Kazaa, Aimster, and Bearshare Kazaa has the least percentage of failure rate. Kazaa had 5% while Bearshare had 44% and Aimster had 75% (Kazaa, Aimster or Bearshare). Kazaa definitely had the most content for users and allows people to reach for their favorite titles more easily. It was seen that Kazaa has the "smartest system over" (Kazaa, Aimster or Bearshare).

Kazaa has been downloaded and accessed by many users. These users feel Kazaa is helpful and resourceful. It is easy for users to download their favorite movies and songs. This easy access has made Kazaa very popular today.

## Morpheus

By: Julia Mitchell

Morpheus is a program that allows for the sharing of file products. It operates peer-to-peer and has become very popular around the world. Those who have Morpheus can connect with other users, whether they have Morpheus or another program, forming a network. This network enables you to download computer files consisting of audio, text, video, images, and other software files. Morpheus and other programs have had a large impact on the internet and other forms of media.

Released in April of 2001, Morpheus was quickly accepted. After the termination of Napster, its users were anticipating a new way to download their files. So when Morpheus came out, it did not take long for it to become popular. According to the Morpheus web site, "the software product has been evolving to revolutionize internet digital media distribution and communications via unique software-driven solutions that enable users to communicate with one another and share information more efficiently and

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on an unprecedented scale". Morpheus improves in quality every day which attracts more users and keeps them satisfied.

There are many advantages and few disadvantages to Morpheus. You can find files anytime without waiting and provided functions such as multiple searches, keywords, and descriptions make advanced searches easy. Users are also provided with access to a massive global user network and they are able to connect directly and share information. Along with these great advantages come a few minor disadvantages. Sometimes Morpheus can be slow and hard to connect with. This can also result in the retrieval of fewer files when searching. These problems do not happen often and are usually caused by the computer's connection. Morpheus' advantages outweigh its disadvantages, which do not linger for long.

Morpheus is an excellent media downloading program. It is a fast, cheap, and accessible way to obtain desired files. This peer-to-peer program is one of the best and is known around the world. Morpheus is a superior communications tool and is beneficial to all those who use it.

## **WinMX: Sharing Your Media** **By: David Maynard**

A great downloading site that will suite your every need is WinMX. It provides almost everything you could ever want in the media industry. It is a free sharing program that allows you to connect, download and share files with millions of other people. Once the program is installed your privacy is kept and the site will never sell you out to spyware. The program features many things like high performance peer-to-peer protocol, share and download any file type, multi-sourced downloading for maximum speed on broadband connections, auto-complete features continuously seeks out new download sources, even after WinMX is restarted, detailed bandwidth monitoring and throttling controls. It also contains a complete upload and download queuing system, fully decentralized chat, OpenNap connectively for expert users, it has powerful docking window interface great for hi-res and multi-monitor systems, and it is compatible with most LAN configurations. (winmx) WinMX now has a newer feature called WINMX v3.31. This program is a minor upgrade that fixes several small problems with the previous version. WinMX is just as good and if not better than any of the other share-files. It comes with all of the qualities of the other programs but leaves out the ads, spyware, and other annoying features.

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