

New software cracks music tracks completely legally from Apple iTunes and other music platforms

German company RapidSolution Software AG has released the Windows software Tunebite. Music tracks purchased from the Internet are copy-protected and involve important restrictions for many users when they are played back. With the option to re-record them while they are played, Tunebite legally provides the user with new music files without restrictions. This ensures that music bought from Apple iTunes, Sony Connect, AOL, Musicload or other music platforms in the Internet can be played back and listened to from everywhere.

According to a press release from Apple in April 2004, more than 70 million music tracks were sold in the US in the first year of existence of the Apple iTunes Music Stores. Towards the middle of the year, Apple has penetrated Europe with further iTunes Music Stores and announced that the threshold of 100 million tracks has been exceeded. According to its own information, Apple is the U.S. market leader in the electronic distribution of music via the Internet. In August 2004, Apple announced that more than one million pieces of music were available on the Internet for download from its Apple iTunes Music Store.

Riding the wave of music euphoria, many consumers have purchased their music as downloads that are protected by the so-called Apple-Play-Fair or the Microsoft Digital-Rights-Management (DRM) data formats and are thus limited in use. The different formats aim to prevent pirate copies and abuse by limiting the possibilities of use. Tracks that are protected by those formats have file extensions such as "AAC, M4P or WMA".

The music industry disadvantaging consumers

Protection against pirate copies also, however, discriminates against honest consumers. Apple iTunes software, for example, is restricted to the use of the mobile Apple iPod player. A track in AAC file format can be easily transferred from Apple iTunes software to the Apple iPod and played back.

At the moment, owners of conventional MP3 players who buy their music from the Apple iTunes Music Store neither have the possibility to transfer tracks from Apple iTunes software to an MP3-player, nor to play it back in Apple M4P format.

The only possibility that Apple iTunes offers to these consumers is to burn an audio CD. Then the consumer, who has to find his own solutions, must manually convert the individual tracks into MP3 format by using additional software from third-party providers, in order to be able to listen to music on his MP3 player. This requires lengthy processes, specific knowledge and the use of additional software, which is often too complicated for the average consumer. Information on the track concerned, such as title, artist, album and cover are lost during this procedure.

Other download platforms that serve as providers of music in DRM format have variously either forbidden or restricted the possibility of burning a CD. And the possibility of playing tracks in DRM format is – as with Apple – often tailored to only one playback medium.

The online platforms for billable music downloads, as well as the companies and institutions behind these formats, only provide scant information. The honest end user, who does not seem to fit into the patterns imposed by the music industry, falls by the wayside.

Tunebite PC software legally helps consumers

RapidSolution Software AG has recognized this problem for consumers and now offers its software solution on its website <http://www.tunebite.com>. When run in Windows, the Tunebite application automatically recognizes when a music track is played back. At the same time, Tunebite re-records the piece of music. At the end of recording, Tunebite saves the tracks to the hard disk. Apart from automatic mode, the user can also use the Tunebite user interface to manually record individual tracks or even a whole collection of tracks while they are being played back, and save them to a file format of his choice.

Tunebite facilitates the recording of tracks in different file formats. RapidSolution Software AG offers Tunebite for sale and download, together with the so-called ogg-file format. By downloading an additional plugin, Tunebite can also be operated with the so-called enc_lame.dll-decoder and provide consumers with tracks that can be played back without restrictions in MP3 format.

Analogous recording does not interfere with the quality of the tracks. Most download platforms do not offer music in CD quality, but with a quality of 128 kbit/s. Depending on the PC's soundcard, Tunebite can re-record it at up to 256 kbit/s, thus rendering any potential quality loss virtually inaudible for the consumer.

Tunebite and the legal situation

Other music download applications are also available on the Internet. These modify or fully delete the copying protection by interfering with the original music files. Such tools are illegal, and producers and users of these illegal tools are liable to civil and criminal prosecution by Apple or the music industry.

Tunebite and its use exploits a legal loophole which has been unsuccessfully hard-fought by the music industry: the so-called "analog hole". This worldwide legal loophole provides the opportunity of legal private use by the analogous recording of media while it is being played. This can be compared with music from the radio, or movies from TV, which can be legally recorded onto cassette recorders or VCRs. Tunebite uses this principle by the analogous re-recording of tracks that are played back.

Illegal software modifies the original files. In the event that producers of the original files change specific structures or elements of the copy protection, such illegal software will become worthless. In contrast to illegal solutions, Tunebite is format-independent, since the software directly records the track being played from the audio source.

About RapidSolution Software AG

RapidSolution Software AG is a leading technology provider in the software development area for music, Voice-over-IP, messaging, localization, web robots and industrial applications. The German company exists since 1998 and has locations in Germany and Romania. The company holds different participations and cooperates with leading companies and institutions.

RapidSolution Software AG is one of Europe's leading specialized providers of music software solutions. Through its participation in air2mp3 GmbH for example, the company provides the German-speaking countries with a free solution for fully automatic music recording to PC from radio, cable or Sat receivers with a multitude of additional functions both for consumers and as an OEM solution.

Further core activities within the scope of home entertainment are media centre systems and ad blockers. RapidSolution Software AG is active in these areas not only with its own solutions, but also as a service provider of individual developments from renowned companies.

Press contact

RapidSolution Software AG
Norman F. Foerderer
Haid-und-Neu-Strasse 7
76131 Karlsruhe
Germany

e-mail: presse@tunebite.com