

## Is downloading music killing the music industry?

New software is making it easier for people to download music from a website and exchange songs over the Internet. The music industry says downloading music has contributed to a decline in CD sales. Now, the US record industry is planning to prosecute people who swap music over the Internet.

1 Read the titles of four articles from the music press and predict the content of each.

- a Internet piracy blamed on sales slump
- b The future is digital
- c Music industry to take legal action
- d Record industry 'stuck in the past'

2 Read extracts from the four articles below and check your predictions in 1. Match each title to the correct extract.

1 The US record industry is planning to sue people who swap music over the Internet. The Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) says its sales have been hit hard by 'peer-to-peer' software, which allows users to swap music, films and other files over the Internet. It aims to gather evidence against users of such software and file lawsuits against them. Stars including Madonna, Eminem, Sir Elton John and Britney Spears have all condemned unauthorised downloading.

3 Music lovers are complaining bitterly about the latest industry announcement. They say the music industry is 'stuck in the past' and has not come to terms with the fact that users often only want a few songs on a new CD. 'We download songs because of the high price of CDs,' one fan complained. They say burning CDs for a friend is not a crime.

2 The music industry says it is facing a global sales slump and claims that Internet piracy, which infringes copyright, is to blame. CD album sales are down six per cent, while audio cassette sales are down by an astounding 36 per cent. Overall sales are down seven per cent worldwide.

4 The latest digital music player has hit the US market. This stylish portable machine can hold up to 7,500 songs, so your entire music collection can be portable. It has a huge hard drive – enough to store a new song every day for the next 20 years. Users can now visit the web, preview, buy and download music. When you find a song you like, you can own it. You can burn individual songs to CD as many times as you like.

File-swappers trade an estimated 2.6 billion songs, movies and other files a month, an industry spokesperson said.

3 Match the following collocations from the texts above. Some verbs collocate with more than one noun.

- |            |           |
|------------|-----------|
| a sue      | songs     |
| b infringe | files     |
| c burn     | people    |
| d download | CDs       |
| e swap     | copyright |
| f trade    | music     |

4 Discuss the following questions.

- Do you think the RIAA is right to sue people?
- How can the music industry combat falling sales?
- What are your views on downloading music from the Internet?
- Do you think legal ways of downloading music will increase in the future?