

Napster deal will clear way for next MP3 music boom



MIKE WENDLAND

Napster is reportedly in deals aimed at settling its bitter, lawsuit-plagued battle with the recording industry on the heels of a new study that shows downloaded music on the Internet is not having a serious effect on record sales or harming musicians.

The settlement will clear the way for the next stage of the MP3 music boom, a boom that will transform the way we all listen to music. Detroit automakers are ready to jump on board, making MP3 music players standard on in-car entertainment systems, systems also capable of playing MP3 music directly from the Internet.

The industry already is seeing brisk sales on MP3 portable music players. Next up are MP3 stereo amps and players for home systems. The Napster Web site has an estimated 10 million users regularly trading music

files via the Internet. Several copycat sites are also growing in popularity. Making it all possible is MP3, a way of compressing music files into small files that can quickly be downloaded and then played in near CD quality.

The technology is now seen as even more revolutionary than the development of the CD a decade ago. Once MP3 routinely becomes available in cars, many analysts believe it will soon become the music mode of choice.

Microsoft's future vision

Get ready for a new high-tech acronym.

We all know that ISP stands for Internet Service Provider. Now, here comes ASP, for Applications Provider, or the system of delivering software via the Internet.

And ASP is the lynchpin of what Microsoft calls *Next Generation Windows Services*, its vision of the future being unveiled this week. It all involves a series of digital tools that will give consumers instant access to e-mail, documents, database files and information-on-demand on everything from

wireless phones to handheld computers to electronic e-books.

Microsoft envisions a world in which the Internet, rather than shrink-wrapped programs and software-based operating systems, runs our PCs or Macs or whatever box performs computing functions in the future. While Microsoft's announcement surely is getting lots of attention, few specific details of the company's plan have been announced. A major reason for that, of course, is the company is under court orders to break up, and if Microsoft is unsuccessful in its appeal, whatever plans they have may have to be shelved. Other companies, including the burgeoning automotive-related Web sites and many business-to-business operations, say the Microsoft announcement is all hype, PR aimed at building public support during the appeal process.

"Like a lot of other companies with Microsoft, this is all smoke and mirrors," said one Detroit area IT exec who obviously didn't want his name used. "ASP technology is already being developed by a lot of us and Microsoft

is just trying to leapfrog our work and make it seem like it came from Redmond (Microsoft's headquarters)."

Internet privacy

Still flushed with their victory over Microsoft in the antitrust case, the association of attorneys general from the individual states met this past week in Seattle and vowed to make cybercrime and Internet privacy their next major cause.

Michigan's Attorney General Jennifer Granholm is getting a lot of attention for her crack-down on Internet Web sites that track the Net surfing habits of consumers and then secretly sell that data to third-party advertisers.

Granholm likens the practice to the "thought police," and says the use of Internet "cookies" must be more responsible. Cookies are tiny programs uploaded to the hard drive of a Web site visitor to keep track of that user's preferences when visiting the site. Based on those preferences, Net advertisers can then target specific messages to users through e-mail or customized banner advertising.

Two weeks ago, Granholm threatened legal action against four Web sites unless they took steps to inform visitors that their Web movements were being monitored. Since then, all four have agreed to new privacy protection policies, said Granholm. In Seattle, the national association of state attorneys general is said it was considering a coordinated effort against other Web sites that abuse the information they collect.

Fight for Covisint

Oakland County is worried that the huge auto industry Web site supplier exchange Covisint will be lured away to other Michigan locales or, worse yet, Silicon Valley.

The county is so worried that its PR man, Bob Dustman, is sending out e-mails to members of Oakland's Automation Alley conglomerate of high-tech firms looking for reasons that County Executive L. Brooks Patterson can use to convince the auto supply Web site to make its permanent home in the county.

Right now, Covisint is temporarily headquartered in South-

field. The stakes are high to keep the new company headquartered in Michigan. It is expected to be the world's largest e-commerce company, handling more than \$200 billion in annual purchasing while connecting automakers with thousands of suppliers.

Besides Silicon Valley, with its wired and high-tech job base, Oakland faces stiff competition from other Michigan locations. Ann Arbor's IT Zone near the U-M, Wayne County's Pinnacle Aeropark near the airport and Detroit's Campus Martius neighborhood near the new Compuware headquarters are all vying for Covisint. A spokesperson for Covisint says it is months away from making a decision.

Mike Wendland covers the Internet for NBC-TV Newschannel stations across the country. He is the author of a series of Internet books. You can reach him through the U-M at <http://lwu.wpi.com> and hear him Monday through Friday at 6:26 p.m. on NewsRadio 960, WWJ, and on Saturdays and Sundays from 4-6 p.m. on TalkRadio 1270, WXII.

Treatment

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son. It is not something that people do to themselves," she said.

"I describe it as a brain response to triggers. It can be caused by sleep changes, hormonal variations, diet, stress, smells, even visual triggers."

About 60 percent of migraine sufferers experience one or more attacks each month. Signs and symptoms of this disorder are worsened by activity, and untreated attacks may last from four to 72 hours. Migraines strike twice as many adult females as adult males. The disease begins in childhood, runs in families, and is most reported in boys prior to puberty.

"We believe that about one in five individuals have migraine due to a hereditary disposition, and we believe it starts way before kids are able to report it," said Dr. Aurora. "Children tend to report lots

■ 'We now understand more about migraines, and new drugs have been developed that target the mechanism of migraines. We've made a lot of strides in the treatment of migraines.'

Dr. Sheena Aurora
— Henry Ford Medical Center

more nausea, and we can see it in very little kids, sometimes as early as ages two or three. By the age of eight or nine, we identify these kids as the ones who tend to be a little more clumsy."

Migraine patients tend to be

more depressed and more anxious. If they smoke, have high blood pressure or take birth control pills, they are at greater risk for stroke. Dr. Aurora said these factors can be modified by a healthier lifestyle that includes exercise and stress reduction.

Study

Over the next few months, about 2,000 Henry Ford patients will receive an invitation to participate in a study on migraines called "the Healthy Lifestyles Migraine Disease Management Program." Patients must return a questionnaire to be enrolled in the program.

For more information or to participate in the migraine study, call (313) 928-9928.

This article, written by Julie Baumel, appeared in Henry Ford Hospital's "Monitor" magazine.

Family owned businesses sought for recognition

HONORS

Applications are being solicited for the sixth annual Franklin Family Business Award, which honors the success and contributions of Michigan's best family-owned businesses.

The award is sponsored by Franklin Bank, Plante & Moran, WWJ 950, The Family Business Council, Corpl Magazine, Safeguard Business Systems and Walsh College.

"Each year we look forward eagerly to this award and the recognition it brings to this vital business segment," said

Franklin Bank President Rebecca David.

Gold, silver and bronze awards will be presented in three separate categories, based on the number of employees: up to 50, 51-249, and over 250.

Judges will evaluate each company based upon the business' success, integration of a family and work environment, contributions made to their particular industry and the community, multi-generational involvement and innovative business practices.

Applications are available by contacting Sylvia Gerathy at (248) 358-9555, in all Franklin Bank branches, and via the

Internet at www.franklinbank.com.

The deadline for returning applications and the \$20 application fee for the 2000 Award is Aug. 1. Finalists will be announced Aug. 25. The Awards Banquet will be held at the Westin Hotel in Southfield on Thursday, Oct. 19. Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson will deliver the keynote speech.

Tickets to the banquet are \$100 and advance reservations are recommended. For more information, application forms or banquet reservations, call Sylvia Gerathy at (248) 358-9555.

ONLINE PARTNERSHIP

The Kroger Co. of Michigan said recently it will team up with Priceline WebHouse to let customers use the Internet to name their own price for groceries at the Company's 106 Kroger and Kessel stores throughout Michigan.

"We're committed to bringing the latest and greatest innova-

tions in the supermarket industry to our customers," said Marnette Perry, president of The Kroger Co. of Michigan. "We

replaced by teaming up with the WebHouse Club to bring these savings home," she remarked.

Read the HomeTown Life section Thursdays

Have you planned your garage sale yet?

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So, grab a pencil and make a list of all the things you want to sell.

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*Some restrictions apply. Contest dates 4-2-00-9-28-00

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