

There is an old saying that the definition of insanity is, "Doing the same thing over and over again expecting the outcome to change"

I think of this saying everytime I hear about music industry efforts to impact piracy.

Insanity is thinking that kids with more time than money will stop finding ways to get music for free. Even if the industry found the end all be all DRM solution that stops 100 pct of duplication, kids will sit in front of their radios with recording capability or redirect digital music from any source to their hard drives and then spend the time to pick out the music they like and burn it.

Insanity is thinking that piracy is the reason music sales are down and then focusing most of your business on selling music to the exact demographic that has the most time to spend on finding free music and most energy to spend on cracking whatever protections you introduce.

Insanity is ignoring year after year, the demographics with more money than time. Those who aren't willing, or don't have the time to troll through the net to figure out which network has the most music to download, searching for songs, picking out which peers to try to download from and then hoping it all worked out right. Those who would prefer to just buy music in the easiest way possible so they can get on with enjoying their music and their lives. Isn't that why we buy bottled water? It's easy and convenient?

Hire someone from Starbucks who understands selling music to demographics who are happy to buy the music they want in a setting they enjoy.

Insanity is repeatedly telling everyone that piracy stops the creative process by preventing artists from making a living and then time and time again, going out and giving advances to bands. Hello McFly, every start up band thinks the money is in getting the advance of a record label deal, not from selling music. They are just as motivated as ever to make music.

Insanity is continuously trying over and over again to "fix" the CD ripping problem hoping to find DRM software that makes the process more difficult and deters the "good people" from creating illegal copies, while completely ignoring DVDs as a solution. A DVD only allows you to use its increased storage capacity to add more value through more music, games, video, pictures, software, whatever, at about the same cost of a CD, while being far more of a pain to rip than any DRM/CD combination the industry has ever come up with. Dual release on DVDs and CDs and over time elimination of CDs will have far more impact than any DRM on CD solution.

Insanity is watching the digital download services develop customer relationships with music buyer after music buyer, while year after year the labels have none. When are you going to learn that it's not only about hitting the numbers for Wall Street every quarter but investing in your customer base. iTunes, Amazon, Netflix, CinemaNow and others have my credit card on file and can find me and sell me something in seconds. Create your own services and sell the music at a deep discount to iTunes and the others. Make it easy to buy, cheap to own. The short term pain will be well worth the long term gain

The music industry has a very unique opportunity to really re-establish itself as a growth industry. It's not like they don't know all of the above. For whatever reason, they just love to do the same things over and over... Which to me is just insane