

If only I was taller. If only I was thinner. If only I was richer.

If only the RIAA could sue the P2P networks, music piracy would be reduced and artists of the world would cheer. The chorus of music from the increased creativity (That is what the RIAA has promised isn't it ?) unleashed by the P2P ceiling placed over every keyboard and cymbal across the world would cause music sales to skyrocket.

Or will they?

Well Grokster vs MGM has apparently removed the "if only" lid from the RIAA. They now are going after LimeWire, Bearshare, MX and their peers (sorry, had to do it) for as they wrote in their cease and desist notice, "We demand that you immediately cease-and-desist from enabling and inducing the infringement of RIAA member sound recordings." Now personally, I think the inducement was to get unknowing users to download spyware so they could profit. But that's me.

More importantly, it starts to put the RIAA in put up or shut up territory.

I hope the RIAA wins this case. I hope they shut them down. I have no more love for these guys than I do Grokster. What I do have love for is protecting individuals rights to use the music they own as they see fit. For making it easy to do backups and protecting our purchases. For protecting the ability of technologists to be creative and invent new and amazing things without having to invest more in legal fees than their ideas.

Bearshare, MX, Limewire and 4 others have become the sacrificial lambs.

Will their consumption satisfy the RIAA?

Will their destruction reduce the amount of P2P file sharing? We will find out.

Will that satisfy the RIAA, or will it just embolden them? Maybe it will give them confidence to monitor every high school software programming class. Who knows how far they will take it.

The good news, it helps remove the excuses. No more "if only". It will put them on a shaky fence between protecting their copyrights and technology terrorists. This gets us closer to seeing who they really are and what they really are trying to accomplish.