

Napster tops half-million subscribers

January 18 2006

Music-download pioneer Napster reports it has passed the 500,000 subscriber mark as it continues to re-establish itself after a landmark court battle.

The company says its subscriber base more than doubled last year thanks in large part to a marketing drive on U.S. college campuses that bolstered that key market to more than 50,000 subscribers for "premium" service.

The rewards of the increased business will be detailed next month when third-quarter earnings are reported, the company said Wednesday.

Napster had been seen by many analysts as headed for the scrap heap of history after losing a legal challenge from the recording industry over file-sharing and copyright violations. The Los Angeles-based company is now a subscription-based enterprise that allows legal downloads to computers and portable digital players.

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Citation: Napster tops half-million subscribers (2006, January 18) retrieved 1 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2006-01-napster-tops-half-million-subscribers.html>

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