

US woman to pay 1.92 mln dlrs in music piracy case

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File picture shows demonstrators in front of the US Supreme Court in Washington, DC during a hearing on the legality of file-sharing networks. A US jury Thursday ordered a 32-year-old woman to pay 1.92 million dollars in damages for illegally downloading 24 songs in a high-profile digital piracy case

A US jury has ordered a 32-year-old woman to pay nearly two million dollars in damages for illegally downloading 24 songs over the Internet in a high-profile digital piracy case.

Jammie Thomas-Rasset, a single mother of four from the Minnesota town of Brainerd, was found liable of violating music copyrights for using the Kazaa peer-to-peer file-sharing network to download the songs.

The jury took just under five hours on Thursday to reach its verdict.

It ordered Thomas-Rasset to pay 1.92 million dollars -- or 80,000 dollars per song -- to six record companies: Capitol Records, [Sony BMG](#) Music, Arista Records, Interscope Records, Warner Bros. Records and UMG Recordings.

In his closing arguments on Thursday, attorney Timothy Reynolds said Thomas-Rasset had made copyrighted music available to "millions on the Internet" through Kazaa.

"She infringed my clients' copyrights and then she tried to cover it up," Reynolds said.

Thomas-Rasset said that her former husband or her children may have downloaded the music but her arguments apparently did not sway the jury.

Thomas-Rasset had been convicted previously, in October 2007, and ordered to pay 220,000 dollars in damages but the judge who presided over that trial threw out the verdict calling it "wholly disproportionate" and "oppressive."

The case was filed by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA), which has brought suit against thousands of people for illegally downloading and sharing music, with most agreeing to settlements of between 3,000 and 5,000 dollars.

Thomas-Rasset was the first among those being sued to refuse a settlement, however, and instead took the case to court. Her case is the only one among the thousands filed to have actually gone to trial.

In December, the RIAA said it will stop suing people who download music illegally and focus instead on getting Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to take action.

The move away from litigation represented a major shift in strategy for the music industry group, which had filed lawsuits against some 35,000 people for online [music](#) piracy since 2003.

More than six months later, however, no ISPs have publicly signed on to the program.

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