

Pioneers of MP3 unveil new chapter in digital music

January 26 2010, by Audrey Stuart



People visit the music world's largest annual trade fair, MIDEM, on January 24 at the Palais des Festivals, in Cannes, southeastern France. Pioneers in the development of the first MP3 players this week unveiled ground-breaking technology aimed at offering new content to music lovers during the MIDEM music industry trade fair.

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The new MP3 file format, called MusicDNA, offers a wide range of additional content to music lovers about favourite artists and bands -- including lyrics, videos, tour dates and social networks such as Twitter -- viewable alongside tracks.

BACH Technology, the company behind MusicDNA, is headed up by Dagfinn Bach, a leading pioneer of digital music who helped develop the first MP3 player.

"Twenty years on from the initial development of the MP3, it is time for digital audio to once again evolve. Just as vinyl gave way to the CD and the CD to MP3, it is time for the [MP3](#) to pass the baton on to MusicDNA," the BACH Technology CEO told journalists at MIDEM, which closes its doors Wednesday.

MusicDNA will be available on the company's website and is fully compatible on Apple's iconic iPods as well as all [MP3 players](#), the company stressed.

Cost of the file will be up to the retailer but BACH said it expects it to be around the same cost as current MP3s.

Experts here this week noted that the new service will compete with Apple iTunes LP service, which offers users an opportunity to buy additional multimedia elements and content.

The BACH format, however, aims to provide users with more information than on iTunes and to automatically update data on labels, bands or retailers each time the player is connected to the Internet.

MusicDNA will also only automatically update legitimately purchased tracks and anyone downloading the music file illegally will not have their information updated.

Record labels such as Britain's influential independent label, Beggars Group, and Tommy Boy Entertainment, have already signed up.

Other partners on board for the initial launch early this year include

Delta Records in the United States and Italy's Amiata Records.

Some digital service providers and retailers, including China's 2RG, which operates China's largest online independent music store, Sweden's InProdicon and Britain's People's [Music](#) Store are also offering support.

None of the world's leading record labels, however, have signed up to date though a company spokesman told AFP that it is currently in talks with a large number of other labels, including a number of major labels.

"We are getting very good feedback and the fact that we are looking to include everyone in this, and not competing against them helps," BACH chief executive Stefan Kohlmeyer, whose company is based in Norway, Germany and China, told journalists.

Rollout is to be staggered over 2010 with a full commercial launch expected in mid-2010.

According to the company, the MusicDNA player will be available free from the MusicDNA website.

Response to the announcement was immense, with some 30,000 people trying to access the website in one day.

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