

Music piracy is the illegal copying, sharing, selling or transmission of music. Pirated music can be transmitted, shared or sold physically or online. Music piracy affects songwriters and recording artists. It stifles careers of new and up-and-coming songwriters, artists and bands. Music piracy threatens the livelihood of thousands of people working in the music industry, from authors/composers, record companies, studio producers, sound engineers, and music retailers.

The majority of people who copy music and/or share it physically or online seem not to know, or are unconcerned, that they are violating copyright laws, and that their actions affect the livelihoods of the people involved in the composition/authorship, recording and production of the musical works and the sound recordings.

Millions of people who would never dream of shoplifting a book, album, or DVD, seem to have no problems whatsoever about downloading and copying music or movies. This is mainly because the illegal downloading, copying and sharing of intellectual property files is, unlike stealing a book or CD, **perceived as a victimless crime**. The fact that the copyright owner does not know that their property has been illegally downloaded, copied, shared or sold, **makes people believe that the copyright owner has not lost anything since nothing tangible was physically taken from the copyright owner**. This is mainly due to the fact that the concept of intellectual property is not well understood. It is abstract and difficult to comprehend when compared to the concept of physical property. When most consumers purchase a book or CD, their gut perception is of having purchased a physical item. They don't think about the intellectual content of the physical item they have purchased.

It is for this reason that POSA and SAMRO have decided to educate the South African public about the dangers of music piracy and how it affects composers and recording artists. POSA and SAMRO have produced booklets to educate different sectors of the society and to appeal to the public to fight against music piracy.

Please download (legally and for free) and read these booklets and join us in the fight against music piracy.