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Microsoft iPod Killer in the Works?

Bring it on...

"I can confirm reports that Microsoft has been building potential iPod competitors in-house, and I've discussed this product with various people at the software giant since last summer. However, as we've discussed, it's not clear that Microsoft should release such a device. To date, most of the iPod competitors from Microsoft's partners have been lackluster, and certainly none of them match the coolness factor of Apple's offerings. But here's the problem: If Microsoft ships a product that is less interesting than the iPod, the company has effectively hammered the last nail into the coffin of its Windows Media technologies and erased any chance that its formats will succeed in the future. In other words, the Microsoft iPod competitor would have to be perfect. To date, Microsoft has been shopping its work around to partners, in a bid to give them ideas about how they might better compete, but it hasn't yet decided to get in the game. My advice is to hold off," Paul Thurrott writes for WinInfo. And sound advice it is, indeed, Mr. Thurrott. We've all heard about and seen the 'iPod Killers' before, and now we listen to the sound of crickets as the iPod sits upon the hill. Microsoft would indeed have to come out with the perfect product to have any chance at all. For such a move, would only serve to drive the current manufacturers away from the WMA format and the DRM. The success of the iPod is not the iPod's credit alone, it is the iPod - iTunes - iTunes Music Store system that is the real winner. The player alone just won't cut it. You also need the content and the link to it. Windows Media Player? That will be a fun ride. If Microsoft does make a bad move and decides to enter this game, and fails, this will be the last fight. If the iPod kills Microsoft's player, what other company is going to get in the game? If Microsoft, in all its glory can't do it, do any of those other little companies stand any chance whatsoever? The only good move is not to play.