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Nick Farrell (The Inquirer) noted that "students told the RIAA to go forth and multiply Some father, maybe

[Napster, Students, RIAA. What's Next, The Pope?](#)

Turmoils, free music and all sorts of settlements

Yes, it's one of those days when RIAA and its partners (our side or their side, no matter) simply offer so much info than it's really a shame not to write about such a thing (unless we -editors- would all go for a "radio silence" targeting RIAA). This editorial brings closer and mixes in three of the day's topics, strongly relating to each other and converging to some relate no one can predict. First of all, Napster: the (now) legendary P2P service which withstood monster lawsuits and finally went law-abiding. Teaming up with AT&T, it will grant free access (and download, that is) to more than three million songs via mobile services. Leaving aside the eligibility conditions for this service ([you can read all here](#)), what interests me most is the 3,000,000+ songs. Now, what would RIAA think about such a nasty job? I guess the mere association between words like „free” and „music” gives them rashes... This comes in quite nice as a quick and brief analysis of the impact RIAA letters have in the academic environment shows that the con hasn't worked as expected. As a matter of fact, what was indeed expected has somehow happened: about three quarters from the US students don't give a flying f*** on RIAA nor have they been very scared by the pile of letters. The reason is rather simple: they are starting to cease fearing of allegations made without proper support. Since all RIAA does is claim for settlements so that they won't go to trial and do this without properly offering strong evidence beyond any doubt, this is called blackmailing. In the case of the universities, RIAA had it: since the admins won't keep track of dynamic IPs longer than one month, there go RIAA's proof. And what's even funnier is the fact that unless a subpoena is ruled for the universities, RIAA can't do s***. So they should be glad some blackmailing worked and they've made some serious money at the cost of just one lousy letter. It looks like RIAA is turning towards really helpless people and tries to scare them as much as possible. One really heartwarming thing is that lawyers decide to defend or at least counsel these helpless people against the wave of rude things coming down. It also looks that RIAA is on a rather tricky path and I won't be at all surprised to read one day that they've been severely defeated in a resounding lawsuit and even asked for immense damage... I guess such an event is on the way... funny they seem not to see it coming... And as we have gotten to the "settlements" chapter again – RIAA don't look like being too friendly among themselves either. The long lawsuit between EMI and Bertelsmann has finally gotten to an end! After EMI sued Bertelsmann AG for investing in Napster (even if the copyright infringement was somehow too difficult to prove since the German conglomerate invested in Napster before its use was ruled as illegal) the suit went on and on and finally it has ended for good with some \$61.22 M. Again, it would be quite interesting to see what has Sony to say about this payment since Bertelsmann is currently in a joint with Sony in the body of the Sony/BMG association... As you can see, there is a lot of stirring in the music business, all due to some people who think they could make music sharing disappear for good; and even more, they have seen that being stubborn in what they do they can scare some other people into paying them big time. Well, the students tacitly "sent RIAA for self-sex", university internet admins laughed and closed the door in their fat noses, lawyers are sharpening blades for the battles to come, some other entities formerly hunted down by RIAA are paying it back completely legally with free music: I won't go that far as to say the end is nigh but nevertheless I can't help noticing the downward spiral RIAA seems to have saddled up lately...