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Spanish 'iPod Tax' Approved

Special anti-piracy tax kicks in first thing next month

Starting July 1st, Spain residents looking to acquire an iPod (or other media players) will be forced to pay a special anti-piracy tax because of the gadgets' abilities to record, copy or store audio and video files. Billboard.biz is [reporting](#) that the "digital canon" tax has arrived 18 months after its scheduled date. The list was published "without warning in the Official State Bulletin (BOE) on June 19," the piece reads, also adding that a few minor changes occurred to the initial "digital canon" list approved by the industry and culture ministries and published in January. One of the changes says that owners of a mobile phone capable of MP3 playback, such as Apple's iPhone, will be subject to a €1.10 tax (\$1.7). The original tax was €1.50 (equivalent to \$2.35). The tax, although meant to compensate artists for their losses due to piracy, is highly controversial. Internet users and gadget manufacturers dismiss the argument saying many consumers don't use their devices for pirating media. It depends on what they mean by many. Their great majority, half of them, or less? Say a billion folks use these gadgets. Say a quarter of them purchase their media and don't even think of pirating it. A quarter of a million folks legally using their iPods is a lot. However, 750,000 folks pirating music is quite enough reason to issue a tax such as this. So what do you do? Internet User (AI) president Victor Domingo claims the "digital canon" will accumulate €225 million (\$350 million) in the first year, by his calculations. The man asks: "who will monitor SGAE and other collecting societies such as Egeda (audiovisual) and Cedro (publishers)? This money goes straight into their accounts." This is also true, so again, what does one do in a situation like this? Pedro Farré, SGAE authors' rights director, said: "We are satisfied that this ministerial order has been approved after so much delay, and we now hope the manufacturers will pay the canon. Technically, the manufacturers pay the canon - whether they pass the cost on to the public is their decision." According to the list of digital taxes, iPods may be priced at €3.15 over their original price. Need we even ask ourselves what the manufacturers are going to do...?