

Online tracker sniffs out a profit

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Music tracking company TuneSat is to launch an ingenious system to help record labels, publishers and performers profit from their songs being played online.

The US company's Content Tracker uses music-recognition technology to build a profile of what music is being used, processing information from the audio feeds of more than 200,000 websites which use music in any form, including video and audio.

And, as well as helping to accurately report on where a company's songs are being used online, TuneSat says its system will help to crack down on the number of unauthorised uses of music on the internet.

Established last year by TuneSat founders and COOs Chris Woods and Scott Schreer, TuneSat's system was initially pitched to American TV networks as a way to automate their cue sheet submission process.

However, as the company expanded it reached out to the music industry, signing up major publishers Sony/ATV and Universal, as well as a number of indies, including Boosey & Hawkes.

Woods says the Tracker, which will be rolled out at the beginning of the fourth quarter, uses an automatic process to monitor websites, which recognises clips of music which are at least three seconds in length.

He adds the system will allow content owners to know where, when and how their content is used, and explains, "It's like Shazam on steroids – it uses an audio tracking system that can pick up a piece of music, even if there are people talking over it."

"Currently, due to the lack of transparency and accountability with rights organisations, content owners have no way to accurately account for the use of their catalogue online and as a result copyright infringement is rampant and there is no way to effectively prevent or monetise these unauthorised uses," he continues, explaining the system will be used by the music industry to establish new lines of revenue and increase existing revenue streams.

Boosey & Hawkes Production Music began test-driving TuneSat in April this year and general manager Alex Black says the Content Tracker will allow the company to build a better picture of how their music is being used online. "It will give us the opportunity to reference the statements we receive from PRS against the TuneSat's results and then question it if needs be," he adds.

Black notes that the system could also be used to help the enforcement of online licensing, allowing collection societies such as PRS to ensure that websites have licensed their music in the correct and proper manner.