

UGA Music Business
Undesirable Lyric Website List
(Update)
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** A preliminary version of this report was released Aug 28th. I since adjusted my methodology and expanded pool of data.*

There has been much study of music and movie infringing websites over the last decade. However, the unlicensed lyric sites have been largely overlooked. There are several reasons:

- 1) The public doesn't understand that this is a type of copyright infringement.
- 2) The many legal actions directed at these sites have generated little press coverage.
- 3) It has always been assumed that there is not much money at stake. At the dawn of the Internet age, the analog equivalent of lyric and "tab" websites was in the form of "sheet music". This had become a very small business.

However, there is anecdotal evidence that these lyric websites generate huge web traffic and may involve more money than one might think. For example, we have found that the fully licensed www.azlyrics.com frequently ranks in the Top 500 websites in the U.S. Based on the popularity of lyric searches, it is possible that unlike the sound recording business, the lyric business may be *more* valuable in the Internet age.

Indeed, the vast majority of these websites seem to have well-established monetization schemes based on advertising. Many of the sites appear to have accounts with major online advertising exchanges and prominently feature advertising from major brands. There are even companies that appear to specialize in matching specific lyrics to key demographics for advertisers. Further, music publishing and technology companies have worked together to offer easy and inexpensive licenses through www.lyricfind.com and www.musixmatch.com.

The industry is robust and flourishing. Just like their music streaming and music download counterparts, licensed lyric sites compete with many unlicensed sites that are not burdened with royalties to songwriters and publishers.

The Lyric Website Undesirability Index And List

Our use of the term “undesirability index” is inspired by Google’s UK Policy Manager Theo Bertrand, who used the term during a recent debate in London. We use the term “undesirable “ because these sites do not appear to be licensed. We cannot absolutely conclude, from the outside looking in, that these sites do not have licenses. However, we could not locate the sites in the www.lyricsseal.com database and they do not appear to have otherwise been flagged as licensed based on our exhaustive web search. This leads us to conclude these sites are most likely unlicensed. It is entirely possible that some of these sites are licensed and we have not been able to locate those responsible for their licensing. If you feel your site has been mistakenly included in this list, please contact us at uga_undesirable_list@outlook.com. We will confirm your licenses and will be glad to remove your site from the list if you in fact are licensed.

Methodology

The methodology is evolving. I’m open to suggestions and am particularly interested in developing methodology that can be used across a variety of copyright categories, not just lyrics. Currently, this is the methodology used to compile this list of websites:

- A. Three songs are selected at random.
 - a. Two of the songs are on Billboard’s Hot 100 current top 10.
 - b. One track is a randomly selected “oldie”. This track must be a top 5, Hot 100 hit from at least 20 years ago.
- B. Two search phrases are created for each track.
 - a. “<Song Title>< Artist>”.
 - b. “<popular snippet of lyric> words”. The search engine auto-fill suggestions determine the most popular snippet of song lyric.
- C. Browser (history, cookies, etc.) is cleaned prior to searches.
- D. The above searches are performed for each song on Google, Bing, and Yahoo.
- E. The top 200 search results for each search are imported into an Excel spreadsheet using a specialized plugin for Firefox.
- F. Each search result is assigned a value. A number one search result is assigned a value of 1. A number two search result is assigned a value of 0.995. A number n search result is assigned a value of $1-(n-1)*.005$.
- G. Scores are tallied for each root domain.

- H. These scores are averaged together with scores from the two preceding studies. (Studies approximately every 60 days creating 180 day rolling window).
- I. Domains are sorted from highest score to lowest score.
- J. “False positives” are eliminated, such as:
 - a. Artist/Label/Publicist websites.
 - b. Site not substantially dedicated to lyrics, unless it had a
 - i. Subdomain (e.g. “lyrics.website.com”)
 - ii. Featured homepage tab to lyrics
 - c. Music reviews, magazines or blogs that reproduced portions of lyrics.
 - d. “Bridge” pages using hidden, popular search phrases to draw traffic (although these may later be included on a separate list if they target lyric searches).
 - e. Personal blogs and websites containing one of the targeted songs lyrics.
- K. Websites that appear to be licensed are eliminated.
- L. The top 50 remaining sites are selected and posted to the list.

Top 50 Undesirable Lyric Websites Oct 22nd 2013

Rank	Website	final score
1	www.rapgenius.com	12.77
2	www.lyricsmania.com	10.4925
3	www.lyricstranslate.com	8.41
4	www.stlyrics.com	6.76125
5	www.lyricsreg.com	6.71375
6	www.lyricstime.com	6.05125
7	www.lyrster.com	5.675
8	www.paroles-musique.com	5.18
9	www.kovideo.net	5.0975
10	www.songonlyrics.com	4.86625
11	www.index-of-mp3s.com	4.805
12	www.lyricstranslations.com	4.79
13	www.karaoke-lyrics.net	4.665
14	www.romantic-lyrics.com	4.385
15	www.maxilyrics.com	4.34375
16	www.poemhunter.com	4.2375
17	www.metal-head.org	4.225
18	www.songteksten.nl	4.21

19	www.lyricsres.com	4.18
20	www.lyricsdepot.com	4.09125
21	www.songtextemania.com	3.95
22	www.lyricsboy.com	3.81
23	www.elyricsworld.com	3.6975
24	www.e-chords.com	3.69
25	www.popdust.com	3.475
26	www.hotnewsonglyrics.co	3.41875
27	www.anysonglyrics.com	3.405
28	www.guitaretab.com	3.405
29	www.allthelyrics.com	3.375
30	www.aldielyrics.com	3.3475
31	www.musicloversgroup.com	3.34
32	www.karafun.com	3.225
33	www.lyrics.astraweb.com	3.18375
34	www.videokeman.com	3.1575
35	www.lybio.net	2.935
36	www.urbanlyrics.com	2.8725
37	www.asklyrics.com	2.8425
38	www.bmusiclyrics.com	2.8275
39	www.nomorelyrics.net	2.7975
40	www.plyrics.com	2.7825
41	www.hitslyrics.com	2.765
42	www.vagalume.com.br	2.665
43	www.lyricsforsong.net	2.66375
44	www.seeklyrics.com	2.61
45	www.lettras.mus.br	2.565
46	www.lyricspinas.com	2.52
47	www.parolesmania.com	2.515
48	www.cowboylyrics.com	2.4825
49	www.lyricsmansion.com	2.36875
50	www.digitaldreamdoor.com	2.35125