

UGA Music Business
Undesirable Lyric Website List
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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) There have been few publicized lawsuits directed at these websites and no law enforcement actions of which I am aware.
- 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, resulting in 18 total sets of search results (2x3x3).
- 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. Domains are sorted from highest score to lowest score.
- I. “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.
- J. Websites that appear to be licensed are eliminated.
- K. The top 50 remaining sites are selected and posted to the list.

Top 50 Undesirable Lyric Websites

Rank	Website	Final score	Major brands
1	www.songlyrics.com	7.445	yes
2	www.lyricsmania.com	6.18	yes
3	www.stlyrics.com	6.055	yes
4	www.lyricsreg.com	4.485	yes
5	www.lyricstime.com	4.435	yes
6	www.lyricsdepot.com	4.395	yes
7	www.elyricsworld.com	4.33	yes
8	www.songonlyrics.com	4.285	yes
9	www.lyricstranslate.com	4.13	yes
10	www.karaoke-lyrics.net	3.89	yes
11	www.lyrics.astraweb.com	3.325	yes
12	www.kovideo.net	3.13	yes
13	www.oldielyrics.com	2.93	yes
14	www.poemhunter.com	2.825	yes
15	www.maxilyrics.com	2.675	no
16	www.lyricsboy.com	2.54	yes
17	www.anysonglyrics.com	2.27	yes
18	www.lyricsmansion.com	2.185	yes
19	www.absolutelyrics.com	2.11	yes
20	www.videokeman.com	2.105	no
21	www.digitaldreamdoor.com	2.055	yes
22	www.musicloversgroup.com	1.94	no
23	www.urbanlyrics.com	1.915	yes

24	www.asklyrics.com	1.895	yes
25	www.bmusiclyrics.com	1.885	yes
26	www.nomorelyrics.net	1.865	yes
27	www.plyrics.com	1.855	yes
28	www.lyricsforsong.net	1.805	yes
29	www.hotnewsonglyrics.co	1.795	yes
30	www.hitslyrics.com	1.73	yes
31	www.sasslantis.ee	1.705	yes
32	www.lyricspinas.com	1.68	no
33	www.cowboylyrics.com	1.655	yes
34	www.guitaretab.com	1.62	yes
35	www.songtextemania.com	1.54	yes
36	www.lyrics59.com	1.5	yes
37	www.golyr.de	1.495	yes
38	www.lyricsera.com	1.49	yes
39	www.justsomyrics.com	1.47	yes
40	www.allthelyrics.com	1.44	yes
41	www.6lyrics.com	1.365	yes
42	www.lyricsfeast.com	1.33	no
43	www.hiplayrics.com	1.32	yes
44	www.lyricsprint.com	1.265	yes
45	www.paroles-musique.com	1.25	yes
46	www.muzikum.eu	1.235	no
47	www.alivelyrics.com	1.13	yes
48	www.lyrster.com	1.13	yes
49	www.guitarparty.com	1.115	yes
50	www.azchords.com	1.095	yes

** songmeanings.NET mistakenly included in the original list due to a typo. The website was recorded as songmeanings.COM when performing the licensing check with lyricsseal.com. As a result it showed as unlicensed.

