

Music labels file online piracy lawsuits in UK

By *srlinuxx*

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Record companies in Britain are filing their first ever lawsuits against five people accused of illicitly sharing music online, after settling out of court with dozens of others.

The lawsuits come as the global music industry fights to control online piracy by suing users of illicit file-trading networks, while also promoting legal music services like Apple's iTunes Music Store.

"Music fans are increasingly tuning into legal download sites for the choice, value and convenience they offer," said Peter Jamieson, chairman of the British Phonographic Industry trade group.

"But we cannot let illegal filesharers off the hook. They are undermining the legal services, they are damaging music and they are breaking the law." More than 60 BPI lawsuits have already been settled, with users paying up to 6,500 pounds each in compensation. The BPI first contacted the users in April.

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