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TimeTrax's TraxCatcher

Posted Jan 6th 2006 9:32AM by [Ryan Block](#)

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As reported by Engadget special correspondent JD Lasica.

Hang on to your briefs, Hollywood. At the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas today, [TimeTrax](#) announced the TraxCatcher, a device that lets you record over-the-air FM radio, capture songs as MP3s, and create a free music library. A base station/receiver that tunes in FM stations serves as a dock to a stick-thin MP3 player, which can capture individual songs through an algorithm technology developed by a Swedish research firm named, not coincidentally, [PopCatcher](#).

CEO Elliott Frutkin said the TraxCatcher would be released toward the end of the

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March. He expects the company to release three or four models, ranging from a basic \$99 unit (pictured) to a high-end unit. Users would be able to set varying bitrates for the 512-megabyte FM tuner in the MP3 player.

"We wanted to take all the complication out of this," Frutkin said. "You just tune to an FM station, hit record, walk away, and you have a music library of 50 songs." Other devices like Griffin Technology's RadioShark let you record FM stations based on chunks of time, but Frutkin said this is the first technology that breaks down over-the-air audio recordings into individual MP3s.

"This is the RIAA's worst nightmare," Frutkin said. "We fully expect a battle royale in Washington over this. The RIAA is going to have to shut down the technology or sit down across the conference table from us and try to make this work for everyone. We've stepped over the threshold, and I'm frankly nervous about what the financial repercussions will be."

Frutkin said the company is developing a prototype that would be compatible with the Apple iPod, allowing users to record FM radio onto their iPods. TimeTrax currently makes software and technology that can record from XM and Sirius satellite radio broadcasts.

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