

Microsoft and MTV Networks Unveil New Windows Media Player 11 and Preview URGE, a New Digital Music Service

Seamless integration of Windows Media Player 11 and URGE delivers complete music experience and redefines music discovery for fans.

LAS VEGAS, Jan. 4 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Microsoft Corp. (Nasdaq: [MSFT](#) - [News](#)) and MTV Networks, a division of Viacom Inc., today unveiled the new Windows Media® Player 11 and offered an early look at the URGE digital music service during the kickoff keynote address for the 2006 International Consumer Electronics Show (CES). Microsoft Chairman and Chief Software Architect Bill Gates was joined onstage by MTV Networks' Music Group President Van Toffler and music superstar Justin Timberlake to preview the seamless integration of Microsoft® Windows Media Player 11 and MTV Networks' URGE, which is designed to bring the emotional connection of music to the forefront of the digital entertainment experience.

Gates and Toffler highlighted the fresh, streamlined design for Windows Media Player 11 with optimized device support and incredibly fast search capabilities that provide consumers with instant access to the entire URGE catalog of more than 2 million songs. Set to debut this year, URGE will offer a deep well of programming and editorial to guide the consumer's digital music experience, including exclusive content from MTV Networks' MTV, VH1 and CMT brands.

"Microsoft and MTV Networks have combined their strengths to dramatically redefine how Windows® users discover and enjoy music," Gates said. "The result is a seamless melding of software and entertainment expertise that makes it easy for people to discover new music and listen to old favorites."

"Our audience has come to expect us to deliver the world's best music programming on MTV, VH1 and CMT," Toffler said. "URGE will be a major new way for artists across all genres -- from alt-country to zydeco -- to connect with their fans and find new audiences through multiplatform exposure from MTV Networks and on one of the world's most popular digital media players, Windows Media Player."

The Best All-in-One Media Player From Microsoft

As their digital music collections continue to grow, consumers increasingly need software to help them find and organize their music. Windows Media Player 11 addresses this head-on with core advancements that include a simplified user experience and unprecedented performance. Windows Media Player 11 makes it easy to manage all media through innovative design improvements from Windows Vista(TM), including visual navigation of entire media libraries, and simplified, high-performance device synchronization. Additional performance enhancements let consumers easily scroll through and access music faster than any other media player, whether the library contains 50 or 50,000 tracks. The powerful Windows Media Player 11 wordwheel search brings an entire catalog of music to consumers' fingertips, providing lightning-fast search results that instantly narrow with each keystroke. Windows Media Player 11 with URGE will be available in Windows Vista, and is also scheduled to be available for Windows XP in the first half of 2006.

Extensive Entertainment Programming From MTV Networks

MTV Networks' URGE will be the first and only digital music service designed by music veterans for music fans. Whether consumers want to take a few minutes to purchase a specific song or

spend hours immersed in the service's extensive music programming, URGE will provide an experience equally enjoyable for all audiences, from intense fans to aficionados. With robust search capabilities, extensive music charts, and countless programmed playlists, URGE will offer constantly updated music feature stories, exclusive interviews, music videos, and other multimedia editorial across all music genres and styles that provide context and direction for music lovers. URGE will be a one-stop digital music experience for consumers to hear, discover, purchase and enjoy music.

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With URGE, music fans will get a choice in how they want to consume digital music to best fit their lifestyle, whether through permanent a la carte download purchases, music subscriptions or fully portable subscriptions. URGE also will feature one of the most robust radio offerings available on the Internet, with more than 100 free and premium stations, all programmed by passionate music professionals. **URGE will incorporate MusicNet's library of more than 2 million tracks, the largest available music library in the industry today. The library includes licensed content from all of the major record labels and thousands of independents. MusicNet is the world's leading business-to-business digital music service provider.**

URGE will be promoted across a broad range of MTV Networks platforms, including the MTV, MTV2, mtvU, MTV Hits, MTV Jams, VH1, VH1 Classic, VH1 Soul and CMT channels, as well as being fully integrated throughout MTV Networks Web sites MTV.com, VH1.com, CMT.com and the new URGE.com. Promotion for URGE will be woven throughout MTV Networks' on-air and online programming, communicating the consumer benefits and explaining the how-to's of digital music, while providing an easy and intuitive way for audiences to extend their MTV, VH1 and CMT music experiences.

Seamless Integration Between Music Service and Media Player

Microsoft and MTV Networks have collaborated to enhance the URGE experience with innovations that make using a digital music service as straightforward as accessing a user's local library. Consumers will enjoy exceptionally fast access to URGE content with enhanced wordwheel search capabilities. With integrated hard-drive and music service browsing, consumers will see all tracks related to their searches, including those from the massive URGE catalog but not stored on their PC. In addition, with drag-and-drop playlist creation, consumers can simply move individual songs or entire stacks of albums into the URGE playlist pane for syncing to a device or burning to a CD. More than 100 portable devices and home network media devices compatible with Windows Media, including the Xbox 360(TM) video game system, will work with URGE.

Additional URGE features, functionality, and related partnerships will be announced in coming months as URGE is introduced with Windows Media Player 11.

About MTV Networks

MTV Networks, a unit of Viacom International Inc. (NYSE: [VIA](#) - [News](#), [VIA.B](#) - [News](#)), is one of the world's leading creators of programming and content across all media platforms. MTV Networks, with 100 channels worldwide, owns and operates the following television programming services -- MTV: MUSIC TELEVISION, MTV2, VH1, mtvU, NICKELODEON, NICK at NITE, COMEDY CENTRAL, TV LAND, SPIKE TV, CMT, NOGGIN, LOGO, MTVN INTERNATIONAL and THE DIGITAL SUITE FROM MTV NETWORKS, a package of 13 digital services, all of these networks are trademarks of MTV Networks. MTV Networks connects with its audiences through its robust consumer products businesses and its more than 80 interactive properties worldwide, including online, broadband, wireless and interactive television services and also has licensing

agreements, joint ventures, and syndication deals whereby all of its programming services can be seen worldwide.

About Microsoft

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