Music labels sue Verizon for more than $2.6 billion



Powerful record labels, including UMG Recordings, Warner Music, and Sony Music, filed a lawsuit Friday accusing Verizon of intentionally ignoring its customers' copyright violations for profit, reports *Music Business Worldwide*.

The plaintiffs say they are entitled to as much as $150,000 per violation under the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA), which could add up to as much as $2.6 billion.

The lawsuit includes a list of 17,335 tracks from artists or bands, including Elvis Presley, Matchbox Twenty, Goo Goo Dolls, and Brandy. (Here's the list if you'd like to dive further in — it starts with Sam Cooke and ends with Wiz Khalifa.) The labels say they've sent "nearly 350,000 infringement notices" to Verizon since 2020, alleging that the company ignored people repeatedly cited for illegally sharing files because they pay more for faster, better internet service.

> *Verizon's failure to take meaningful action against its infringing subscribers drew subscribers engaging in Internet piracy to purchase Verizon's services, so that those subscribers could infringe Plaintiffs' (and others') copyrights and avoid obtaining that copyrighted content through legitimate channels. Infringing subscribers were drawn to Verizon's services both because of its lax policies concerning copyright infringement and faster internet speeds that facilitated the use of P2P protocols for those willing to pay more. Verizon fostered a safe haven for infringement in light of its lax policies and thus encouraged its subscribers to infringe. The specific infringing subscribers identified in Plaintiffs' notices, including the particularly*

> *egregious infringers identified above, knew that Verizon would not terminate their accounts despite receiving multiple notices identifying them as infringers, and they remained Verizon subscribers so that they could continue illegally downloading copyrighted works.*

The suit charges Verizon with both contributory and vicarious copyright infringement, asking the judge to award labels the maximum penalty for every track on their list as well as attorney’s fees.

Previous copyright battles have included Viacom vs. YouTube, with the latter arguing successfully that it qualified for the DMCA’s “Safe Harbor” provision, while a $1 billion judgment against Cox Communications was overturned on appeal with the court saying the ISP didn’t profit by ignoring music piracy.

https://www.theverge.com/2024/7/15/24199236/verizon-music-copyright-infringement-lawsuit-2-6-billion