

- [Home](#)
- [Find a product](#)
- [Find a service](#)
- [News](#)
- [Articles](#)
- [Case studies](#)
- [Training](#)
- [Events](#)
- [Recruitment](#)
- [Glossary](#)
- [Books](#)
- [Newsletter](#)
- [Archive](#)
- [Subscribe](#)
- [About us](#)
- [Advertise](#)
- [Link to us](#)
- [Newsfeeds](#)
- [Contact us](#)
- [Disclaimer](#)

## Search

HiddenWires Web

[Visit our partners](#)

## Articles and whitepapers


[Visit our sponsors and showcases](#)

## CD Ripping Services for Custom Installers (1/12/2008)



By Jason Osborne, Move2Digital

So you've finally completed the installation that your team has been working on over the last 6 months. You've demonstrated the home cinema, wowed the clients with the joys of the multiroom audio installation and now you're just about to hand over the remote. Nothing left for the client to do but sit back and enjoy the experience of their vast entertainment library. But apart from that single film and album imported by the installer for demonstration purposes, the server is empty and before they can truly enjoy their new installation, they'll have to spend the next few weeks, if not months, importing their collection, one disc at a time. Sound familiar?

To date, the task of importing a CD and DVD library has often been left for the client to complete or a task for the engineer who pulled the shortest straw. This reluctance is to be understood. After all, is ripping CDs really the best use of your highly-trained engineer's time? It can be reasoned that merely ripping a CD does not require technical expertise and is an ideal opportunity for a custom installer to exercise some corporate social responsibility by hiring a local youngster to complete this task.

However, ripping a client's entire CD collection that usually numbers in the hundreds if not thousands, in a fast and efficient way, ensuring that the metadata is not only accurate, consistent and logical, but is correctly structured for the client's choice of server, all with the correct album cover art, is a task that is without doubt completely different. Without this detail, navigation of the server can prove problematic. In fact it's no different to having the CDs themselves in the wrong jewel cases - the content is rendered pointless. While custom installers may agree with this, how many can claim that their clients are truly receiving this service at the moment? And how many servers are still languishing in homes bereft of content and begging to be fed with media?



CD in wrong jewel case.

## Why use a ripping service?

I'm sure that every installer who has braved the task of ripping a client's collection has noticed the inconsistencies from metadata sources. Even the best ripping applications that cross-reference multiple sources are subject to inaccuracies with artist, album and track names. Most metadata sources still tag the artist name fields on the majority of compilation albums with "Various Artists". The only way to correct these inaccuracies is by hand. And how many installers have the time to scan the album cover art of those that are missing? While vital, these are not jobs an engineer should be doing. But a poorly-tagged library with missing artwork can completely detract from the amazing job that the installer has achieved, which can be a real shame.

If your client wants to hear Beethoven's Piano Concertos No. 1 and 2 conducted by Sir Simon

Rattle in the bathroom, but actually hears their son's The White Stripes rock album due to poor tagging that wasn't checked, chances are they'll sadly not notice the clarity of the sonic reproduction from the high-quality speakers.

Professional ripping services also have the advantage of working with multiple media servers, and therefore have in-depth knowledge of the nuances of the various servers. For example, we know which server doesn't display album cover art over 500 pixels, and which server doesn't display the genre tag when a collection is ripped to FLAC (Free Lossless Audio Codec). Through thorough testing and by working with a host of manufacturers, ripping services can provide a great deal of insight on the best format for the client's choice of server.



*The Niveus Ranier 2009 Media Server. Niveus has entered a partnership to use Move2Digital's ripping service.*

### **Added benefits**

So now your client has that perfectly-ripped and groomed library. But that CD and DVD collection that appeared so ample when sitting on the shelf doesn't quite seem as large when imported in their new media server which has terabytes of storage space.

This is where the additional services that a ripping company provides can prove invaluable for an installer. For example, Move2Digital offers all of its clients a bespoke purchase and encoding service that identifies gaps in a client's collection and will purchase these albums on the client's behalf. The service will also compile a bespoke list of CDs and DVDs that will complement the client's existing entertainment library, which they will purchase and load the media server with before delivery back to the client. This can add real value to the proposition for a client, and what better way to truly enjoy the new installation with the combination of new music and films as well as old favourites? After all, our purpose is to provide a unique and unparalleled customer experience.

Many installers have also used this service as an opportunity to revisit past clients. Offering this concierge-type service via a ripping partner is an ideal way to open communication about additional work to their existing installation.

### **Challenges**

Two of the many challenges that face our industry are navigating this current downturn and reaching the next generation of custom install clients. As a ripping service, we have found that most of the installers that we work with are still extremely busy. I guess if your clients have no need for credit then they are less likely to feel the crunch. However, those same installers are savvy enough to be aware of the dangers of complacency and are always looking for new ways of gaining an advantage, of which offering a ripping service is just one.

And in terms of capturing and educating Generation iPod, many are taking the opportunity to have their client's collection ripped, not just in lossless for their multiroom audio system, but also in MP3 320kb/s for the numerous iPods that exist in the family. This gives the installer the option of using an iPod dock for some rooms, such as the children's bedroom, while using a touchpad in others.

Every installer knows that what the customer would like is not always what the customer asks for. So when a client states that they already have all their music ripped in iTunes, it's worth considering whether an entire CD collection encoded in AAC at 128kb/s is truly going to give your perfect installation the sonic representation it deserves. Try an A/B demonstration using your client's favourite album ripped in both compressed format and in lossless. It's always a treat to watch their jaws drop when they notice the glaringly obvious difference in the sonic quality!

An installer wouldn't dream of not explaining to their client the difference between true 1080p and an inferior display but, sadly, less explanation is given to audio formats, robbing the client of at least the opportunity to make an informed decision.

### **Conclusion**

Our industry is becoming a great deal more service-orientated and our value, whether you're an installer or a professional CD ripping company, is in providing a complete solution. Being able to over-deliver on a project by providing this necessary service via a ripping partner is an ideal opportunity to do exactly that.

Whether you're of the opinion that providing a ripping solution for your customers is added value and gives you an essential advantage, or whether it is already a core part of your service delivery, I'm sure you'd agree that not providing any solution at all is no longer a viable option.

Jason Osborne is a Director of Move2Digital, provider of digital music conversion and device-loading services for media servers and digital portable audio players.

[www.move2digital.com](http://www.move2digital.com)

[Visit our featured links](#)

Visit our advertisers

[home](#) | [use our newsfeeds](#) | [subscribe to newsletter](#) | [submit a link](#) | [advertise](#) | [link to us](#)

© SYPHA 2002-2009. All rights reserved. Over 100,000 visitors every month.

Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of all articles, advertisements and other insertions in this website, the publisher accepts no responsibility for any errors or omissions or incorrect insertions.

The views of the contributors are not necessarily those of the publisher or the advertisers.