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"One day, all music will be delivered on the internet", claims Apple's boss, Steve Jobs. Have you started downloading music yet?

Licensing digital music is a major hurdle for the spread of this technology. This was demonstrated when I attempted to burn downloaded tracks to a CD to play on my Hi-Fi. I tested the process by using a ReWritable CD - unplayable on most CD players and which I had no intention of keeping - without a problem. However, I was unable to repeat the process with a CD-R for permanent use. The reason later transpired to be because I had already made my one and only copy permitted by the licence!

Conventional CDs also have the benefit of transferable licences. If I bought a CD, and wished to play it on any number of players, or to give it away, there would be no problem. However, with digitally-licensed music, I would have to attempt to re-acquire a licence for each new device. CDs can be destroyed, but are insurable. With digital music, even if I had kept a backup, or could re-download it, if the service used had ceased trading, there would be no way to reacquire the licences and I could be left with no way of playing the music I had spent money on.