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How Music Got Free: A Story of Obsession and Invention

Stephen Witt

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How Music Got Free: A Story of Obsession and Invention Stephen Witt
Finalist for the 2016 *Los Angeles Times* Book Prize, the 2016 J. Anthony Lukas Book Prize, and the 2015 *Financial Times* and McKinsey Business Book of the Year

A *New York Times* Editors' Choice

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"[*How Music Got Free*] has the clear writing and brisk reportorial acumen of a Michael Lewis book."—Dwight Garner, *The New York Times*

What happens when an entire generation commits the same crime?

***How Music Got Free* is a riveting story of obsession, music, crime, and money, featuring visionaries and criminals, moguls and tech-savvy teenagers. It's about the greatest pirate in history, the most powerful executive in the music business, a revolutionary invention and an illegal website four times the size of the iTunes Music Store.**

Journalist Stephen Witt traces the secret history of digital music piracy, from the German audio engineers who invented the mp3, to a North Carolina compact-disc manufacturing plant where factory worker Dell Glover leaked nearly two thousand albums over the course of a decade, to the high-rises of midtown Manhattan where music executive Doug Morris cornered the global market on rap, and, finally, into the darkest recesses of the Internet.

Through these interwoven narratives, Witt has written a thrilling book that depicts the moment in history when ordinary life became forever entwined with the world online—when, suddenly, all the music ever recorded was available for free. In the page-turning tradition of writers like Michael Lewis and Lawrence Wright, Witt's deeply reported first book introduces the unforgettable characters—inventors, executives, factory workers, and smugglers—who revolutionized an entire artform, and reveals for the first time the secret underworld of media pirates that transformed our digital lives.

An irresistible never-before-told story of greed, cunning, genius, and deceit, *How Music Got Free* isn't just a story of the music industry—it's a must-read history of the Internet itself.

From the Hardcover edition.

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