

**From:** Jim Allchin  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 13, 2003 10:03 AM  
**To:** Amir Majidimehr  
**Cc:** Will Poole; Michele Freed; Pieter Knook; Harish Naidu; Chris Jones (WINDOWS); Linda Averett  
**Subject:** RE: sucking on media players

I think I should talk with Jobs. Right now, I think I should open up a dialog for support of the iPod. Unless something changes, the iPod will drive people away from WMP.

jim

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**From:** Amir Majidimehr  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 13, 2003 10:01 AM  
**To:** Jim Allchin  
**Cc:** Will Poole; Michele Freed; Pieter Knook; Harish Naidu; Chris Jones (WINDOWS); Linda Averett  
**Subject:** RE: sucking on media players

Now you feel our pain ☺ We have been unsuccessful in the past to convince these vendors to open their eyes and accept that there is better software out there than what they ship with these things. Of course, some are better than others but none are a match for Apple. For good or bad, the message is finally getting through (with retailers threatening to sell iPod) but we are not waiting for that. Tomorrow, we have an entire crew descending on Creative and after that, Samsung and Rio to get them motivated to build the "right" device. We are putting incentives on the table in the form of cash, technical support, direct interface to developers, early access code for 9.1, etc. In other words, we are going all out and hoping that at least a few will listen. If none do, then it is time for us to roll up our sleeves and do our own hardware ☺.

We are also pushing them on ID. Interestingly enough, some have devices that are pretty much clones of iPod in all respects but worry about challenges from Apple. Still, we are giving them motivation to try harder.

As you allude to below, we also have work to do on our end to make synchronization better. But to do that, we need to have devices that support our new MTP protocol so we don't quite have anything to give you just yet. Our target is to unveil the synchronization capabilities at CES in early January. So we may be able to give you a sneak peak sometime in December. We would love to have your feedback during that process.

BTW, while the Dell is not substantially better from usability side, it is at least prettier than the Zen.

Finally, while not a substitute, we hope that Portable Media Center will be a well executed device with support for metadata which is very useful given its color screen (there are some complicated rights issues that we have to sort out first). Some of the UI design elements appear to be even better than iPod (as far as cascading menus is concerned).

Amir

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**From:** Jim Allchin  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 13, 2003 9:34 AM  
**To:** Amir Majidimehr  
**Cc:** Will Poole; Michele Freed; Pieter Knook; Harish Naidu; Chris Jones (WINDOWS); Linda

Plaintiff's Exhibit

8636

Comes V. Microsoft

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Averett

**Subject:** sucking on media players

I bought the high end creative labs portable player. It was the NOMAD Jukebox Zen Xtra.

I have to tell you my experience with our software and this device is really terrible. I expect you already knew this but I had not personally experienced it. Now I spent the time last night really playing with it. My goodness it is terrible. What I don't understand though is that I was told that the new Creative Labs device would be comparable to Apple. That is so not the case.

1. The physical device is not even in the same league as the iPod. I mean it is ugly, not smooth to the touch (hard edges and uncomfortable to hold, etc.), fragile (easy to break), the controls are difficult and they hurt your finger if you use the "jog" dial much at all, etc.
2. A reboot is required.
3. Two unsigned drivers are loaded. I have NO idea what these are needed for.
4. They ship their own music jukebox software and organizer. The installation encourages you to use theirs over WMP.
5. Setting up a relationship to copy all the music from WMP is very un-intuitive. Copying the contents of a playlist isn't too bad, but doing everything is very strange.
6. The actual Playlists themselves are not copied over to the device. So you just lose that capability on transfer.
7. There is no synchronization as you know. You copy it across and the next time, you have to copy it ALL across again.
8. One of the worse problems I had is that it appears NONE of the meta data that you put in the WMP library is carried over. In other words, the copy ONLY uses the information in the file itself. So, if you have Wave files and you copy them, then you lose all the meta data (e.g., artist, album). This also appeared to be true for files that DID have meta-data fields in the files. It's like WMP doesn't force updates of these fields back into the files themselves. So all the entering of information in WMP library is lost if you move the file to another machine. I hope that is not the way it works, but it sure seems like this is the case.

I am REALLY counting on wm9.1 to fix this terrible experience. Apple is just so far ahead. How can we get the IHVs to create something that is competitive with the iPod? I looked at the DELL system and that is not close either.

I would like to try to use any alpha software you have.

jim