

# Firenze Tecnologia Media Innovation Unit

## AGNULA LIBRE MUSIC

### A Platform for Libre Music Sharing

# What it is (in a nutshell)

AGNULA Libre Music (ALM from now on) is a web-based open repository of musical works whose copyright terms allow for a greater amount of sharing and wider scope of usage conditions than “standard” copyright (i.e. business-driven copyright).

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# Some Legal Background (sorry about that)

Music is considered a form of “creative work” - as such, it is protected by copyright and/or *droit d'auteur*.

The Berne Convention, all the various international and supranational treaties and conventions on copyright (think WIPO) and national law systems give authors a set of exclusive rights of their work.

The net result: everything not expressly allowed (licensed) by the author (or rightsholder) is denied – modulo “fair use” provisions and/or explicit exceptions.

# Some Legal Background - 2

However, the “romantic” (as in romanticism) dominance of the author allows for a GNU/GPL-style hack.

Authors can expressly waive some of their rights in order to give licensees the rights to copy, share, modify, reproduce, use the work.

Most widely known example (but absolutely neither the oldest nor the only one):

Creative Commons Project/Licenses

<http://www.creativecommons.org/>

# How does it work

- Basically, ALM is a CMS (yes, TLA overload) and online publishing system, optimized for audio files publication and management.
- Registered users (registration is free and pseudonymous) are given complete access to their material.
- There is no artificial separation between “publisher” and “user”.

## How does it work (2)

- Registered users upload their content through a standard web form.
- If licensing metadata (see *infra*) is already present in the file, it is automatically read; otherwise, a second form has to be filled with the licensing terms of the music.
- If no licensing terms are given, the file is kept in an “invisible” state (except for the uploading user).

## How does it work (3) – metadata and license handling

ALM uses the metadata scheme proposed by Creative Commons, i.e.:

- using metatags inside files
- using a web page to verify the license

ALM uses the “TCOP” Copyright tag (provided by the ID3v2 format).

The tag points to a web page (on the AGNULA web server) which provides both the URL to the correct Creative Commons license page, and an RDF description of the work and its usage terms.

## How does it work (4) – copyright abuse

To avoid abuses of the service and the uploading of material which has not been properly licensed to be distributed, all visitors (even anonymous ones) can signal, through a script which is present in every page, any potential copyright violation to the original author. The script also puts the file into an "invisible" status until the author either reviews or modifies the licensing terms.



# How does it work (5) – miscellanea

ALM can read and (supposedly) correctly manage various data formats:

- Ogg Vorbis
- MP3
- FLAC
- WAV
- AAC

# How does it work (7) – miscellanea

ALM sports a wealth of breathtaking, market leveraging, agent-based, web services-enabled, peer to peer features (yes, I'm trying to break the buzz-o-meter) !

- Search engine (title, artist, album) – anybody wants to do some research on MIR ?
- RSS 2.0 feed with enclosures, to be used with “podcasting” supporting clients
- A SOAP interface for queries to the database
- Real time download statistics
- Creation of personalized playlists (.pls and .m3u formats)

# How does it work (8) – allowed licenses

ALM currently accepts works licensed under one of the following licenses:

- Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike
- Creative Commons Attribution
- EFF Open Audio License

Please notice – we do not accept “non commercial” licenses.

# Sociolegal ramblings (again, I'm sorry)

- Why did we spend our time in such an endeavour instead of more useful activities (i.e. sleeping)?
- The last 30-35 years have seen a massive expansion – in time and scope – of traditional copyright law.
- This “new enclosure movement” risks to endanger the very same element that their proponents **claim** to protect: creativity.
- How can you create anything if everything is fiercely protected by a monopolistic instrument?
- Creation needs a starting ground to thrive: the public domain (take this term as a sociopolitical, **not** a legal concept).

# Sociolegal ramblings (2)

In much the same way as the Free Software Foundation, the GNU Project, the BSD folks and a lot of other people did in the eighties, it is now high time to “reclaim the commons” (which is **not** communism, no matter what your opinion is on the latter).

You can find a lot of good materials on this stuff on the Creative Commons Project web site:

<http://www.creativecommons.org/>

# Future Directions – Technical

- Integration with BitTorrent
- Integration with Open Media Streaming (<http://media.polito.it/>)
- Integration with Creative Commons web services
- Integration with CC/Open Content P2P Networks (?)
- Integration of Music Information Retrieval systems?
- Your take..



# Future Directions – Sociolegal

- Analysis of the motivations that lead authors to publish on ALM (or related archives):
  - Notoriety?
  - Second-market revenues?
  - Protection of the Public Domain?
- Analysis of the legal problems that CC licenses might have (in Italy: exclusive rights of performer)



# Thank You

For any question, doubt, offer to contribute, etc:

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To upload **your** music:

<http://muzik.agnula.org/>