



# Karaoke Piracy

What Every Establishment Owner Needs To Know

*Did you know that over 90% of Karaoke Jockeys (KJ's) are using stolen or pirated music to put on their shows? Did you know that hiring one of them puts you at risk of a lawsuit?*

Ask yourself, how you would feel if someone was using your product to profit by it while you never received a single penny for it. That's basically what's happening with karaoke. Most KJ's, referred to as Pirates, are stealing instead of buying their music. Because of this, many karaoke manufacturers can no longer afford to produce new music. Some have gone out of business entirely..

## *How do I know if they're a Pirate?*

KJ's claiming to have 50, 75, or even 100 thousand or more songs, is usually an indication of piracy since this is a very un-realistic number. Think about it, if a KJ claims to have 100,000 songs at an average price of \$2.50 per song, he/she would have paid a whopping \$250,000.00 for them, which is unlikely and the very reason that legal KJ's don't have every song ever made. We have to pay for them. The average *legal* KJ has between 10 and 20 thousand songs.

## *Where do Pirates get them from?*

**Pirates** get them from file sharing web sites, which is illegal or from buying loaded hard drives (containing up to a hundred thousand or more songs) for only a couple of hundred dollars, which is also illegal.

## *What's the deal with using a computer?*

KJ's who's karaoke music tracks reside on a computer that's used to run their shows, **must own all of the original manufacturer CD's**, not copies or burns, that those tracks came from and be able to prove it. This is called 1 to 1 compliance and requires permission and/or certification from the karaoke manufacturer(s).

## *My KJ is an independent contractor. How does that affect me?*

Since it's your venue that's promoting karaoke entertainment, you become liable whether or not you knew your KJ is operating illegally. That's why it's so important to know who you are hiring.

Sound Choice® and other karaoke manufacturers have been fighting back by visiting establishments across the country and filing lawsuits for copyright infringement against KJ's and venues suspected of using music tracks that have been illegally obtained. **Your establishment could be next!**

## *How do I know my KJ is operating legally?*

Unless acceptable certification has been provided, the best way to determine if a KJ is legal is to audit their song library. Here's How: Ask your KJ to bring in ALL of their karaoke CD's. Simply go through the KJ's song book and pick out a random song. The KJ should then be able to produce the CD that the song is on. Do this for about 20 to 30 songs. If the KJ has all of the CD's for the songs you've selected, most likely he/she is legal. If they give you an excuse or are not willing to comply, don't hire them. If you already did, get rid of them. The honest KJ will have no problem showing their CD collection. The pirate with 100,000 songs will! Why? Because there won't be any CD's.

The best way to protect yourself is to:

- *Pay your yearly PRO fees (ASCAP, BMI, SESAC)*
- *Only hire KJ's who have proven they are legal*
- *Join the free Safe Harbor program (<https://scsafeharbor.com>)*

Karaoke music piracy equals:

*Lost Jobs • Lost Wages • Unfair Competition • Fewer New Songs Recorded*

**And it drives legal karaoke hosts out of business!**

All of the ads on eBay, Craigslist and similar sites that are offering pre-loaded hard drives, used by Pirates, are operated by criminals. Plain and simple, piracy is stealing. It is illegal to buy or sell such systems, with statutory fines running into the millions of dollars.

Pirates will often try to under-cut the legal KJ by offering to work for less than the going rate. They can do this because they have no investment in music; it's stolen! On the other hand, the legal KJ has spent thousands of dollars on music and will always have ongoing expenses keeping up with the latest releases.

Piracy affects us all and is hurting the industry. It has forced karaoke music publishers and many honest KJ's out of business. You can help by only hiring legal KJ's to host karaoke. Doing so, allows us to fairly compete and you won't have to worry about a lawsuit. Don't put your business and reputation on the line in order to save a buck. ***Don't hire anyone that can't prove they're legal!***

We are proud of our music library. All of the karaoke tracks used in our shows come from the original manufacturers discs that we have legally purchased and own. We have been provisionally certified by Sound Choice. Certification # P96673214



For more information, please visit our website at [www.firelightkaraoke.com](http://www.firelightkaraoke.com).