

Snowtape: Internet Radio Done Right

David Appleyard on October 21st

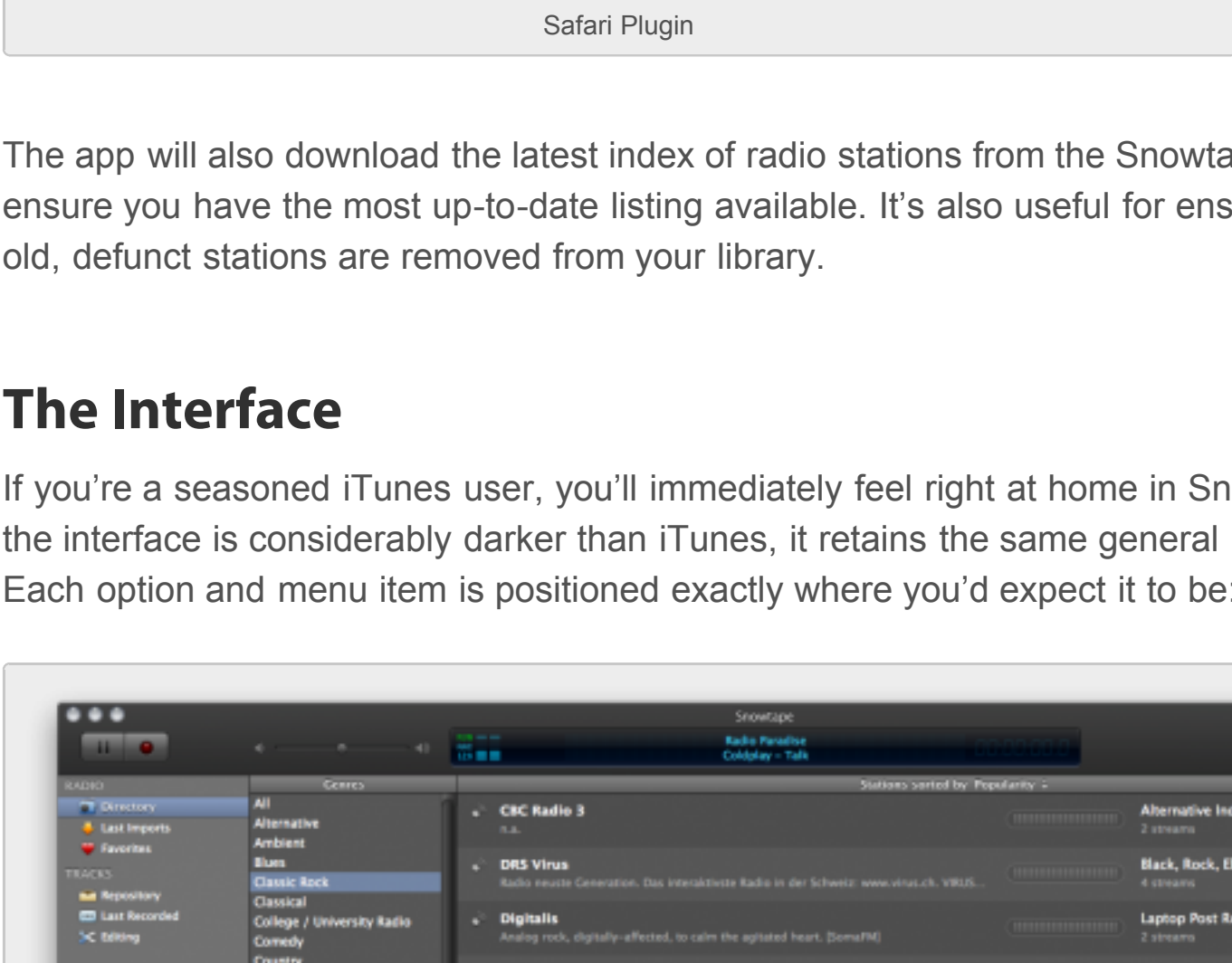
itunes, radio, snowremote, snowtape

Although iTunes has offered a selection of internet radio stations for several years, this is one area of the application that hasn't seen a great deal of recent development. Snowtape aims to take the baton, and offer a full-featured internet radio experience on the Mac.

The software makes it easy to find a station that plays a particular type of music, establish a "favourites" list, record and edit tracks, export music to iTunes, and automatically discover album artwork. I'll be delving a little deeper into Snowtape and exploring what the app is capable of.

Setup

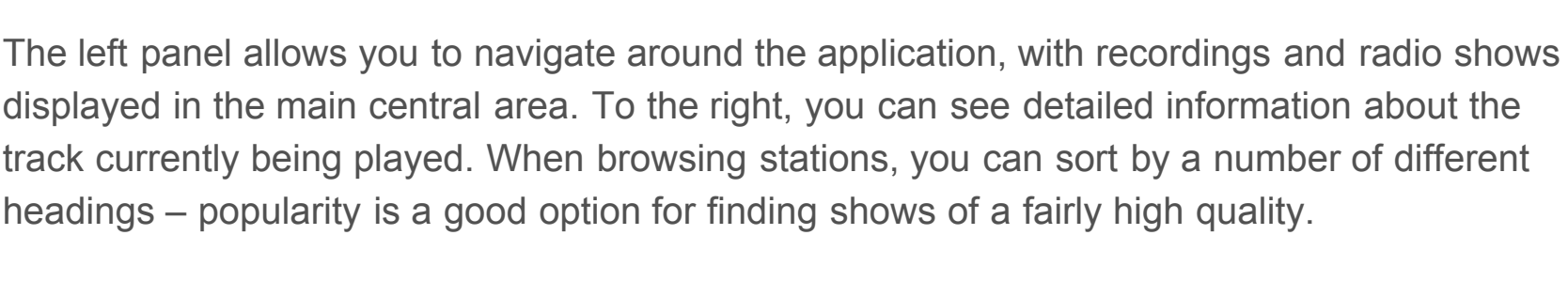
Setting up Snowtape is relatively simple. When launching for the first time, you're asked whether to install a Safari plugin that will automatically send any radio URLs to Snowtape:



The app will also download the latest index of radio stations from the Snowtape server to ensure you have the most up-to-date listing available. It's also useful for ensuring that any old, defunct stations are removed from your library.

The Interface

If you're a seasoned iTunes user, you'll immediately feel right at home in Snowtape. Although the interface is considerably darker than iTunes, it retains the same general layout and style. Each option and menu item is positioned exactly where you'd expect it to be:

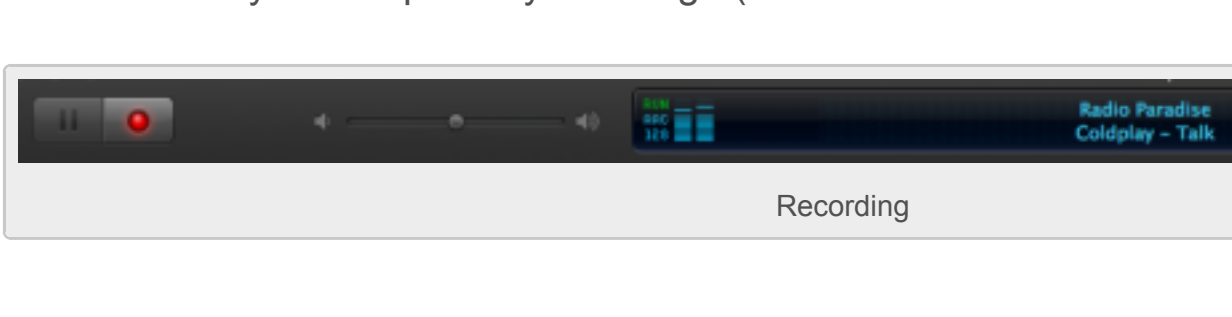


The left panel allows you to navigate around the application, with recordings and radio shows displayed in the main central area. To the right, you can see detailed information about the track currently being played. When browsing stations, you can sort by a number of different headings – popularity is a good option for finding shows of a fairly high quality.

Snowtape also clearly shows the stream quality of each station, with different colours representing varying quality. It's generally better to aim for the green shows, as those will resemble – at the very least – MP3 quality audio.

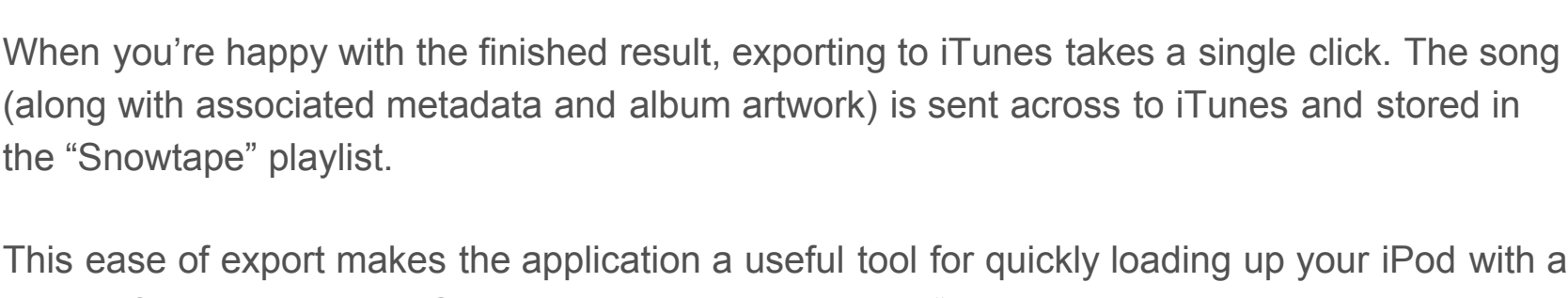
Mini Controller

Like iTunes, Snowtape also has a mini controller for a simpler listening interface. This is incredibly well-designed, and allows you to see current track information along with recording a particular song.

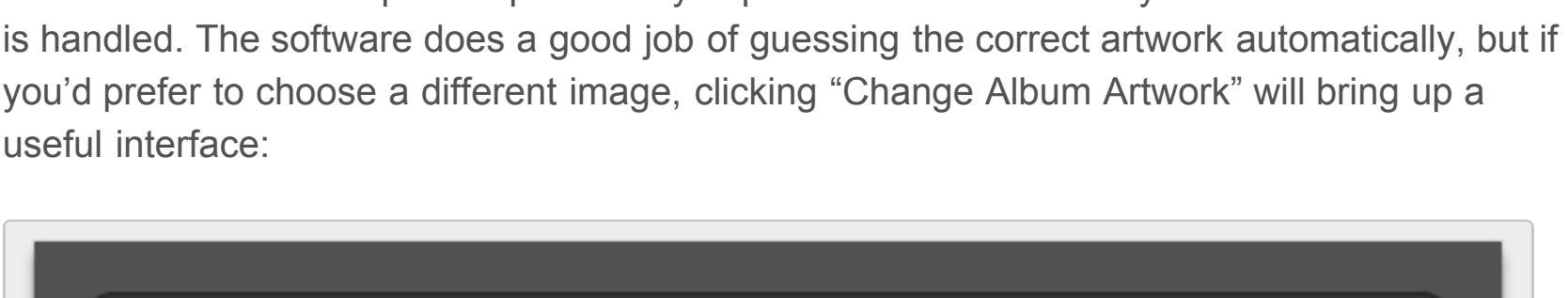


Recording, Editing & Exporting

Snowtape really comes into it's own when you begin to record a particular radio station. This is done at a very high quality, and the application can automatically detect when one song ends and another begins. Each song is tagged with the correct artist and album information, and stored in your "Repository" of songs (a welcome alternative to "Library").



After recording a song, you may find that it's necessary to edit out any advertisements or dialog at the beginning and end of the track. Snowtape again keeps this simple with a tool for cropping a few seconds off where necessary:

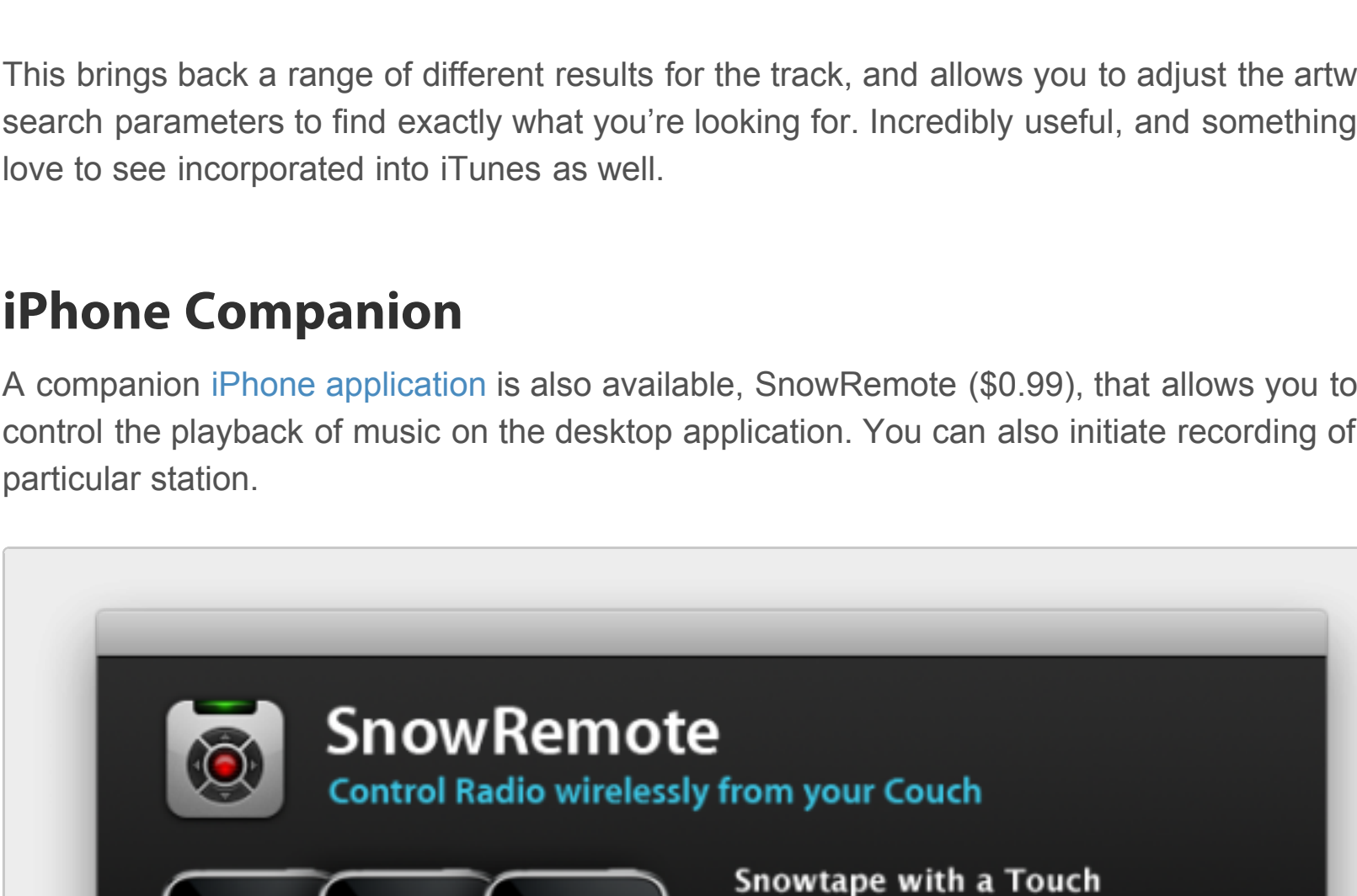


When you're happy with the finished result, exporting to iTunes takes a single click. The song (along with associated metadata and album artwork) is sent across to iTunes and stored in the "Snowtape" playlist.

This ease of export makes the application a useful tool for quickly loading up your iPod with a range of new music. The Snowtape website states that "In just 10 hours your music library will contain over 150 songs and by the end of the week your iPod shuffle is already packed with your favorite music." It's a valid claim, and the process of moving songs from radio to iPod is remarkably easy.

Album Artwork

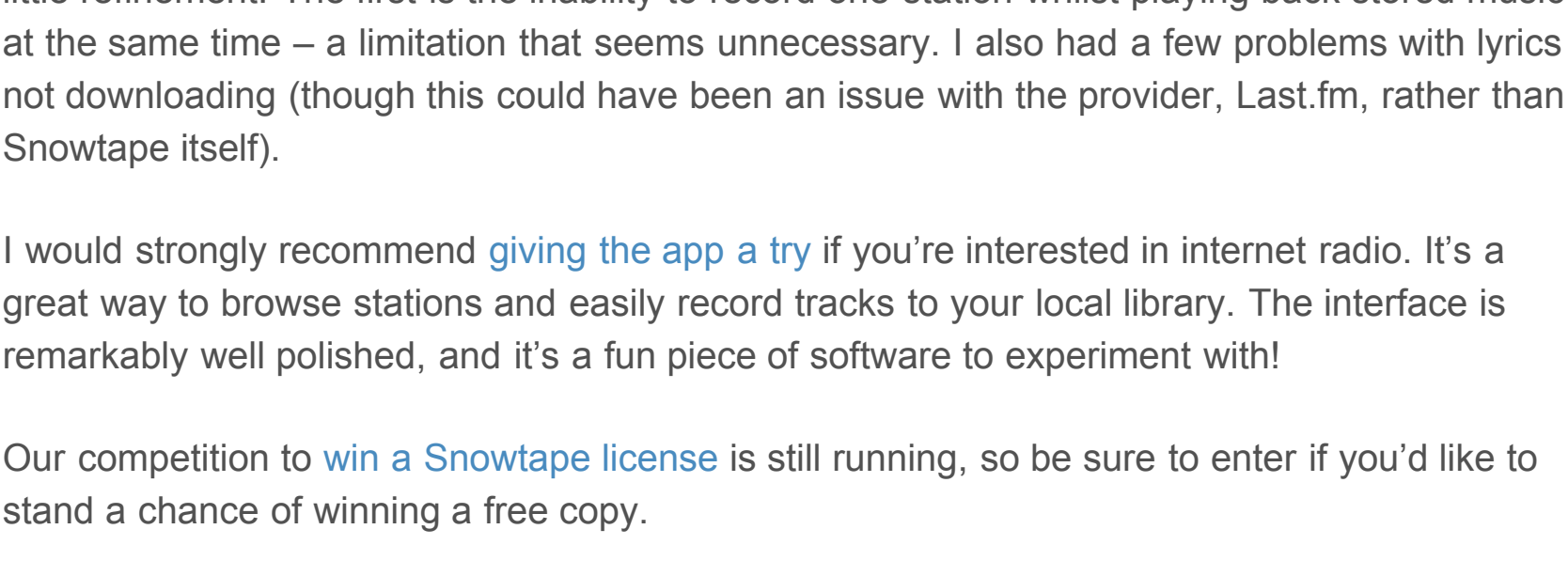
One feature of Snowtape that particularly impressed me was the way in which album artwork is handled. The software does a good job of guessing the correct artwork automatically, but if you'd prefer to choose a different image, clicking "Change Album Artwork" will bring up a useful interface:



This brings back a range of different results for the track, and allows you to adjust the artwork search parameters to find exactly what you're looking for. Incredibly useful, and something I'd love to see incorporated into iTunes as well.

iPhone Companion

A companion iPhone application is also available, SnowRemote (\$0.99), that allows you to control the playback of music on the desktop application. You can also initiate recording of a particular station.

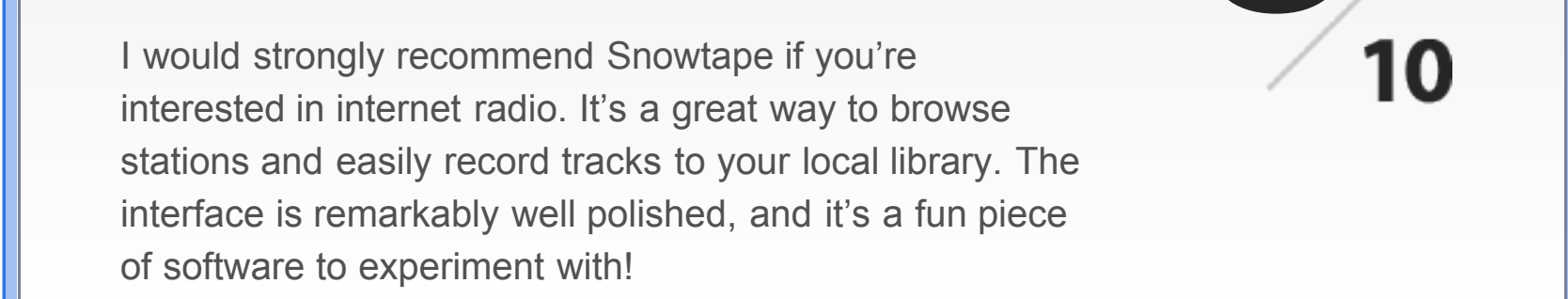


Conclusion

Although there's an awful lot to like about Snowtape, a few areas did stand out as needing a little refinement. The first is the inability to record one station whilst playing back stored music at the same time – a limitation that seems unnecessary. I also had a few problems with lyrics not downloading (though this could have been an issue with the provider, Last.fm, rather than Snowtape itself).

I would strongly recommend giving the app a try if you're interested in internet radio. It's a great way to browse stations and easily record tracks to your local library. The interface is remarkably well polished, and it's a fun piece of software to experiment with!

Our competition to win a Snowtape license is still running, so be sure to enter if you'd like to stand a chance of winning a free copy.



Digg submit 5 Saves 21 retweet Share / Save

Our Score 8/10 Related Posts

Summary
I would strongly recommend Snowtape if you're interested in internet radio. It's a great way to browse stations and easily record tracks to your local library. The interface is remarkably well polished, and it's a fun piece of software to experiment with!

Snowtape | \$29 | Vemedio

Responses

Topy October 21st: I love this program, I've been looking for something similar since years. Of course I made it in the competition :D (sorry for my english)

Fred K October 21st: Absolutely agree. Snowtape good. :)

Mediumjones October 22nd: This app looks cool, but still having to use iTunes? I've been looking for a lite & simple music player for Mac for years. Something like WinAmp where you don't have to use the library feature if you wanted to just use Finder to organize and queue up your playlists. Or something like the OSX Preview app, but for audio files. I don't mind just Quicklooking .mp3s but the playback stops if you do anything else. Songbird and iTunes are just way too bloated to want to launch usually.

Soyek October 22nd: Cog ain't bloated, kinda ugly tho. Plays FLACs, APES and even CUEs like a charm.

Soyek October 22nd: Cog ain't bloated, kinda ugly tho. Plays FLACs, APES and even CUEs like a charm.

Alex October 22nd: I too would love a license. This is such a great ideal.

spiritualized October 22nd: great program, the ONLY thing as I stated somewhere else, it has such a small number of stations, there is no for instance BBC radio stations, etc. I tried Radioshift and its way of finding stations through a search inside the app is awesome, finding and adding stations was done in a second and without a problem already sent the developer of Snowtape to that way of finding stations, as there isn't a single station that I couldn't find through Radioshift, everything else is better on Snowtape, especially the recording part. But pls consider, cause it is a huge thing, a lot of people find it a big issue, hope u manage it somehow :)

Flash Cards October 22nd: Really nice app. I wish it did one thing like RadioLover does... which is the ability to set recording split preferences... some stations I listen to may have one long mix where the artist/song doesn't change... it is convenient to have it say... split/create a new file every 5 minutes of recording.

oracle October 22nd: Found a coupon code on retailmenot.com. Apparently you can save 20% using CPN3667046RMMN.

Web 2.0 October 22nd: Awesome plug-in, great work... Thanks

Your Response

Your Message...

oracle

thecocaooracle@gmail.com

URL (Optional)

Submit Comment

Trackbacks

Although iTunes has offered a selection of internet radio stations for several years, this is one area of the application that hasn't seen ...

What is Good Writing? | You Can Write Well October 22nd

22,000 Subscribers +Followers

RSS Feed

Email Updates

Twitter

HE'S LOOKING PROFESSIONAL Online Invoicing for Freelancers

FRESHBOOKS painless billing

Your business in your pocket.

Watch Video

CSS VIEW, SAVE & SHARE WEB DESIGNS

tidy up! hyperhelpsoftware.com

Top Ringtone For your Mobile

Wallet

Manage Invoices on iPhone

Crash for Mac & iPhone

coupons the SUPER COOL kind

Billings

Advertise Here

Desktops

View More in our Flickr Group

Twitter

Follow us: @macappstorm

About Us

About Appstorm

Get Your App Reviewed

Write a How-To

Submit a News Tip / General Contact

Submit a Newspaper

About Envato

9Rules Member