

Music notation software and its influences media essay

[Media](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Chris Paulhus Professor Isbell, Stephen CIS 326 Information Technology Music Notation Software and It's Influences While studying on my Career Path, I have noticed a change in the way music has been written. It has changed a great deal from the very beginning where it was written by hand, and the craft was localized to certain peoples and guilds. Now, we can download any number of free software, 'freeware,' from off of the internet or purchase powerful music writing software to create our own works with a relative ease as compared to the fore-runners of music notation. The invention of this commodity intertwined with sound creation/editing software has almost made notating music by hand obsolete. When the first music composing software was invented decades ago, it revolutionized the way that one could make music. Although it required extensive libraries of pre-recorded music for the software to run effectively, it was a tiptoe into the waters of music notation/composition. This program was meant more for the writing of contemporary songs such as ones to place on records or albums. Nevertheless, it was still the beginning of a computer-driven music scope. Acid-Pro was the software name. Composition with loops was the game that it played. It changed music that was written by hand or played by the physical body into something that could be made into a 'loop' that could be replayed and mixed with other 'loops' to create a completely electronic way of making music. It turned a brute of a computer that was made to do minor functions and trivialities into an associate or medium for creating what has been called the reason makes us who we are: Music. It was the first computer program that was available to the common public and was compiled for the sole of reason of the creation of loop based music. After this

pioneering software program hit the market, there rippled a wave throughout the other software companies to create more music writing programs. Thus the standards such as Finale, Sibelius, and the less famous Musescore, were born. These programs, unlike Acid-Pro, were designed for music notation for the purpose of sheet music. This allowed people to create music notes on a wide range of staves and clefs (Percussion, bass, tenor, alto, treble, and soprano clefs). This made the composition and arranging of music for the purpose of the entertainment of the peoples by brass band, jazz ensemble, orchestra etc. more accessible and generally easier than before. This newer software came with midi, or Musical Instrument Data Interface, files that could be played when the user used the playback feature of the software. This allowed the composer/arranger to hear what he/she had written without the need to hire musicians that are fallible and capable of making mistakes during a first read-through, to read through the music to find any mistakes or illuminate any areas of improvement. The playback feature made it possible to edit the music before it was handed to the musicians to be played. This new way of writing music meant that it could be produced cheaper, faster and more effectively than ever before. It also ushered in a new type of composer. It let the common person experiment with the creation of music with little to no previous knowledge of composition. As the software became more available and more concise, the software companies added more distinctive and accurate sounds. The diversity of the instrumental base choice was increased, thus making it a more effective way to write music. They also added the option of more staves that could be sounded at once. One could now write for two hundred

or more instruments if one were to choose to do so. One could also write with many more notes in a chord that was humanly possible to play. This made pieces such as "Necrofantasia I and II," and "Faeries's Aire and Death Waltz," to be heard, or in the case of the latter piece, just written. Before the time of electronic musical notation and playback, music that was written on any medium had to be played by physical musicians and thus was limited to the natural limitation of the human that was behind the instrument. While these three selections noted are impossible to be played by any human, they are astounding to listen to with their flourishes, outstanding chordal structures and rhythms. Without the software available, these pieces would not be as intricate and intriguing, and possibly never even conceived. The software was essential in that they use the software's playback feature to perform that which was previously impossible. With the invention of these notation and looping software programs, the musical scope was changed to where the process of composing music was slanted. Any one person or company that had a copy of one of these music programs could send a file to another person that had a compatible version of the software, and they could download it onto their PC or other device. They could listen to the composition without the need to travel to a concert. No longer did one need to assemble an ensemble for a loved one to hear a piece that was composed solely for them. They could listen to it while in their own home, by their own means, provided they had a compatible program. This also allowed there to be mass production of music. As an example, one that would produce very few pieces of music in a year, or none at all, could now write music with ease and simplicity. This led to there being more music available for the buyer

and the music lover. More solos for instruments, more accompanied solos, more band scores, Jazz numbers and such, are available for purchase than ever before. One is not limited to just a certain composer or even Producer, such as when the French hired Jean-Baptiste Lully who was the court composer and musician for King Louis XIV. This man was the person to go to for music printing, acceptance and publishing during his occupation as the court musician. The problem was that if he did not like your music, it would not get publicized, printed or otherwise played by any of the higher echelon music ensembles. This was an extreme case of not being able to get your music 'out there,' because your music would never have gone past the Producer. With Finale, Sibelius, and MuseScore, and the invention of the internet, there is no need to go to a producer to print or advertise your own music. You can just download these programs, make your music, then transfer the music into a PDF via a PDF creator. This allows you to print it from most anywhere and view the piece of music on any of the wide range of devices that support PDFs. This means that the consumer can be the producer and have all the profits of their compositions. This obviously has had an effect on the music production industry. As more and more people, more specifically: the musically inclined, gain access to these software programs, the more music will get printed. With this mass creativity, there comes a price. With more 'unprofessional' music composers out there, the more the quality of the music that is available is degraded. Thus it is easier to obtain a musical selection that is sub-par to the other magnificent works out there. Despite the previous statement, it does not necessarily mean that these programs have 'corrupted' the market or music as a whole, but I

believe they have enriched our community with a wider spectrum of acceptable music.