

Website Presentation

www.pandora.com

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If you enjoy listening to great music, finding new songs and artists, and don't like commercials, you must get to know this website: www.pandora.com.

I first learned of this website through a co-worker. I was complaining to her about how sick I was of the music on my ipod. I appreciate the convenience and mobility of the ipod, but it can be very time consuming and costly to continually update the music on your ipod. Local & national radio stations are not a better listening alternative, in my opinion. They play the same songs over and over again. When they are not playing the same handful of songs, the air time is filled with commercials. I really can't say that I've ever appreciated a radio ad that I've heard.

So, my co-worker, Laura, tells me about Pandora. Pandora is Internet radio. But what makes it so unique and completely diverse is that you can create your own station. What you do is simply enter in a few of your favorite artists or songs. Pandora takes this information and runs it through hundreds of algorithms, playing the songs you like, as well as playing songs that are similar in sound, content, and genre. You can then rate the songs they play by giving it a thumb up, if you like it, or a thumb down if you don't care for the song. With each song you rate, more algorithms are run, and more songs are recommended based on what you like.

This is completely fascinating to me. I am extremely passionate about music and I love variety. The whole idea that I could create an entire station that was filled with music that is based on my opinion alone is incredible. The best part being, that it is always changing. My

music tastes evolve as music evolves and because of the beautiful way this website works, I am continually presented with new artists and songs that expand my taste in music.

Another great thing about this website is that you can create multiple stations. For example, I love holiday music, so I created a station that I listen to only around the holidays. My sister had created different stations for moods. If she's doing homework or wanting to relax, she has a station that plays mostly instrumental music, but she also created an upbeat station, that she likes to listen to when hanging out with friends and cleaning. I personally prefer just the two stations for myself, because I like listening to something slower one minute, but fast paced the next. Pandora allows you to create up to 100 stations yourself!

Something else really great about Pandora is that you can share your station with others. When I want to hear great instrumental music, I'll select my sister's station. You can also, just select from their genre stations. Honestly though, I love my own station so much that I never do that. My station is called "Cynthia Knows Good Music." You can add all kinds of information about yourself that others can view if you would like while they listen to your station.

The site is totally interactive. As the songs change, you can view the album you're listening to. You can also click on a link to get an abundance of other information such as the history of the artist, song, and album and learn about similar music and fans of this type of music. If you "thumbs down" a song, it automatically stops the song and never plays it again. It actually even apologizes for you not liking the song! You can pause a song and even scroll back through all the songs that have played during that session and change your rating if you'd like.

And now for the best part of all...this site is completely free! There is absolutely no charge to create a log in, your own station, and listen to up to 40 hours a month. There used to

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not be a limit at all, but that has recently changed. If you do exceed the 40 hour limit, you can pay a one-time fee of only \$.99. By paying this fee, you then have unlimited access for the rest of the month. In my opinion, this is a very small price for countless hours of great music.

Pandora has very little commercial interruption. This is pleasant change from what we are used to in all other media venues, where advertising has become as prevalent as the actual program itself. There is advertising all over the website, but it is in no way intrusive nor does it ever get in the way of the music.

The name Pandora means "all gifted" in Greek. In Greek mythology, Pandora received gifts from the gods. Apollo gave her the gift of music. As I'm sure you have heard Pandora was very curious. Unlike those gods of old, the Pandora website celebrates that virtue and has made it their mission to reward the musically curious.

Pandora started back in 2000 and their corporate office is located in California. Pandora stands by its mission statement: to play only music you'll love.