

DIGILINX™ Application Note

Creating Playlists to Work with the Streaming Music Manager

Starting with *DigiLinX Dealer Setup 2.0*, text-based .M3U playlists are supported by the Streaming Music Manager (SMM100). This application note explains what a .M3U file playlist is, how to create and edit them, and how to export proprietary iTunes playlists as .M3U for use with the SMM100.

M3U Playlists

M3U (Moving Picture Experts Group Audio Layer 3 Uniform Resource Locator, MP3U URL) is a computer file format that stores multimedia playlists. It was originally implemented in Winamp (see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Winamp>), although it is now supported by many applications.

An M3U file is a plain text file that contains the locations of one or more media files that the media player should play. Each location is placed on a new line. The locations can either be absolute or relative path names (for example, C:\MyMusic\Chanson.mp3 or Chanson.mp3) or they can be URLs. The file can also include comments, prefaced by the “#” character. In extended M3U, “#” also introduces extended M3U directives.

Example

M3U playlists can be created in a standard text editor, or by many free applications available online.

Here is an example of an extended M3U file. Sample.mp3 and Example.mp3 are the media files, 123 and 321 are the lengths in seconds. The value after the length is the title to be shown, which is generally the same as the location of the file which is on the second line.

```
#EXTM3U

#EXTINF:123, Sample title
Sample.mp3

#EXTINF:321, Example title
Greatest Hits\Example.mp3
```



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This example assumes the M3U file is in the same directory as Sample.mp3. Absolute directories (C:\My Music\Sample.mp3) and relative directories (Jazz\Night Train.mp3) can both be used.

Creating M3U Playlists in MediaMonkey

MediaMonkey is a popular, free media management application that is available for download at <http://www.mediamonkey.com>. Many other applications can also create M3U playlists, including Winamp (<http://www.winamp.com>) and Musicmatch.

After you have downloaded and installed MediaMonkey, it will ask you to identify the directories with music it should manage when you run it for the first time as shown in Figure 1.

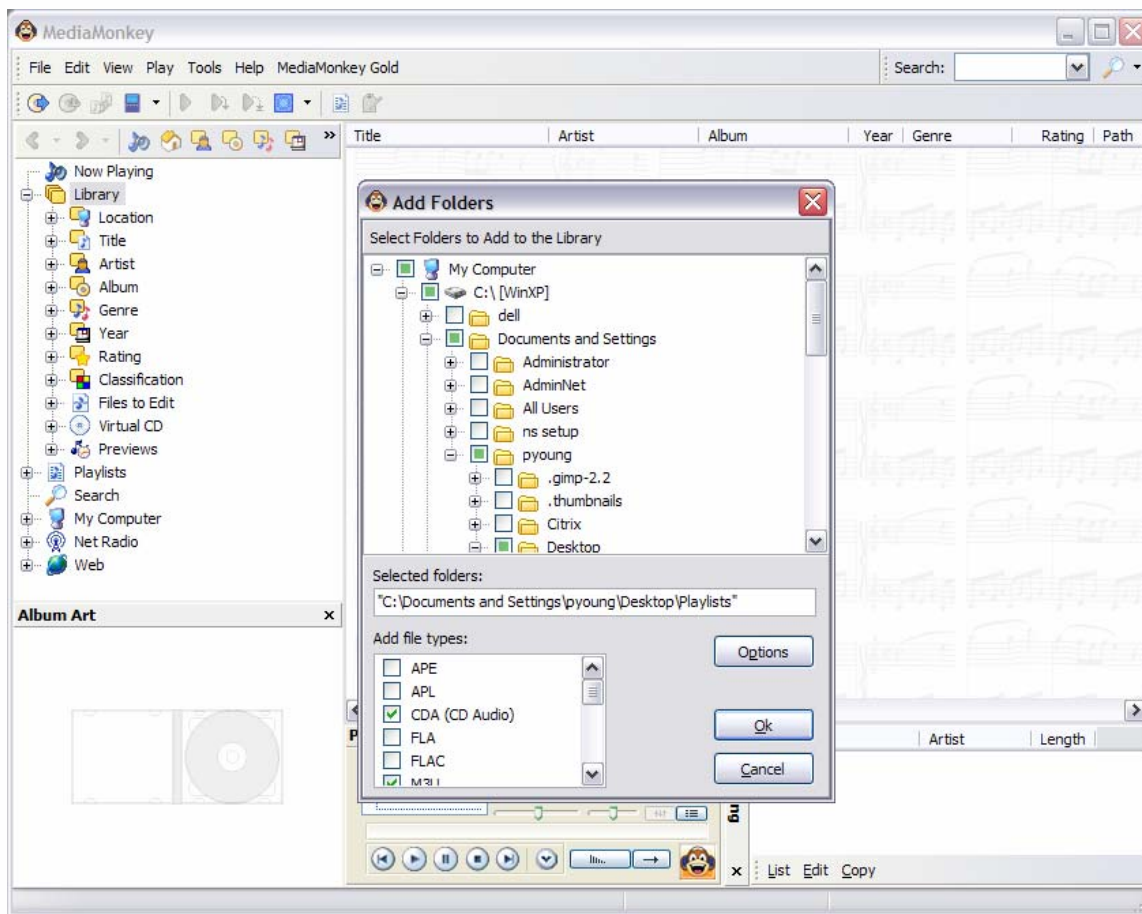


Figure 1 Selecting directories to scan for music in MediaMonkey

After you identify the directories, you can browse the discovered music by location, title, artist, album, genre, year, rating or classification using the navigation tree on the left hand side. Browsing music by title is shown in Figure 2.

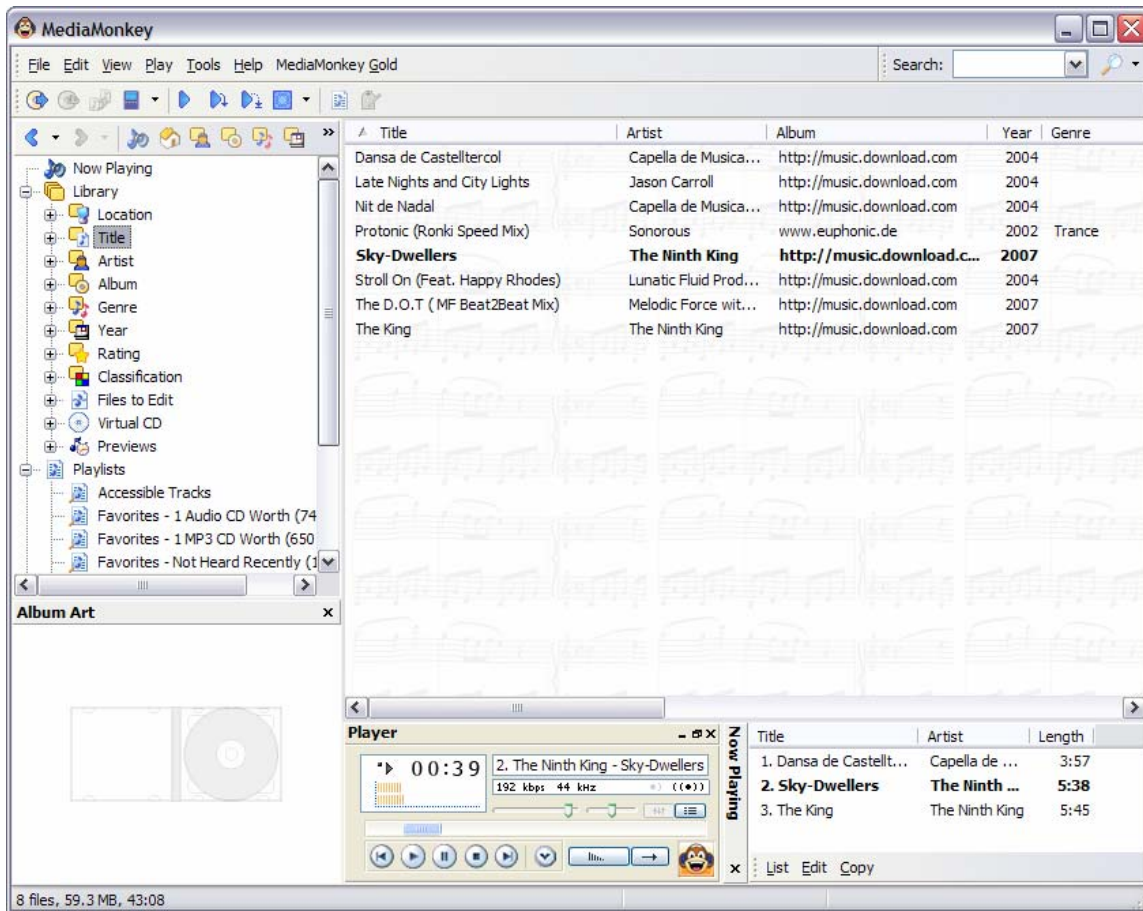


Figure 2 Browsing music by title

To create a new playlist, right click on the word Playlists in the navigation tree. Select **New Playlist** from the choices as shown in Figure 3.

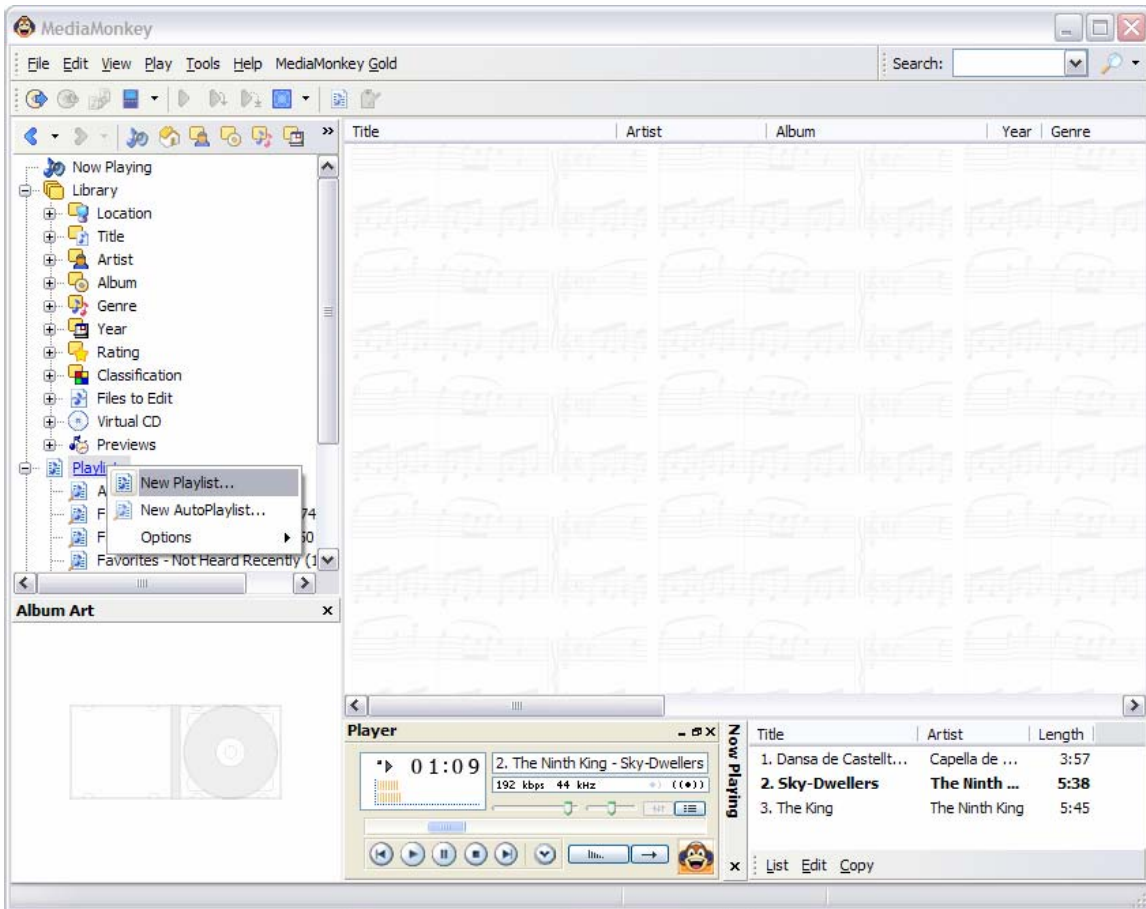


Figure 3 Creating a new playlist

Next, name the playlist as shown in Figure 4.

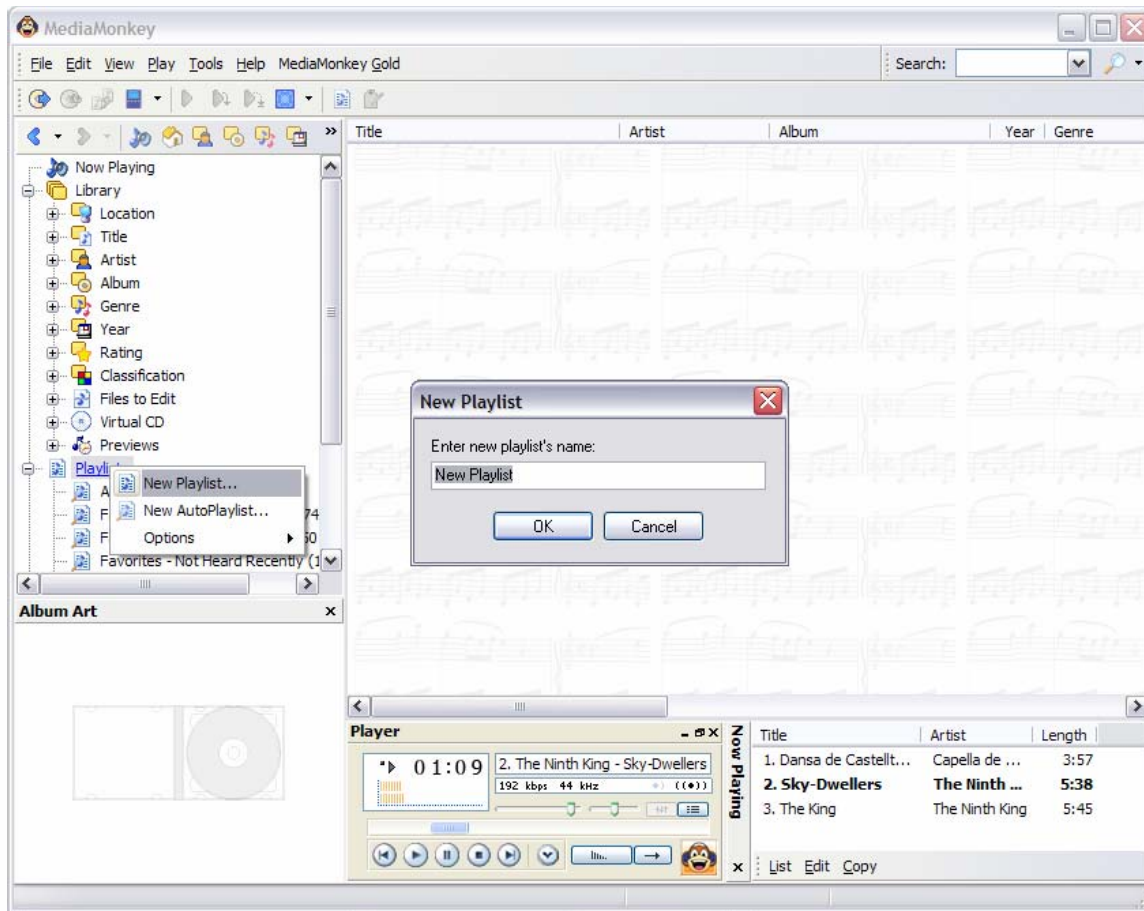


Figure 4 Naming a playlist

We named our new playlist Test Playlist. To add songs to the new playlist, browse songs by one of the criteria in the navigation tree, and drag and drop each song from the right as shown in Figure 5, into the playlist you want them to belong to. Songs can belong to multiple playlists simultaneously.

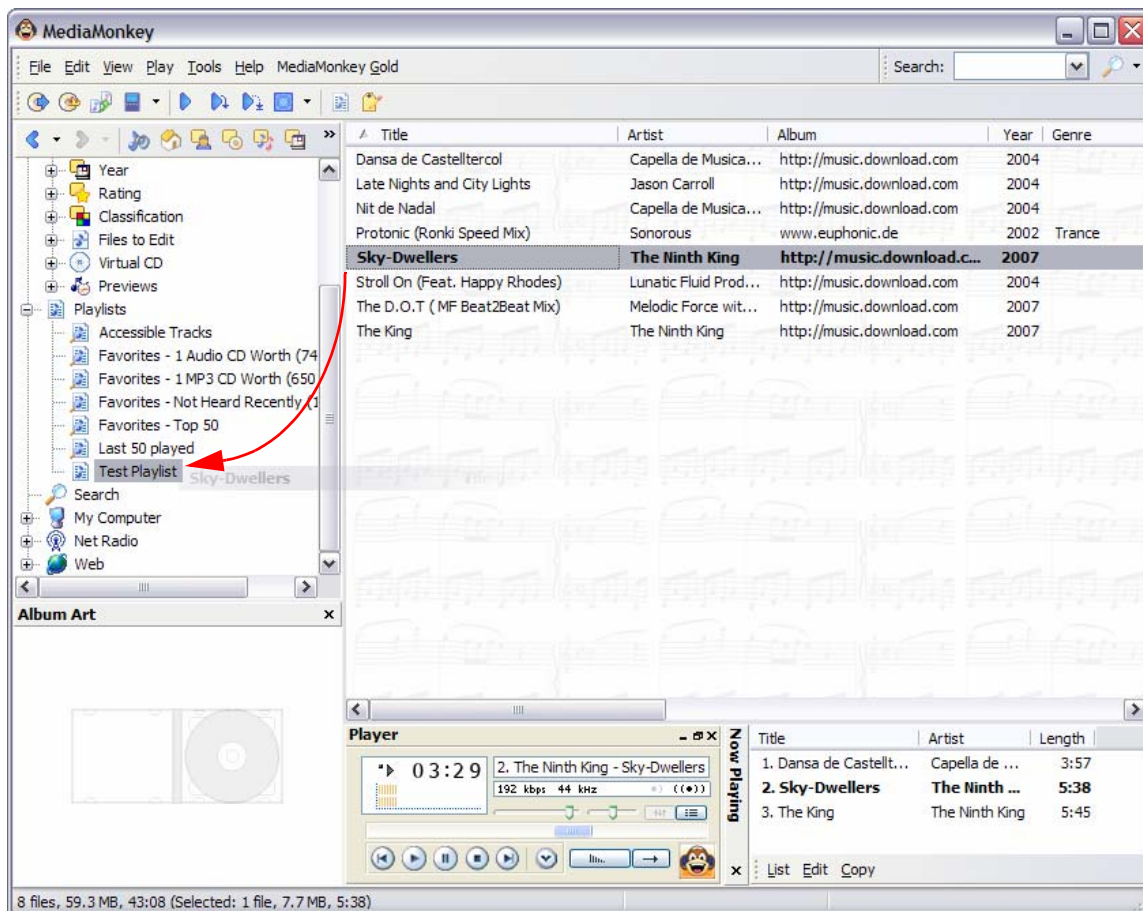


Figure 5 Dragging and dropping songs to a playlist

After you have added all the songs you want for your playlist, click the playlist name on the navigation tree to review the list of songs in your playlist on the right as shown in Figure 6.

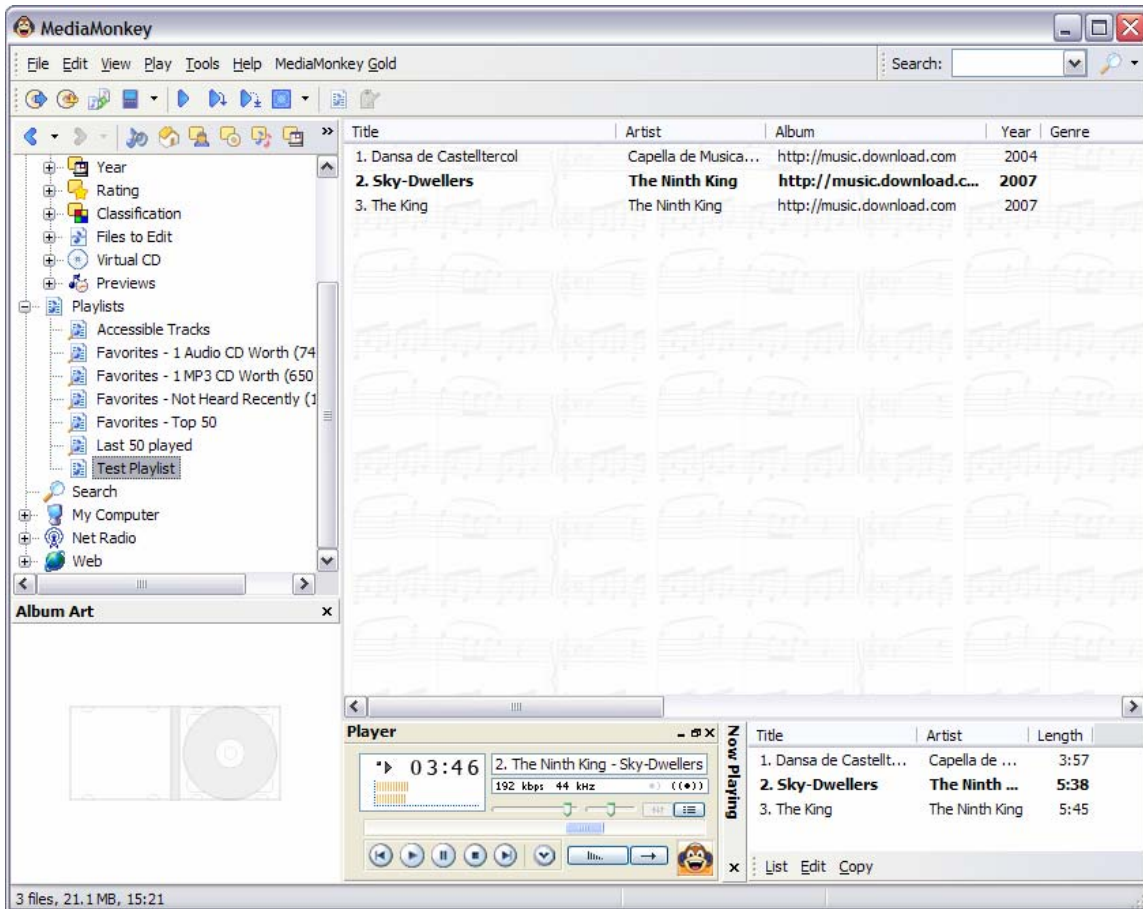


Figure 6 Reviewing the selected songs in a playlist

Once the playlist is correct, right click the playlist name in the navigation tree, select **Send To** and then **.m3u Playlist** as shown in Figure 7.

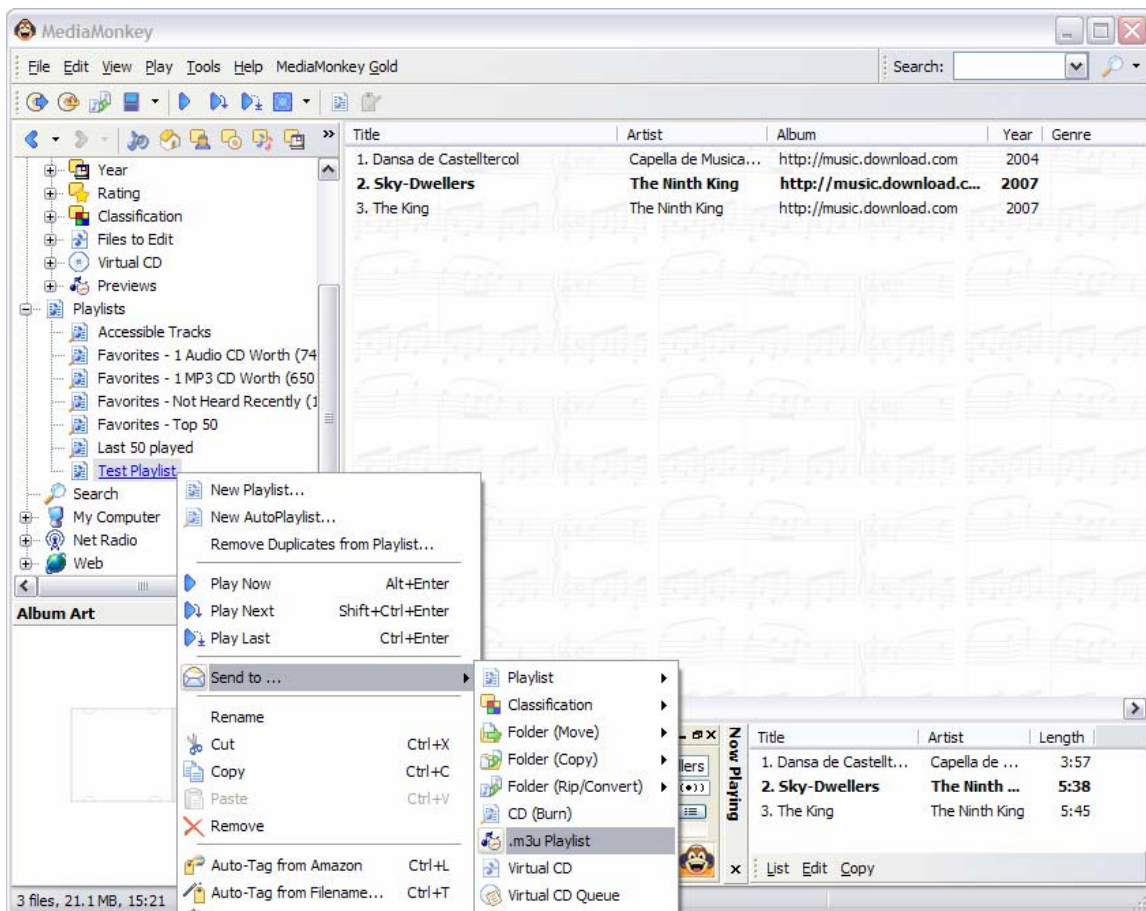


Figure 7 Exporting a playlist to a .m3u file

MediaMonkey asks where to save the .m3u file and then saves it to that directory as shown in Figure 8.

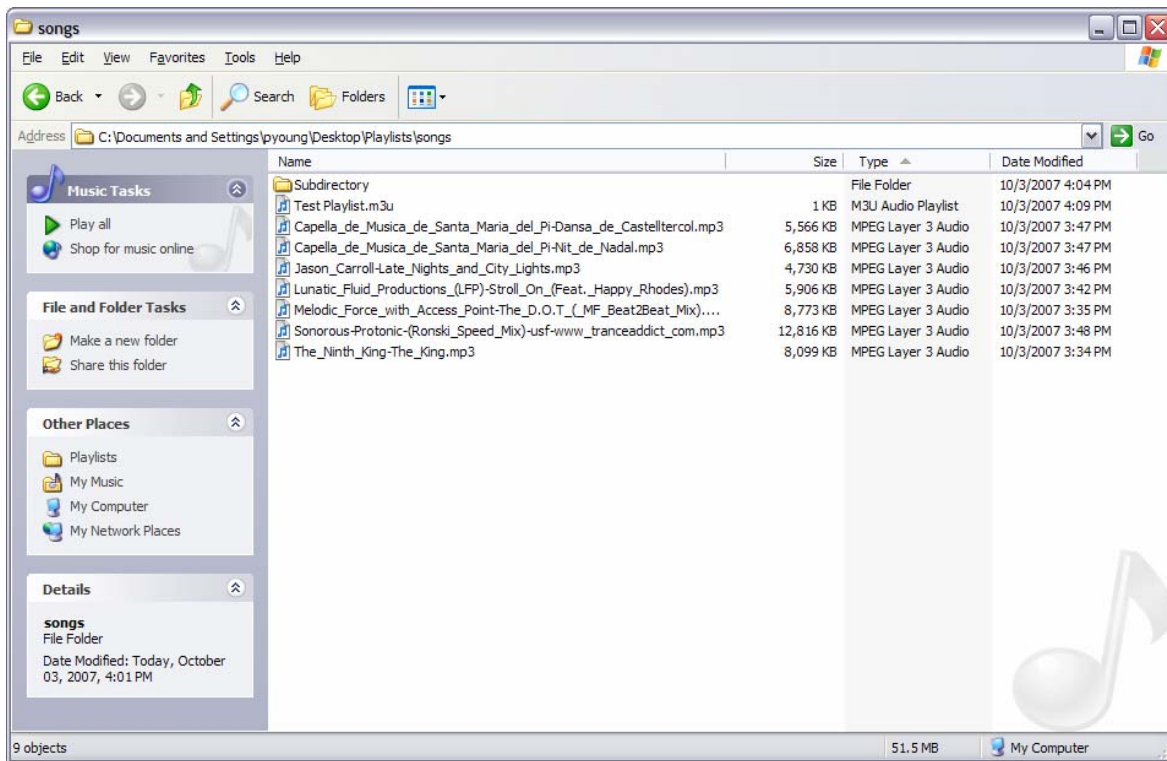


Figure 8 Song saved to a directory

Creating .M3U Playlists from iTunes Playlists

Apple's iTunes creates proprietary playlist files that cannot be read by Streaming Music Manager. There are programs that convert iTunes playlists to .M3U playlists. The iTunes Library Manager is a free download from <http://sourceforge.net/projects/free-ilm/>.

After downloading and installing the iTunes Library Manager, open the program. Select the **Refresh Playlists** button. The iTunes playlists should appear in the list on the left. Check the playlists you wish to export and choose the export directory on the right with the **Browse** button as shown in Figure 9.

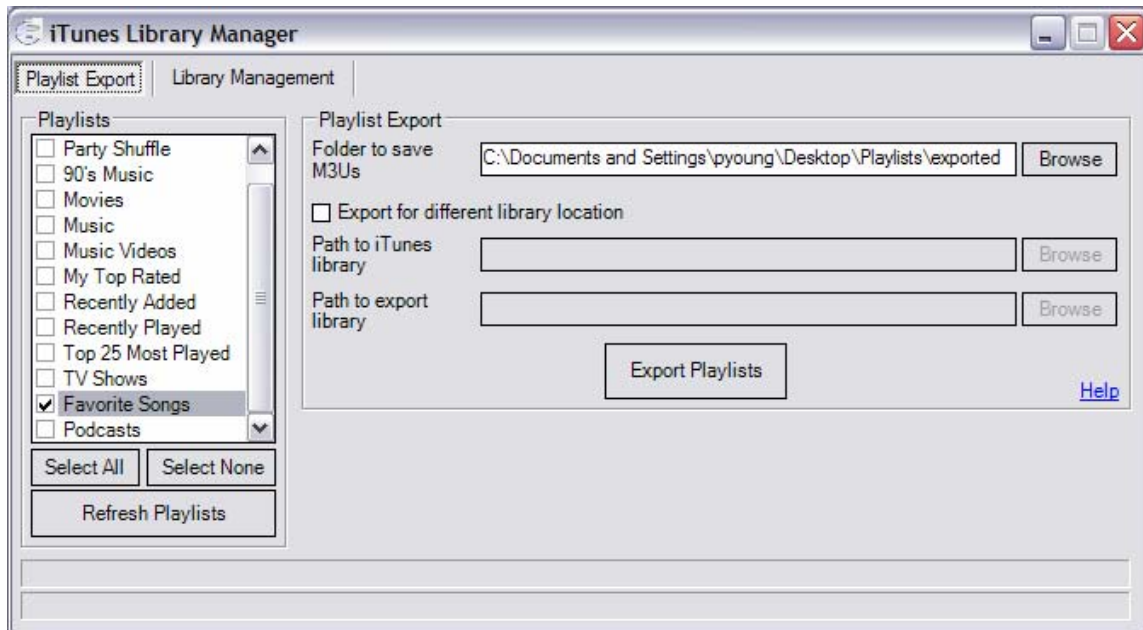


Figure 9 Exporting iTunes playlists

Press the **Export Playlists** button and the iTunes playlists will be converted to .M3U playlists in the directory you have chosen.

NOTE: iTunes Library Manager will export the playlists using absolute paths. To make the playlist more portable, you must convert the filenames to relative paths.

CAUTION! iTunes manages a mix of file types including MP3, WAV, and AAC. AAC files that have been ripped from a CD or downloaded from the iTunes store are not supported by *DigiLinX*. Make sure all files are MP3 to ensure playback through a *DigiLinX* system.

Reading Playlists with the SMM100

The SMM100 will read .M3U playlists in shared directories with music files. To ensure that the SMM100 is up to date, open *DigiLinX Dealer Setup 2.0*. select the Update Devices icon, the Update *StreamNet* Devices screen appears (see Figure 10), and update the firmware to the latest firmware.

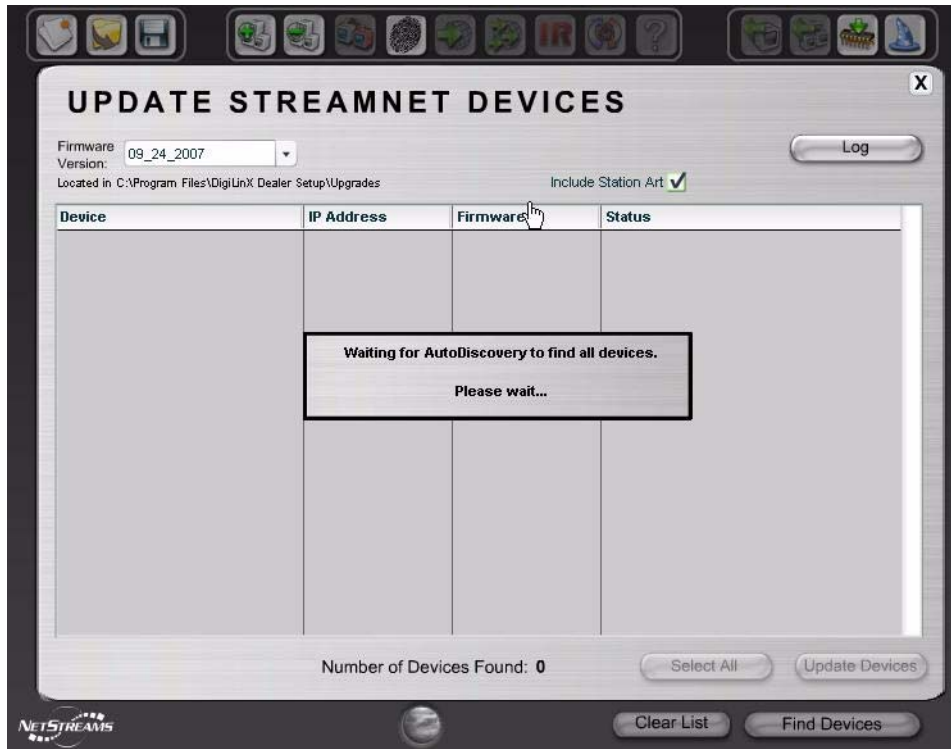


Figure 10 Update Devices icon

Wait approximately 30 minutes for the SMM100 to upgrade and reboot, and the SMM100 will begin to re-index shared folders. At this time, the SMM100 will read playlists in these folders and preset them through the *DigiLinX* user interface as a playlists option. To edit a playlist, simply edit in one of the programs listed earlier or with a text editor. The SMM100 will see that change on the next index (approximately every 15 minutes), and will reflect that change in the graphical user interface.