

/open_source/stream audio with Zina



Promote your mate's band with Zina, a lightweight audio-streaming solution that's like iTunes for the web. Karl Hodge shows you how it's done



What you'll build Using Zina, the web-based audio jukebox, you'll create a site that's capable of streaming a collection of copyright-free files over the net. Alternatively, use it to stream your music collection between computers on a private network. I'll show you how to prepare files for the application, add content and create new themes

Knowledge needed FTP and some basic PHP

Requires A remote web host with PHP support, MySQL, and some copyright-free audio files

Project time 60 minutes

Although the makers of web browsers are doing more these days to make sure they support standards, embedding media in sites can still be a tricky affair. Zina, an open source tool for distributing audio files, is a simple solution to that problem. Although it requires installation on a remote server with PHP support, it's easier to implement than manually coding a static page. You can get the software up and running with no coding whatsoever.

"Zina" is one of those recursive acronyms standing for "Zina is not Andromeda", Andromeda being a commercial music jukebox application that enables you to stream directories full of music across the web. Zina does the same job for

free. Free, we tell you! Of course, any music you post using Zina must either be licensed for free distribution or copyright to you.

This simple-to-use software is ideal for beat combos wanting to establish their own web presence, or for home HiFi, when you want to beam your music collection wirelessly from one computer to another. As you can tell, I'm a Zina fan, and that's why this issue's open source project is showing you how to get it up and running. So let's get started! ●

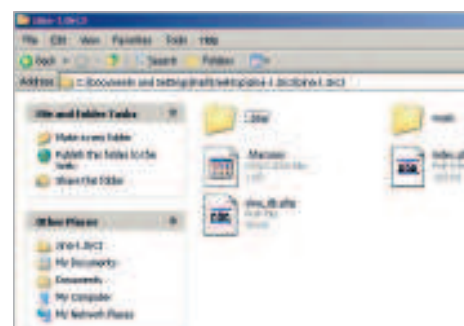


About the author

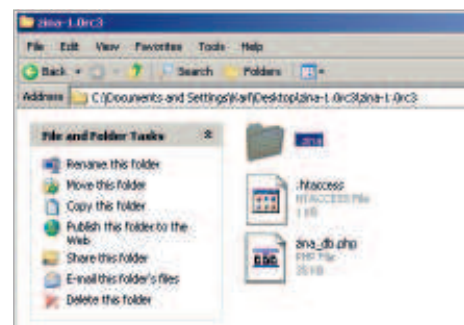
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Areas of expertise Interface design and development
Clients nerve.com
Favourite holiday food Ice-cream

Expert tip Creative Commons

The tracks bundled in the tutorial files are licensed using Creative Commons (www.creativecommons.org), a method of asserting copyright over content that also enables you to assign limited rights to users. If you're distributing your own content, check out Creative Commons licensing first. There are a range of different rights that you can choose to confer, giving you a safe way to get free text, audio or video into the wild. If you're on the lookout for music covered by Creative Commons licences, trawl through the audio section of archive.org.



START Install Zina Providing that your hosting platform meets Zina's requirements, the installation is as straightforward as it can possibly be. De-archive 'zina-1.0rc3.zip' to your local machine, then FTP the contents to a new folder labelled "zina" on your web server.



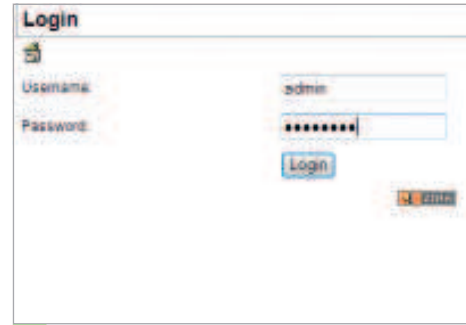
2 Set permissions There's only one folder to set permissions on: /zina/_zina/cache. Use your FTP tool to make it world writable. Right-click, choose **Properties**, and tick all the boxes if using Windows FTP, or **CHMOD 777** if you're sending a UNIX command through an FTP client.



3 Get started Navigate to Zina's start page. If all's well, you'll find it at [http://\(YOURURL\)/zina/](http://(YOURURL)/zina/), where demo content lets you explore its functionality. Click on **Artist One Demo**. This shows you what an artist's listing looks like. You can select an album title and be taken to a list of tracks.



4 More options On the album page, users have a choice of listening online or downloading. You can play tracks from an album or the site's catalogue in random order. To create a playlist, tick the box next to a track, then the **Add to** icon next to the **Session Playlist** drop-down.



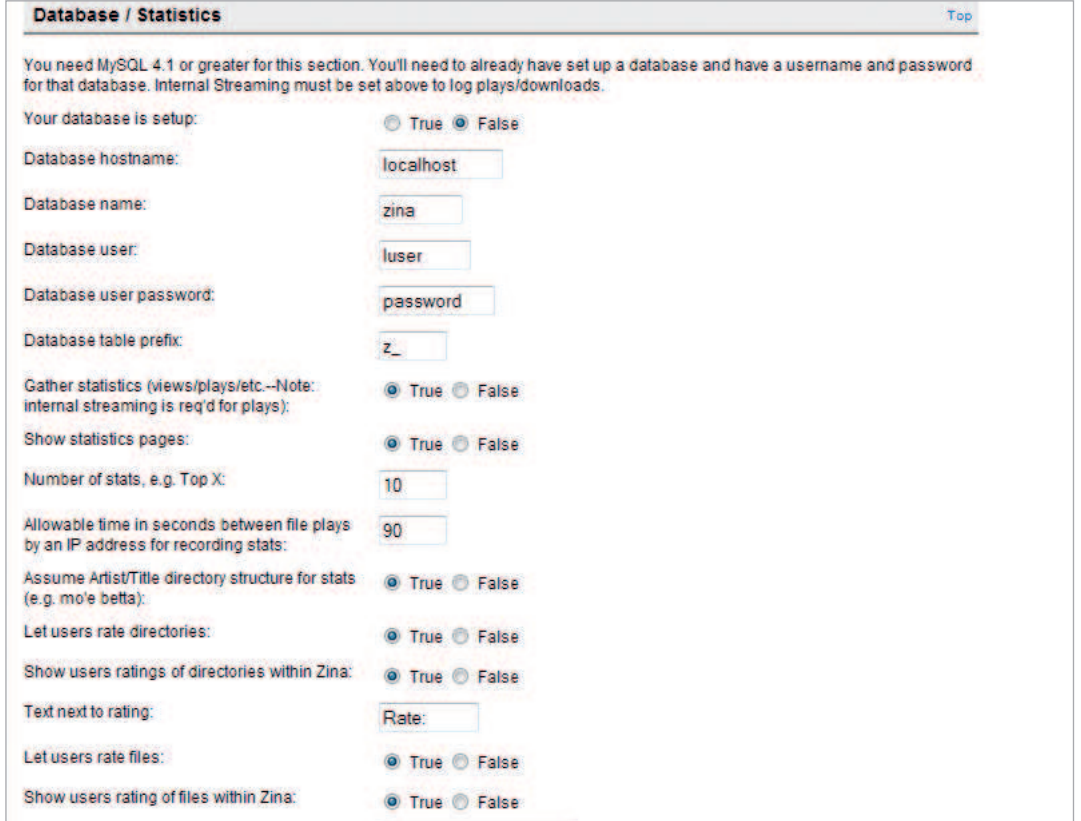
5 Under the bonnet That's the basics covered. Now click the padlock icon in the top-right of the screen. This takes you to a page where you can log in by entering the name "admin" and "password" as your password. Naturally, you'll want to change the default settings.



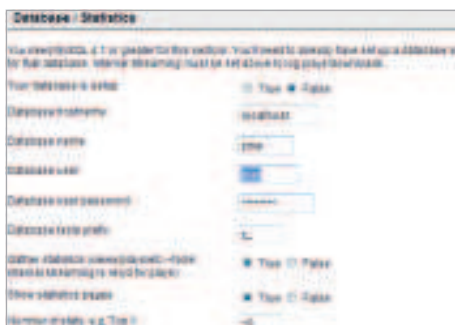
6 View the settings Click the new Settings icon that has appeared next to the login padlock (the one that looks like a pair of gears). You're presented with a long list of settings, which can be navigated quickly using the text links at the top of the page. Click on **Authentication**.



7 Set your password Type in the old password ("password"), then enter a new password and confirm it. When you've done that, scroll down to the bottom of the page and click **Update**. That's the same procedure for changing any settings. Now have a look through the page.



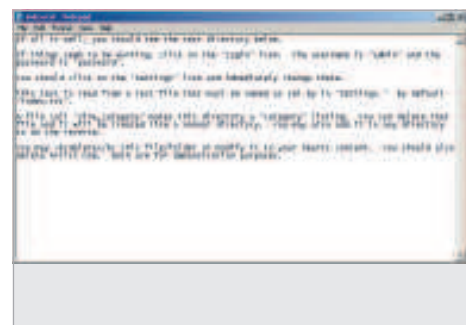
8 Using a database Most of the default settings that Zina ships with are good to go. One tweak we can make is enabling database functionality. Make sure you have a new MySQL database created on your server, or a database with room for some new tables. Drill down to **Database/Statistics** in the Settings page.



9 Name the database Set the **Your database is setup** option to **True**, then enter the database name, username and password. Leave the other settings at their defaults and click **Update**. Your database keeps a log of downloads; how many times a song is played, and so on.



10 Adding content With Zina configured and ready, it's time to start bringing in your own content. There's no interface for uploading songs; this has to be done manually and must conform to a specific directory structure. No need to worry though, as it's all quite simple.



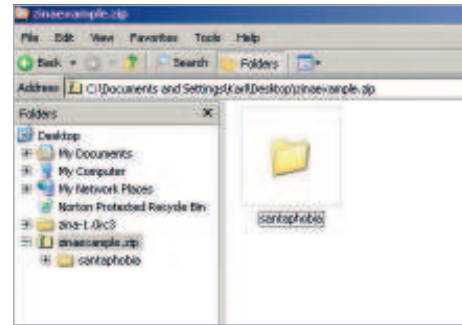
11 The front page We'll start by changing the front page text. Go to the folder you de-archived the Zina files to and open the 'music' directory. Open 'index.txt' in a text editor. You'll notice that this is the same text that appears on Zina's front page when you log in. >>>



12 Amend the text You can change the content and save it, then FTP the altered content to the corresponding directory in your remote installation. Refresh Zina's front page and your edited text will appear instead. Next, return to the local files and click on **artist one demo**.



13 Artist one You'll find a text file, 'index.txt', containing content for that artist's page. You'll also find an image and a 'title one' folder. Open this and you'll find two MP3s, another 'index.txt' text file (describing the album), a text file associated with song one, and another image.



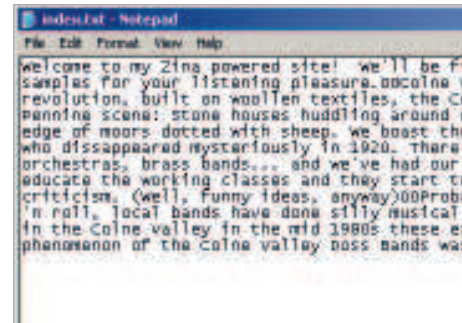
14 Add songs Following this structure, you can add some songs. I've made it easier by creating a directory for you. Drag 'zinaexample.zip' from the CD to your desktop and de-archive it. FTP the 'santaphobia' folder that's inside the archive to the 'music' folder of your Zina installation.

Expert tip Zina as a plug-in

Zina can also be installed in several Content Management Systems as a plug-in. The software supports Drupal, Mambo, Xoops and PHPNuke. In each case, begin by setting up and testing the software in standalone mode in the 'Modules' or 'Plug-in' folder of your chosen CMS. In the **Settings** section, choose your CMS from the **Embedded** dropdown in the **General** section. Finally, head to www.pancake.org/zina-install-12 to download the additional modules for your CMS. You'll also find instructions there for completing installations.



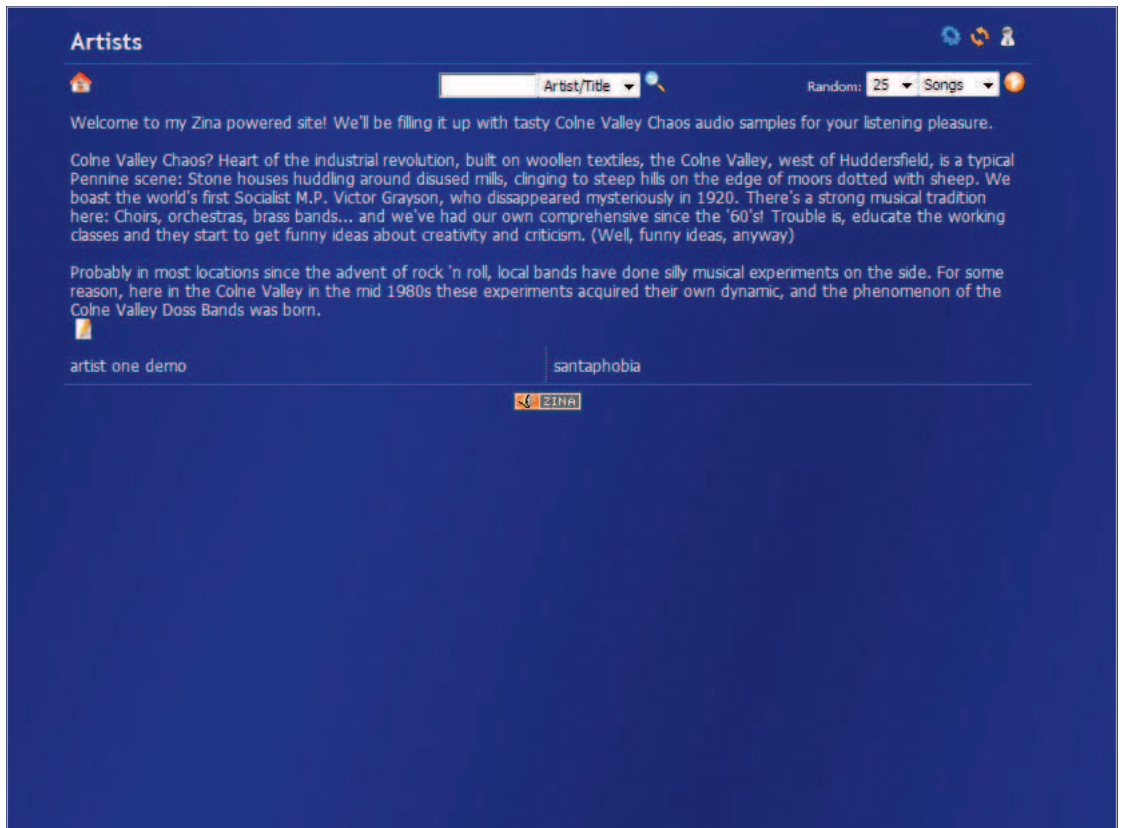
15 Band details Return to the front page of Zina in your browser. You'll see a **santaphobia** listing, in addition to **artist one demo**. We need to add a description of the band, so open up a text editor and type a few words into a new document. Name this "index.txt" and save it.



16 View your text Upload 'index.txt' to /zina/music/santaphobia, then click the **santaphobia** link on the front page of your Zina site. You'll see the text you entered. You can also change the image contained in the 'santaphobia' folder to anything you like.



17 Zina's themes Once you've mastered Zina's directory structure, adding music is fairly straightforward. Embedding the application into your site is similarly easy, and is achieved using themes. Go back to **Settings** and find the **Theme** drop-down in the **General** section.



18 Make your own There are three default themes you can choose from, which can be found in /zina/themes, each conforming to a specific structure. To create your own theme, make a copy of the 'zina-light' folder in the 'themes' folder and rename it.

FINISH Customise a theme Now you can tweak any aspect of the theme to create your own layout. The best files to change are 'template-main.html' and the CSS files 'common.css' and 'index.css'. You can also change any of the icon images in the 'images' folder. And that's it – you've mastered Zina!