Natural Music Introduction

Computer Hardware Required

Natural Music will run properly on any computer capable of efficiently running Windows XP or later.

Natural Music System Description

The Natural Music system allows the station's program director to control the station's music mix. This is done by creating format clocks to specify how much of each category or "type" of music to play and by setting up rules such as *tempo, gender,* and *style* to be used when scheduling music.

Music Scheduling

In the Natural Music system, each song is placed into one of the user-defined Music Categories. You can imagine each category as a stack of index cards with one song on each card. When the format clock for that hour calls for a song from that category, the first few songs are examined (the search depth is set by you), and a study is done to decide if any of your rules for that time of day (*tempo, mood, style*, etc.) are violated. If not, the song is scheduled and placed at the bottom of the "index-card" stack for that category.

Editing Music Logs

If there is a violation of your rules, the system will note this on the Music Log as a *Missed Song*. After the Music Log is generated for a day, you may load it into the Music Log Editor. This is where you may insert songs that were "Missed" due to rule violations. The system will never violate your rules, but you may. The Log Editor also allows you to print the Music Log.

Automation Music Logs

Logs in the appropriate format for several types of automation system can be created by the Music Log Editor and sent to your automation system.

BMI/ASCAP/APRA/RIAA Logs & Reports

The Music Log Editor will also generate reports with the information needed for these logs as long as the Music Log for that day is kept in the system [user selected # days]. If you need these reports, it is suggested that you generate them shortly after the Music Log is used. Natural Music can prepare the many of the reports in the electronic filing format required by many reporting agencies.

Built-In Help

Your first source for help with Natural music is this built-in help file. This help file may be accessed from any screen in Natural music by clicking [Help][Natural music Help]. You may look up topics in the [Contents], use the key-word [Index], or use the [Find] function to search the entire help file for specific words. The printable and searchable user manual may be accessed from the main Natural music screen by clicking [Help][Print User Manual].

Quick Start Guide

To run NM5 on users will need at least "Standard User" or "Power User" permission levels on that computer.

This describes a **very abbreviated Quick-Startup process** to quickly generate a usable Music Log and does not even begin to describe the many functions and controls of Natural Music. Those are described in detail in other parts of this help file. It assumes you have successfully installed the system and have Natural Music started to its main screen. From the Natural Music main screen click:

❑ **Create a Station Music Database** When you first start Natural Music, if you have not created an initial Station Database, you will need to create one using **[File] [New Station]**. Simply assign the database a unique name [usually the station call sign].

❑ **Enter Station Setup Information** Click **[Setup] [Station]** to enter station information and automation setup information, if needed.

❑ **Create Music Categories** Click **[Setup] [Music Categories] [New]** to create 1 or more Music Categories. At this point please set the *Search Depth* to 25% and leave *Prior Day Separation* [blank] at this point. Assign a meaningful name to the Music Categories.

❑ **Import or Enter Songs** Click **[Music Library] [Songs]** to access your music database. If you have <u>imported</u> an existing music database, you will only need to verify that each song is assigned to the correct Music Category. If your music database is empty, you will need to enter at least a few songs before trying to create your first music log. For each song you must enter at least the *Title, Artist, Source*, and *Music-Category* to be able to create a Music Log.

❑ **Create and Assign Format Clock** Click **[Setup] [Clocks]** to create at least one clock. Within the clock, at each point in the hour, select the Music Category to be played at that position in the hour. [If you need automation commands, see Automation Command help]. Then be sure to assign each clock to all hours for which that clock is to be used.

❑ **Create Minimal Rules** Click **[Setup] [Rules]** to verify that RuleSet 1 is assigned to all hours. Set up a very simplified set of rules. With RuleSet 1 displayed, click on the **[Artist]** tab and enter your required *Artist Separation* in Hours and Minutes (hh:mm) from 00:00 to 24:00. You may enter any other rules as needed but for this Quick Start, we recommend you only use the *Artist Separation* rule until you get a better idea of the interaction of the various rules.

❑ **Generate a Music Log** Click **[Logs] [New]** to generate a new Music Log for a day. After the Log is generated, it will be loaded into the Log Editor so you can edit, print, or send it to your automation system.

❑ **Edit/Print/Automate Music Log** Click **[Logs] [Edit]** to view an existing Music Log for a day so you can edit, print, or send it to your automation system.

❑ **Data Backup** Click **[Data] [Backup]** to backup your data often, daily if possible, so if your computer crashes, you will not have to manually reload all your data. **IMPORTANT!** Natural Broadcast Systems, Inc. is not responsible for any data loss no matter the cause. The only protection you have against a catastrophe is to backup your data often!

Common Startup Problems

This is a list of the most common problems encountered during initial Natural Music setup.

PROBLEM Completely blank music log. No songs scheduled or "missed" for one or more hours.

POSSIBLE CAUSES This indicates that Natural Music cannot find a clock to use during the hour(s) involved, OR the clock that is assigned for the hour(s) is empty.

SOLUTION Check your Format Clocks for the hours to verify that valid Clock ID's are assigned to each hour for which you need music. If valid clocks are assigned, be sure you have selected a valid Music Category at each point in that clock.

PROBLEM You get a large number of ***Missed Songs*** when your Music Log is generated.

POSSIBLE CAUSES This indicates that Natural Music cannot find a song within the specified Music Category which meets all your rules. A few ***Missed Songs*** on a Music Log is normal!

SOLUTIONS This problem indicates that *one or more* of the following is happening:
- Your Rules are too restrictive, relax them.
- Your Music Category Search Depth is set too low, and Natural Music is quitting before it finds a song which doesn't violate one of your Rules.
- Daypart Codes are preventing the system from choosing the songs during that part of the day.

   NOTE: When one of these errors doesn't appear to be a problem, try checking combinations of errors. A common type of this "combination problem" occurs when your *Prior Day Separation* is set at 4 hours and you have a song which is DayParted to play only 8-midnight. This song will play once and never play again, because the system will try to separate it from its last play by 4 hours, and there are only 4 hours in which it can play due to DayParting.

PROBLEM Some songs don't rotate properly through the Music Category. Some play often, some seldom or never play.

POSSIBLE CAUSES This indicates that your rules may be forcing Natural Music to reuse some songs too often and others not enough. Check the song History to be sure this is not just an illusion.

SOLUTIONS This problem indicates that <u>one or more</u> of the following is happening:
- Are you Shuffling the Music Category too often? Never shuffle more often than once within the number of days it takes the Music Category to rotate completely.

- Rules are too restrictive, relax them. **Example**: This often happens when you have very slow or fast tempo songs and your tempo rule often precludes them from playing on a regular basis. This causes the "moderate" tempo songs to rotate too fast.

- Your Music Category Search Depth is set too large. The system keeps digging deep into the category to find songs which meet your rules, causing the violating songs to rotate slowly, if at all, and the non-violating songs to rotate rapidly.

- Your Daypart Codes are preventing the system from choosing some songs during parts of the day.