

## The Man Behind the MP3



Photo: Ray Bengston

**Nathan Schulhof invented the MP3 player, works with a renewable energy company and a white blood cell storage facility, and is writing a new book about downloading music.**

**N**athan Schulhof might not be a household name, but his revolutionary invention certainly is. This extraordinary innovator invented, patented and introduced the first MP3 player—and that is just the beginning of this visionary's achievements in changing the world.

"I can't tell you how many people tell me, 'thank you.' It makes me feel very proud," Schulhof, known as the "Father of the MP3 Industry," says of his 1994 creation. "What the invention of the MP3 has done for me, besides make a few dollars, is allow me to really do things that I want to do."

Things like taking three companies public, creating the first media catalogue website ([www.audiohighway.com](http://www.audiohighway.com)), bundling software in maga-

zines, and continuing to bring emerging technologies to the marketplace. He now only involves himself in projects that he characterizes as "very disruptive."

"They actually have to change the world somewhat," he says. "Make it a better place for human beings."

Adhering to this criteria, he's helping fund and introduce Monterey-headquartered BioBanc USA, the immunology storage facility for white blood cells.

"There's so much work being done in medicine that is going to extend our lives and cure diseases," Schulhof says.

He also has his hands in XET, a solar company creating affordable renewable energy, as well as Athena, a company aimed at resolving female incontinence. Set for release later this year is Schulhof's latest book, "Download: The Story of the Invention that Terrified the Music Industry and Transformed Global Culture."

In the midst of his great accomplishments, Schulhof's world was turned upside-down on January 16, 2004, when he lapsed into a coma. Resulting from an ignored tooth infection that turned his entire body septic, the five-day coma wiped out his memory and left him hospitalized for eight months, virtually unable to function.

"It was terrible. It took me two years to recover," he explains. Since that life-changing illness, he's eliminated his previous 70-hour workweeks but refuses to retire. "My work is the best thing in my life," he says. "I try to really live in the moment and enjoy what's happening right now."

A wine connoisseur in his spare time, Schulhof now splits his time between his offices in Los Angeles and Los Gatos, residence in Solvang, and condo in Carmel.

"I love the people and the way of life," he says of the Central Coast. "How can you not find it just gorgeous?"

—Katie Perry