

Topic: Unplugging USB Devices from C/Ports When Using MS Media Player
Component(s) Affected: Universal C/Ports, Dual Monitor C/Ports
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OVERVIEW / ENVIRONMENT

Microsoft Media Player can provide audio output to C/Ports, through either the legacy audio out jack or the USB ports, to a suitable audio playback device (e.g. speakers). In either case, the Microsoft Media Player application outputs audio data through a "USB Audio" device that is associated with the Standard Open-HCD USB Host Controller. Should this device be removed from the system while the Microsoft Media Player application is open, then this application will fail to operate correctly.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

If Microsoft Media Player stops playing audio, but works correctly after exiting and re-launching the application, then this may be due to the loss of the USB Audio device. The issue can be confirmed if the loss of audio was associated with either unplugging the audio playback device (e.g., speakers), or disconnecting the C/Port CAT5 cable connection.

The USB Audio device is an intermediate device driver that is initialized when Windows detects an Audio playback device (e.g., speakers) connected somewhere in the USB network topology. When Windows detects that there are no more such playback devices connected, then the USB Audio device driver is terminated. Unfortunately, when this happens, certain open applications (such as Windows Media Player) that were/are accessing the USB Audio device are not informed and/or terminated as well.

The open applications can experience a variety of effects, but typically appear to continue working, although no audio is heard. This is the case with Windows Media Player. In fact, it will appear to still be playing the track started prior to the loss of the USB Audio device, but no audio will be sent to the playback device.

The USB Audio device can be lost simply unplugging the audio playback device plugged into the DMUCP/UCP. A less obvious instance of this issue occurs when the CAT5 cable connected to the DMUCP/UCP is unplugged or switched in the backpack. This action causes the entire USB network topology to be re-enumerated, and thus the USB Audio device is terminated and re-launched.

TROUBLESHOOTING

When USB devices are unplugged, including disconnecting or switching the CAT5 cable, and the result is the termination of the USB Audio device, any open applications that depend on the USB Audio device should be restarted. In the case of Windows Media Player, the application should be exited and re-launched. Failure to do so will result in the application continuing but without actually generating any audio playback.

For more information, please contact ClearCube technical support.

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