



MusicWatch Annual Music Study: 2020 Highlights

Not For Publication

1. The number of music streamers in the US hit another record, at 209M, or 86% of the internet using population aged 13 and older.
2. Music subscribers also hit a record, at 84M. This is subscribers not subscriptions, and some consumers have more than one paid sub. The figure excludes SiriusXM and Prime subs who use Amazon Music. Adding those in, the subscriber number jumps to 123M or more than half the internet population 13 and older.
3. The number of people sharing a paid account also grew, both among those on sanctioned family plans (+31%) and simply swapping log-ins (+44%). Makes you wonder if all the folks with new SVOD accounts are sharing those log-ins and trading music accounts for access to Disney+!
4. Most popular genres; 80-90's Hits topped Classic Rock for #1 this year. Popularity is based on genres consumer report as their favorites; they listen to, add to playlists, follow artists on social and see live shows. Classic Rock was #2 followed by Country and Rap/HipHop.
5. Engaging with music on social media exploded in 2020 with elevated audience levels, thanks mostly to TikTok. Social media accounts for an increasing share of time spent listening to music. While TikTok grew as a trusted source for following artists, those following on Facebook and Twitter declined.
6. 48% of people who traveled in a car say they are in vehicles less; that is 83 million who are commuting less, taking fewer shopping trips or traveling less in their cars. The car radio remains the most popular in-vehicle listening device although broadcast listening hours have been depressed by less driving.
7. Lockdowns cut live attendance by nearly 50 million attendees in 2020 and per capita spending by 60%. That does not include tickets paid for and still held by buyers. Only one-third of concert goers have little or no concerns about returning to venues even after they officially open.
8. Growth in smart speaker usage slowed for the first time, although consumers continue to cite PAD's as highly influential for their in-home listening.
9. Piracy, or Badquisition as we call it, was level this year. While legacy P2P/Torrent sharing is at lowest levels ever, 16.4M stream ripped a music file.
10. Remember ownership? Listening to CDs has fallen by 50% in the past five years. Incidence of purchasing CDs and DDLs fell under 10% this year, and the remaining buyers continue to get older each year.
11. Vinyl as comfort food? Vinyl had a monumental year, surpassing CD sales for the first time in generations. One in four (27%) of those who bought more vinyl agreed *"with all that's gone on this year I wanted the comfort that I get from listening to vinyl"*.