

**New England Conservatory
Contemporary Improvisation Program
Technology, Music Streaming, and Music Industry Updates
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WHERE ARE WE

- **US Streaming**
 - According to Nielsen Music (Billboard) and BuzzAngle (Rolling Stone), the total number of music streams in the U.S. last year **over one trillion for the first time**, representing a 15% growth in streams year-over-year.
 - On-demand streaming accounted for over 80% of total consumption in the U.S., and that audio streaming in particular continued to register solid annual growth (from Nielsen's 24% to BuzzAngle's 32%).
- **Audio vs. Video**
 - Audio accounted for around 70% of total on-demand streams in the U.S. in 2019, with video comprising the remaining 30%.
 - But Nielsen's worldwide streaming data flips that ratio on its head:
 - Out of the 5.1 trillion on-demand music streams generated globally in 2019, including U.S. plays, 66% came from video, while the remaining 33% came from audio.
 - This is because YouTube is the preferred consumption platform and marketing machine for several international music genres, from [K-pop](#) in Korea to [Bollywood](#) in India (YouTube alone accounts for [40%](#) of Indian labels' revenues).
- **Streaming Concentrates Power**
 - 31 songs were streamed over 500 million times in 2019, up from 21 such songs in 2018.
 - A tier below, nearly 900 songs were streamed over 100 million times last year, up from 525 in 2018.
 - But that doesn't mean the distribution of power has gotten any more equitable. BuzzAngle found that the 1,000 most-streamed songs in 2019 accounted for 18% of *all* streams, while the top 500 album titles were responsible for 30% of all album sales — same as the year before.
- **Gender Inequity**
 - A disappointing takeaway from both BuzzAngle's and Nielsen's reports is the lack of women among the top-selling artists and songs of both 2019 and the past decade.
 - According to BuzzAngle, with the exception of Cardi B's "Bodak Yellow" and Camila Cabello's "Havana," *all* of the 25 top-streamed songs over the past five years were by male artists.
- **Classical Music**
 - December 2, 2019 Pittsburgh Post Gazette
 - Accounts for just 0.7% of digital streaming, is being left behind.
 - Classical is facing the risk of a digital death," said Thomas Steffens, CEO of the classical music-only streaming service [Primephonic](#)

- According to a new survey commissioned by Primephonic, 34% of the 1,000 Americans surveyed are interested in listening to classical music, but only 16% actually do so.
- Both offer more comprehensive metadata than standard streaming services, as it's helpful to know the composer and specific performers.
- In June, Idagio [released its own study](#) about the classical music streaming industry. It found that radio and CDs are still the primary ways that people listen to classical music, but streaming is growing. In 2018, classical music streaming revenue was up 46% to \$141 million, or 37% of the total classical music market value.

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

MIDIA a London based research and analytics firm - intersection of music, technology, music, and video. 20/20 Prediction Report.

- **Attention Saturation**
 - Measuring sentiment – rather than purely time and money spent – will emerge as the methodology for measuring success in the era of attention saturation.
- **Vertical Integration**
 - Watch for record labels, sports leagues, TV networks and games publishers getting snapped up for true vertical integration.
- **Social Video**
 - Nowhere is this better seen than Instagram and TikTok. Audio is the victim in that equation.
- **User-Modified Content**
 - Memes; Captions;
- **Content and Engagement Clusters**
 - Smart – and typically big – companies are therefore building engagement clusters. Sometimes these are ecosystems (e.g. Apple, Amazon), but in other instances they are collections of content experiences, e.g. Disney+, Hulu, ESPN+.
- **Abundance Paradox**
 - The emerging abundance overload is the entertainment equivalent of feeling nauseous from eating or drinking too much. 2020 will see this trend accelerate, with slowing and even declining user numbers for incumbents in mature markets.

METADATA

- October 2019, the music industry standards body [DDEX](#) released a new metadata standard.
- **Digital Data Exchange, LLC (DDEX)** is a not-for-profit, membership organisation that was formed in 2006, and is focused on the creation of digital music value chain standards.
- The standard is called [MEAD](#) (for Media Enrichment And Description), and it could lead to a breakthrough in making music easier to find.
 - Information about “focus tracks”, which is crucial for voice-activated services (i.e. which sound recording or video is to be played when a consumer asks for, for example, “the latest George-Ezra track” – which may well differ from Ezra’s most recently released song because of advertisement campaigns or other events);
 - Journalistic material such as reviews about a musical work, a recording, an album or a musician;
 - Lyrics of musical works or recordings;
 - Information about artist nicknames, whether “official” or not;
 - Information about historic chart positions of and/or awards won by an artist, a work, a recording or a release;

- Extended information of interest for aficionados of classical music;