

Impact of the internet on live music



**ASSIGN
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“ The Internet has killed live music and caused financial problems for musicians”. Discuss.

Society is confronted to a fast changing technological environment, especially with the Internet. Some claim that live music is on the decline, and that music industry and musicians suffer from financial problems. We will be discussing the negative, but also the positive aspects that has the Internet on live music and on the music industry.

Firstly, it is a known fact that in comparison to the past, CDs’ sales are declining, and this is mostly due to the apparition of new media and to illegal music streaming and downloads online.[1]Despite this, online content also has advantages: many consumers, especially the younger population, use the Internet as a way to discover new music, although it is mostly done illegally. This discovery can be turned into revenue with legal streaming services.[2]

The younger generation does not go in shops to find music anymore; the Internet is a more practical way to discover new artists, while staying at home. Services, such as Spotify, have been made available to stream music legally: free versions are run thanks to advertisements, and consumers can pay to not have them.[3]Consumers tend to download music in order to sample it, and if they like it, they may purchase it,[4]and maybe even go to concerts later on. This is also positive for live music; it is an effective advertisement in a way.

Some debates were recently going on about Periscope, a mobile application that allows you to watch people live-streaming all over the world. It is said to have a negative impact on live music since people were live-streaming concerts for example. On the one hand, it is true, for people watching the performances are not paying, and people are streaming it without owning the rights to do so.[5] On the other hand, it can be a good way to make other people discover an artist, especially since it is available to see worldwide, including places where there may not be concert opportunities.

From a financial point of view, illegal resources online do impact the industry and artists. However, new ways are found to improve these issues as much as possible.

A successful example is Japan: in order for their disc industry to keep on selling, they developed an effective strategy; albums and singles come with unique features, special songs or additional content and bonuses. This strategy is working well because fans are ready to pay to get this additional content from their favourite artists.[6]

The music industry – in all its aspects – has changed over the past years due to the Internet and the digitization of music. Nowadays, consumers want free access to music. It became an expectation and piracy is considered normal. Subscription models are now more and more used, allowing the consumers to pay in order to access a music library.[7] Streaming services ensure revenue to artists, labels, etc. Artists themselves can also release free songs through these in exchange of consumers' loyalty. These services also prove to be useful for the evaluation of trends and popularity of songs.

The Internet also offers opportunities for artists that other media don't provide. Artists can now interact with their fans on social media – a lot of them do so -, and make their own advertisement directly to their fanbase.

To conclude, despite having made illegal copying and downloading much easier, new technologies also offer new opportunities for the music industry.

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