

Swedish music sales 'boosted by Spotify'

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Spotify co-founder Daniel Ek speaks at a Spotify event in New York City on December 6, 2012. Music sales in Sweden rose last year thanks to the growing popularity of music streaming service Spotify, the country's music industry body said, offering hope to a sector battered by file-sharing.

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Last year was the best year for music sales in Sweden since 2005, according to data from the Swedish Recording Industry Association (GLF).

"This is a clear sign that more consumers are paying for their music consumption than for some time," the chief executive of the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI) Sweden, Ludvig Werner, said in a statement.

"We hope that a recovering market for music will encourage artists and music companies to release more music," he added.

Music sales in the Nordic country rose 14 percent to 943.6 million kronor (108.9 million euros or \$145.4 million) in 2012 from the previous year, boosted by a 12 percent increase in digital sales, which accounted for 63 percent of total music sales.

A total of 90 percent of digital sales came from music streaming services such as Spotify, the digital media juggernaut that was founded in 2006 by Swedes Daniel Ek and Martin Lorentzon.

Spotify first launched its service in 2008 in Sweden and says it has since become the world's largest [streaming service](#).

It claims to have a catalogue of more than 18 million songs, more than 15 million active users and over four million paying customers.

However, Sweden has also been at the forefront of file-sharing activism, and in 2006 fans of the website Pirate Bay and similar sites formed the [Pirate Party](#) to campaign for copyright reform.

Founded in 2003, The [Pirate Bay](#)—which boasts more than 30 million users—makes it possible to skirt copyright fees and share music, film

and other files using [bit torrent](#) technology, or peer-to-peer links offered on the site.

A co-founder of the Swedish-based website, Gottfrid Svartholm Warg, was handed a one-year prison sentence by a [Swedish court](#) in 2009 for promoting [copyright infringement](#) but failed to show up to serve his term.

He was detained in Sweden in September last year, days after his deportation from Cambodia.

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