

New study points to increased incomes from music streaming

June 4 2013

The issue of intellectual property rights in the music industry remains a hot topic, and the debate seems to intensify every time technological advances are made. A new doctoral thesis from the School of Business, Economics and Law, University of Gothenburg, shows that the total incomes of music composers have increased significantly in the last 15 years, despite the file sharing revolution.

Based on Swedish statistics from 1980-2009, the study concludes that the music industry's claim in the debate is true: it has lost revenue due to illicit downloading. Yet the study also shows that the composers have been able to increase their incomes substantially over the same period through increased revenues from concerts, radio and TV. And their revenues from music streaming have grown rapidly since 2010.

'In 2011 their income from music streaming increased by 70 % from the year before, and today downloads are generating more income than [CD sales](#),' says the author of the thesis Staffan Albinsson, researcher in economic history.

Albinsson believes that innovations such as Spotify have helped tone down the debate.

'The consumer can access a lot of material without breaking the law, and the rights holders are getting paid. There is no need for a discussion until next time new technology is introduced,' says Staffan Albinsson, who refers to the [printing press](#), the gramophone, radio and cassette tapes as

good examples of past technological innovations that have sparked debate about [intellectual property rights](#) at different times in history.

Albinsson wishes the debate would give more attention to the qualitative implications of [intellectual property laws](#).

'I'm convinced that different forms of intellectual property rights have different qualitative implications,' he says. The most illegally downloaded music is probably also the most expensive music to produce, and if the high costs cannot be recovered, this music won't be there to enjoy.'

Provided by University of Gothenburg

Citation: New study points to increased incomes from music streaming (2013, June 4) retrieved 19 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2013-06-incomes-music-streaming.html>

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