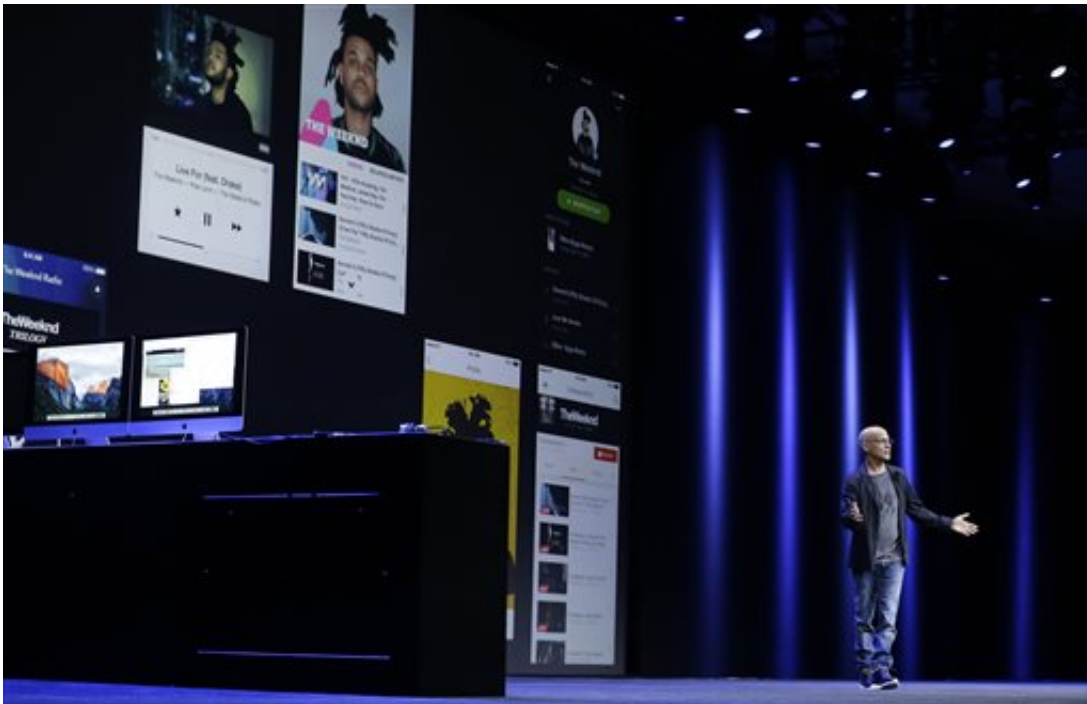


Apple Music brings change to streaming, but is it enough?

June 9 2015, by Ryan Nakashima



Beats co-founder and Apple employee Jimmy Iovine speaks at the Apple Worldwide Developers Conference in San Francisco, Monday, June 8, 2015. The maker of iPods and iPhones announced Apple Music, an app that combines Beats 1, a 24-hour, seven-day live radio station, with an on-demand music streaming service. (AP Photo/Jeff Chiu)

When Apple launches its Apple Music streaming service at the end of June, it will affect things big and small in the music industry.

Hundreds of millions of iPhone and iPad users in more than 100 countries will get to try the \$10-per-month service for free for the next three months when it is pushed to their devices with a [free upgrade](#).

They'll get unlimited access to tens of millions of songs during the trial, and afterward be required to pay a monthly fee for access, instead of paying for each album or song download.

"It'll change the way you experience music forever," CEO Tim Cook promised Monday at Apple's annual conference for [software developers](#), held in San Francisco.

It could become one more thing that keeps current iPhone and iPad users inside the Apple ecosystem, while enticing others in.

Here's a look at some of the major aspects of Apple Music.

INTEGRATION WITH SIRI

Subscribers will be able to ask Siri, Apple's mobile digital assistant, all sorts of unusual questions about music, and have any of millions of tunes play back in response.

Executive Eddy Cue demonstrated a few of them Monday, including asking for a playlist of the top 10 hits in the alternative genre, asking for a song from the soundtrack of the movie "Selma," and even asking for the top song from May 1982. (It was Joan Jett & the Blackheart's "I Love Rock 'n' Roll.")

Using Siri's artificial intelligence and one's voice could come in handy when working out, going on a jog or driving a car that comes with

Apple's Car Play.

REAL RADIO, OVER THE INTERNET

In modern times, Internet radio has been defined by automated playlist generators like Pandora, Songza and others. Apple is changing that game by bringing back living, breathing DJs. It plans to run "Beats 1," a live 24/7 radio station hosted by DJs including former BBC host Zane Lowe in Los Angeles, New York and London. The service will be free to users with an Apple ID.

It will also offer standard genre-based Internet radio stations, this time with playlists curated by humans, instead of the algorithms that power the soon-to-be-disappearing feature, iTunes Radio.



Musician Drake, right, high fives Eddy Cue, Apple senior vice president of Internet Software and Services, during the Apple Worldwide Developers Conference in San Francisco, Monday, June 8, 2015. The maker of iPods and iPhones announced Apple Music, an app that combines Beats 1, a 24-hour, seven-day live radio station, with an on-demand music streaming service. (AP Photo/Jeff Chiu)

CONNECT

Apple is opening a new platform for artists that allows them to release content to fans such as lyrics to an upcoming song, behind-the-scenes video, or even new tracks. Any user can access "Connect" through a tab on the Apple Music app, and can follow artists and access their feeds. Only subscribers will be able to view, save and like the content.

The fact that payment will be required for what might be considered

promotional content will be new to subscription services, but could coax super-fans to pay up.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Apple touts its human curation so much, it's making you pay for it. A new "For You" tab will offer subscribers music suggestions based on artists and genres they say they like, as well as what they actually listen to. A team of music experts is said to be behind every pick.

"These people are going to help you with the most difficult question in music: What song comes next?" said executive Jimmy Iovine, who helped develop the service.

APPLE MUSIC VS. MY MUSIC VS. BEATS MUSIC

Apple device users who have bought songs or albums on iTunes needn't worry. Their music will still be on their devices, and in many cases, still saved to the cloud.

Music that isn't available for streaming but still for sale on iTunes, like songs from the Beatles, can be integrated into playlists. Subscription music can be saved for offline listening alongside downloads.

And the some 300,000 subscribers to Beats Music, which Apple bought along with the headphone line for \$3 billion last year, will have the opportunity to transfer their playlists over to Apple Music, at which point, their Beats subscription will be canceled.

BETTER DEAL FOR RECORD LABELS, ARTISTS

Music fans who have read about artists and record labels complaining about the tiny royalties they get from streaming services may have something to cheer about.

According to two people familiar with the matter, last-minute deal-making did result in a better streaming deal for record labels and artists.

Instead of sharing roughly 55 percent of subscription streaming revenue with labels and artists, Apple will share around 58 to 60 percent. Music publishers in charge of songwriting royalties also saw a slight bump in their cut from about 10 to 12 percent to about 14 percent of subscription revenues, the people said. The people spoke on condition of anonymity because the deals are confidential.

ANDROID

Apple is letting users of Google's competing Android mobile operating system use a version of the Apple Music app beginning this fall. But those users will have to pay to access Beats 1 and some features of Connect that Apple device users will get for free.

CAN APPLE COME FROM BEHIND?

Observers expect Apple's biggest advantages—its huge user base, ability to sell its services with attractive TV ads, and global reach—will get the

service up and running successfully.

Whether it will dramatically raise the popularity of streaming services is unclear. Currently, Apple's Beats Music serves just a tiny fraction of the 41 million paying music subscribers globally.

Russ Crupnick, managing partner of research firm Music Watch Inc., says he's not sure whether Apple has come up with the right package of services to make paid music streaming at \$10 a month take off.

"You've got to really change the mindset of consumers to have them say, 'Wow, this makes it worth the money,'" Crupnick says. "I still think you'll have a lot of people who will say, 'No thanks, I'll take the 99-cent track. There are a lot of places where I can listen to [music](#), thank you very much.'"

© 2015 The Associated Press. All rights reserved.

Citation: Apple Music brings change to streaming, but is it enough? (2015, June 9) retrieved 5 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2015-06-apple-music-streaming.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--