

Streaming sets the tune for French Riviera music trade show

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The new boss of Deezer, France's answer to Swedish-based streaming leader Spotify, will take the stage on the first day of the event in Cannes, along with an executive from Tidal, a rival service relaunched this year by American rapper Jay-Z.

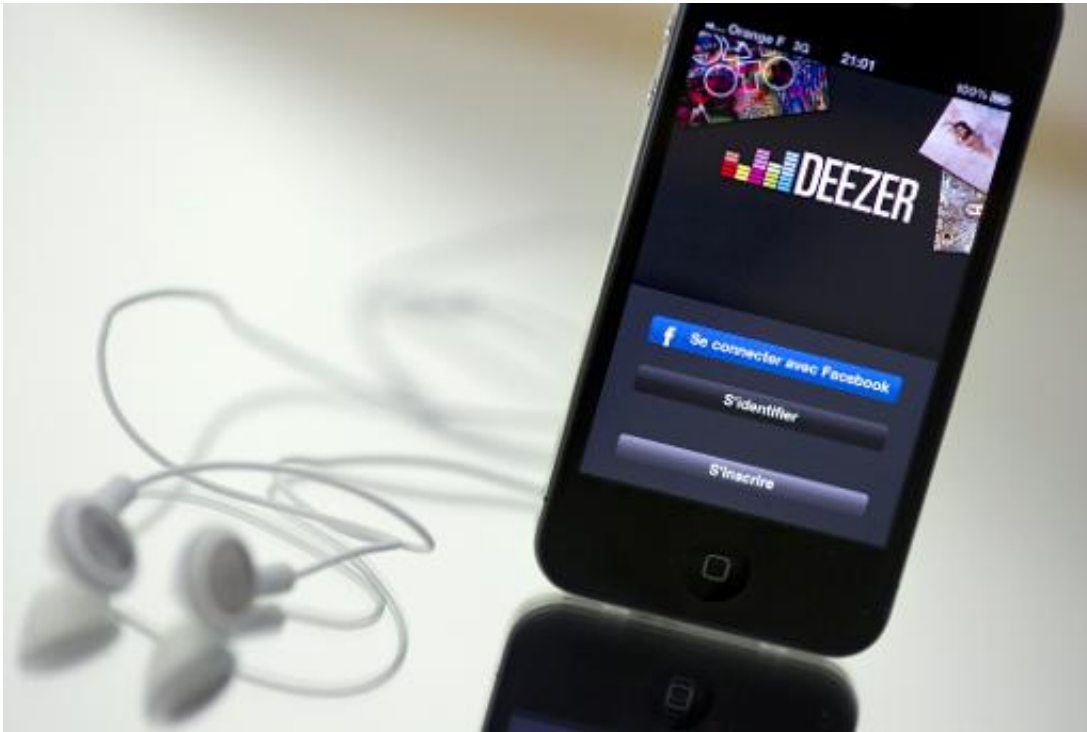
It's one more sign that streaming is focusing the minds, hopes and investments of many of the 6,000 attendees of the trade show, coming from 75 countries.

While older consumers "possess" music, either as files on computers or smartphones, or even still on CDs, younger generations have turned to [streaming music](#) sites or applications that pipe tunes through the Internet, with the user having some control over what is played.

With the [music industry](#) in crisis since the beginning of the century—illegal downloading and changing consumer behaviour have cut revenues by around 60 percent—executives hope that legal streaming outfits will help slow the slide.

But questions remain over the economic model to follow, and how the pie will be shared.

The search for answers is all the more pressing now that global sales of music online are equal to physical sales, according to the worldwide recording industry representative organisation IFPI.



French music streaming site Deezer has 16 million users, around six million of them paying customers

The imminent entry into the streaming market of Apple, which revolutionised online music sales with its iTunes store, is further spurring interest.

Competing services

Several existing streaming outfits offer free versions of their service, but they break up the feed with ads. Ad-free versions typically cost just under 10 euros or \$10 or 10 pounds a month, depending on the territory.

Spotify has around 60 million users worldwide with a quarter of them paying for no ads. But it has come in for criticism from some artists—most famously Taylor Swift—who say it doesn't sufficiently

compensate them.

Deezer has 16 million users, around six million of them paying customers, and a music library to rival Spotify's 30 million songs.

Jay-Z's Tidal pledges the highest royalty percentage to artists as well as playback unaffected by compression. But it has no free version with ads, and charges relatively high fees for its high-fidelity audio service. A monthly subscription costs 19.99 euros (\$22.65) in mainland Europe, 19.99 pounds (\$30.75) in Britain and \$19.99 in the United States.



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The way music is now being consumed represents "a complete paradigm

shift and a whole new music industry needs to be built around that," said Mark Mulligan of British media and [music](#) consulting firm Midia.

As well as [streaming](#), Midem will be looking at copyright, an area that the European Union is looking at overhauling to keep pace with the changes brought on by the Internet.

Andrus Ansip, the European Commission's vice president in charge of the Digital Single Market, will be in attendance at the close of the four-day event on Monday.



A woman listens to music at last year's MIDEM on February 1, 2014 at the Palais des Festivals, in Cannes

Midem, now in its 49th edition, is usually held at the beginning of the

year. It was shifted to June this year to avoid a clash with the Grammy Awards in the United States—and to take advantage of the better weather to put on several free concerts for the public.

More than a dozen emerging artists from Britain, the US, Germany, Norway and elsewhere have been invited to perform at the event.

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