

Music industry begins global Friday release of new albums

July 10 2015, by Shaun Tandon



A woman listens to a music CD in a shop in Hong Kong on June 17, 2012

Big record stores, streaming services and hit charts adjusted longtime practices as the music industry Friday began a coordinated global release for new albums.

For the first time most new albums will be released in all formats on Fridays everywhere in the world, ending regional divergences that

industry players found increasingly anachronistic in the age of instant digital [music](#).

The IFPI, the industry's global body, is championing "New Music Fridays" both to curb piracy and to stimulate sales as shoppers start their weekends.

The coordinated day marks "an opportunity to recreate excitement around the release of music—the message is 'Think Friday, Think New Music,'" said Frances Moore, chief executive of the London-based IFPI (International Federation of the Phonographic Industry).

Releases on the first New Music Friday included the latest by English synthpop star Little Boots and the first album in more than a decade by Chicago alternative rockers Veruca Salt.

Spotify, the leader in the booming streaming sector, marked New Music Friday with a notification to subscribers and a playlist of songs recently released by artists such as Eminem, Demi Lovato and Pharrell Williams—who had originally put out the song "Freedom" as an exclusive for Apple's new streaming service.

Major global charts also modified reporting periods. The next "weekly" hit list of Billboard, the premier US chart, will cover 11 days to account for the transition.

Albums traditionally have come out on Tuesday in the United States and Billboard's chart has looked at weeks ending on Sundays.



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The top album on the last chart with such a period, ending July 5, was "Dreams Worth More Than Money" by rapper Meek Hill, who scored his first number one.

One institution that faced a peculiar problem with the transition was NewReleaseTuesday.com, a leading US site for Christian music.

The site rechristened itself [NewReleaseToday](http://NewReleaseToday.com) to keep with the times while preserving the acronym NRT, by which it is commonly known.

Some differences to persist

Germany and Australia already had Friday release dates, while Monday

was the day in Britain and France.

The global release date is supported by major record labels but is ultimately voluntary, with no legal repercussions for vendors who do not put out new albums on Fridays.

In a notable exception, Japan will keep releasing domestic-oriented albums on Wednesday, although works by international artists will come out there on Fridays.



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The IFPI said it expected some artists in Asian countries to keep their custom of releasing albums on dates considered auspicious, which do not necessarily fall on Friday.

The global release date has also faced heated opposition from owners of some small independent stores in the United States.

The US opponents argue that Fridays are already busy, while Tuesdays bring in fans on an otherwise slow day and allow more time for store staff to open shipments.

Others say that release dates are increasingly meaningless for small brick-and-mortar stores, which attract collectors who may already have heard the music digitally.

Noel Gallagher, the brash star of Oasis fame, warned not to expect all artists to toe the line on New Music Fridays.

"I'll release mine on a Wednesday just to be fucking contrary," he told Britain's NME music magazine.

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