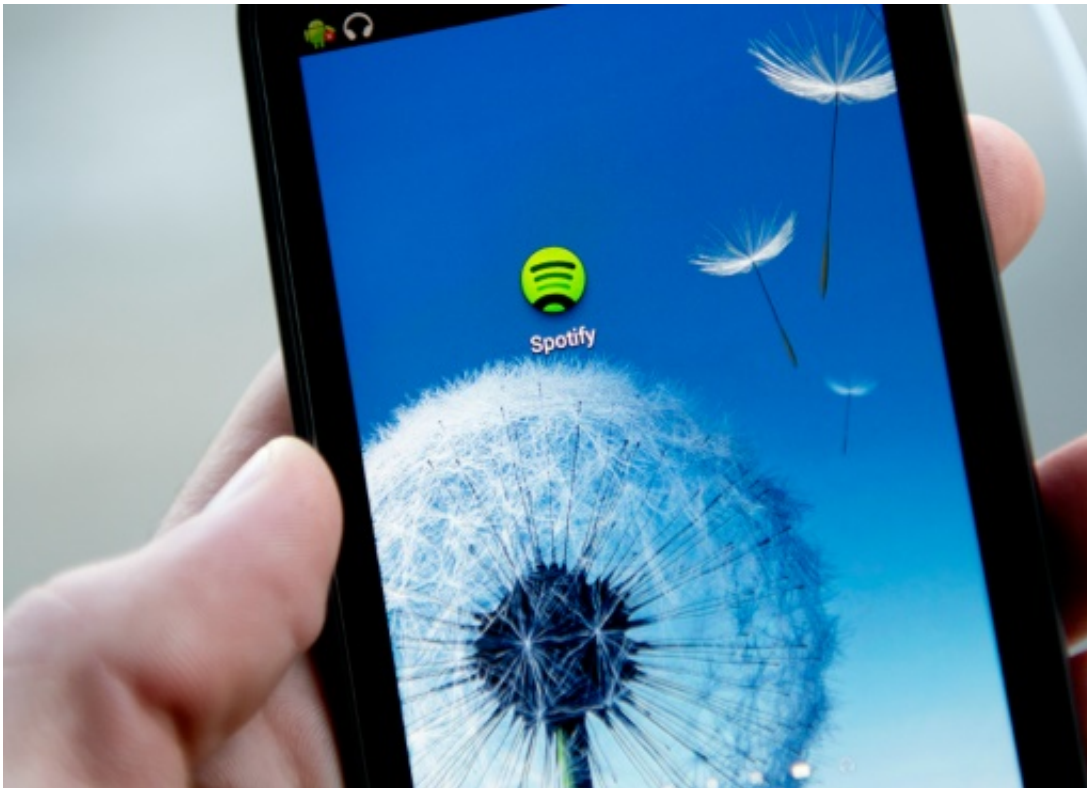


As streaming booms, audio overtakes video in US

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Americans have for the first time streamed more music on audio services such as Spotify than through videos, in a welcome shift for the industry, a study said Tuesday.

Streaming has been rapidly growing and offering a new source of revenue for the long-beleaguered [music](#) business, which has tried to steer fans to subscription audio sites and away from video behemoth YouTube.

Analytical firm BuzzAngle Music, in a mid-year report, reported 114 billion audio streams on sites such as Spotify, Apple Music, Tidal and Rhapsody in the first six months of the year.

The number topped the 95 billion video streams on YouTube, Dailymotion and other sites, marking the first period in which audio dominated, it said.

Audio streams soared in the first six months of 2016, more than doubling from the same period last year, while video streams grew by a more modest 23 percent.

Streaming overall expanded by 58 percent in the United States, the world's largest music market, keeping up a breakneck rate of growth, it said.

The shift toward audio streaming is particularly striking as YouTube alone has more than one billion users around the world.

Spotify, the largest streaming company, said it had 89 million active monthly users worldwide as of the end of 2015, of whom 28 million were paying for subscriptions.

Streaming—which allows unlimited, on-demand listening—has been transforming the global music industry which in 2015 reported its first substantial revenue growth since the dawn of the internet age.

While some artists criticize Spotify in particular for its compensation

level, the music industry says it earns far less from video sites.

Record labels have been campaigning to change US and European laws that protect video companies if users upload copyrighted material.

YouTube's owner Google rejects the criticism, saying it also has licensing agreements with [record labels](#) and checks for copyright through its Content ID technology.

The company has started its own YouTube Music streaming site for both video and [audio](#) as well as the subscription-tier YouTube Red [video](#) service.

BuzzAngle said that Toronto rapper Drake's "Views" was by far the biggest album in the first six months of the year, with Beyonce's "Lemonade" a distant second followed by Adele's "25," which came out in late 2015.

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