

Music Industry Market Research
The Effect of Cover Artwork on the Music Industry

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Abstract

The creation and use of the Internet has revolutionized the marketing and consumption of music in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. Past and current marketing tactics were researched to see why the music industry has declined in sales in recent years. Cover art has been apart of the traditional marketing of tangible goods such as vinyl records, CDs, cassettes, and other media. It grabs the attention of the consumer and is their first impression of the album. The Internet has utilized cover art, but not in the same manner. It exists but is not widespread. This theory to see if the incorporation of cover art is something that users want to see more of online, will ultimately lead to an increase in record sales was tested by creating a mock up website that utilized cover art along with other website functionality that individualized a user's music experience. User's responded in a survey on what they liked or did not like about the website and what they noticed was different about this music news website compared to others that exist. The data was gathered and analyzed and showed that 76% of the total amount of users who took the survey wanted to see more cover art to be incorporated online, but it did not prove if this would increase record sales and if it was the determining factor that would make users want to visit the mock up website created.

Chapter 1

Purpose of Research

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to explore the different reasons why the music industry has experienced a decline in the 21st century. By pinpointing the different factors that led to the stunted growth of the industry, new marketing ideas can be formed to rectify the situation. One area of study that has not been researched within the digital era is finding a better way to connect the aesthetics of album art with music consumers. A solution to this problem can be incorporated into a website, one that connects album artwork with music fans to learn about their favorite artists, and explore new ones. By utilizing ideas from the past, present, and future a new source of communication between music and listeners can be formed.

Before digital distribution, music sales increased every year. The music industry at the time was controlled by record labels and these labels were able to create a lucrative market. However, the Internet has changed the way music is delivered to the consumer; therefore the music industry along with other media has evolved. Since the digital era, music is no longer in a tangible form such as vinyl records, cassette tapes, and CDs. Unfortunately, music sales have not been able to adapt to digital distribution methods, and several factors have caused a decline in music sales.

This research will be directed towards music sales because peer-to-peer file sharing, the ability to purchase individual songs, difference of communication, and the loss of tangible artwork and packaging all have had a negative influence on sales.

The study will focus on researching the unification of artwork with music because this is an area that many people overlook.

Visual artwork is powerful, and just as a book cover grabs the attention of the reader; album artwork grabs the attention of the listener. Music sales have experienced negative and positive influences. The development of music videos, online stores such as Apple's iTunes, cover art, and media organizers/players have grabbed the consumer's interest and have created new methods of promoting music sales. New methods of including album artwork have the potential to improve upon past marketing techniques.

Significance of the Problem

Music is part of society. It has existed since the dawn of man and will always continue to play a role in mankind. By researching the factors that have led to the decline in music sales, new marketing techniques such as incorporating album artwork can be used to connect the music fan to the music they enjoy most. These old and new ideas for artwork distribution will be incorporated into a website that grabs the consumer's attention, and in turn boosts music sales.

Interest in the Problem

Though it may be different in its message, genre, or style music resonates feeling and emotion. Music is powerful, and it can be an extremely lucrative market if properly executed. Artists around the world want to share their feelings and beliefs with people, while still making a profit. The traditional recording industry

cannot be reconstructed, but there can be alternative methods to reconnect fans with their favorite artists. Creating a universal location where music lovers of all different genres can go to, to explore new and existing music, can do this. I want to bring together the visual elements such as album artwork, music videos, etc. to connect with the auditory element. In the past this combination has been successful, and I believe there is a way to once again unify these elements for the present and for the future.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Purpose: Showing the many reasons why the music industry has declined in recent years, and how alternative marketing ideas such as cover art can be used to remedy this situation.

History

The music industry started in 1888 with the invention of the phonography by Thomas Edison. When devices that could reproduce sound, became commercially available to the public. The phonograph was revolutionary because society could listen to their favorite music whenever they wanted. In order for a phonograph to work, the consumer was required to buy records. Records are flat disks that have musical recordings encoded onto them as grooves. When the record is placed into the phonograph, the grooves vibrate and the recorded music is played aloud through an attached speaker. Phonograph records were limited, because each record could hold only a few minutes of information. This was a problem, because every time the consumer wanted to listen to another song they would have to put in another record, and songs had to be shortened in order to fit the time restriction. As time passed, records grew larger in size and could hold more data. By the 1940s records were able to play an average of 15 minutes per side. This allowed artists the opportunity to record a collection of songs, and create what is known as an album. Though albums were first introduced in 1909, it wasn't until the 1940s that

an entire album could be placed on one record. Once an entire album could be recorded onto one record, sales increased. The Marketing department of record labels grew and new marketing techniques arose.

Music Videos

On August 1, 1981 Music Television debuted. The purpose of MTV was to connect television viewers with music. How MTV accomplished this goal was by playing artist music videos, reporting music news, and playing live performances of popular artists. Music videos were a visual representation of an artists' song. They were a new creative marketing tool. MTV's target market is comprised of teens and young adults. According to Troy and Cannato, "by 1984, MTV was reaching 1.2% of the daily television audience, and more than a quarter of daily teen viewers" (2009 p. 159). This number grew larger throughout the 1980s into the 1990s. However, by the mid 1990s users had the option of downloading music from the Internet and their own on demand playlists. According to Billboard "the number of videos shown on the network [MTV] plummeted 36.5% from 1995 to 2000" (Billboard, 2001, p. 68). The number continued to drop as years continued to pass, because music videos were no longer as popular as they were in the past. The Internet was a quicker and easier source to get music news as well as videos. Music fans no longer had to sit through unwanted music videos to see their favorites.

Figure 1: U.S. Music-Video Report Card

Number of times that videos were played on MTV in the given year

1995	1998	2000
47,118	43,790	29,920

Source: (Billboard, 2001, p. 68)

The Internet Era

“Since the mid-1990s the Internet has had a tremendous impact on culture and commerce, including the rise of near instant communication [such as] email, instant messaging, Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) "phone calls", two-way interactive video calls, and the World Wide Web” (Johnson). As seen with MTV, television viewers started to lose interest in music videos. It was not because they no longer wanted to watch music videos, but there was quicker and more accessible way of watching them. Just as the Internet changed MTV, it also changed the music industry. The computer and digital music formats like the mp3 would forever impact the sales of music.

Mp3s made their first presence on the Internet in 1994, and grew popular in 1997, when the first audio player was released. The first audio player was called Winamp, which was also a media library that organized one’s music files. It allowed the user to name their mp3 with pertinent details about the particular file. Examples include: artists’ name, song name, album name, album art, genre, etc. Winamp also included extraordinary playback features. The user had the ability to play a song from any moment. The playback option would not harm the data in any way, and it could be played as many times as the user wanted without ruining the

quality. With the ability to playback music, digital files started to become increasingly more popular. Users would obtain these Mp3s by downloading separate freeware programs that converted their CDs into digital files. CD ripping programs, turned the embedded files on the CD into a MP3 format. The Mp3s would then be stored in the user's media library.

Peer-to-Peer File Sharing

As users began accumulating files on their computers, they wanted to be able to buy or 'share' files with each other. In June 1999, Napster developed the first peer-to-peer file sharing service. This program allowed users to share files with one another, without payment. Internet users could upload their mp3s and download others. Napster's popularity grew, because people began to realize that they no longer had to pay for music. Figure 2 shows the growth of Napster.

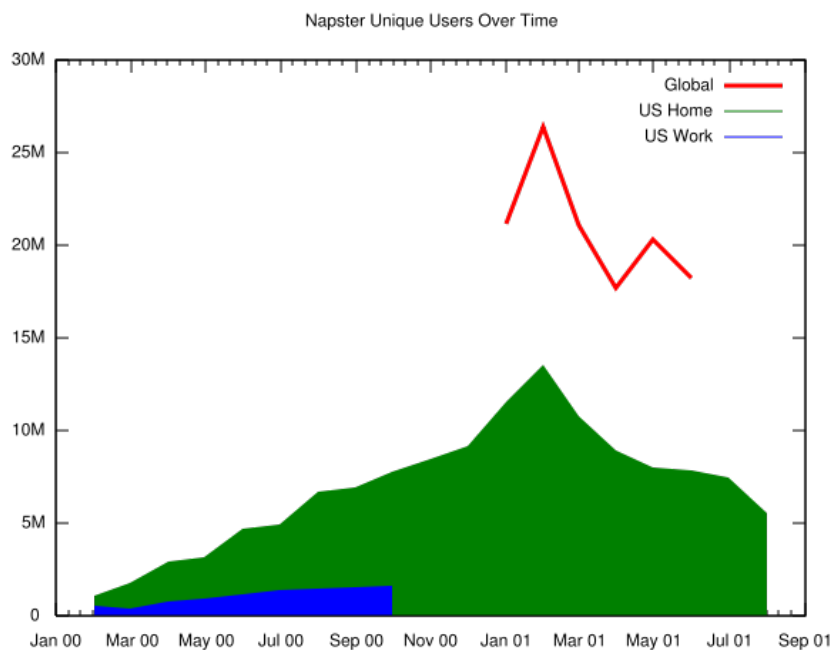


Figure 2: Napster Growth Over Time

Source: (Paczkowski, 2008)

Napster's service was available until July 2001, when artists such as Metallica and Dr. Dre, began to complain and issue lawsuits because their music was given out for free. "Napster Inc. began its death spiral on March 6, 2001, when it began complying with a Federal court order to block the transfer of copyrighted material over its peer-to-peer network" (The History Channel, 2013). Users realized they no longer could download anything they wanted using Napster. Napster eventually ended, but they started the trend of music piracy and torrenting. The problem of piracy still looms the Internet and many argue that this is why the music industry has seen a loss in sales.

Peer-to-peer file sharing by torrents is one of the largest controversies in the music industry. These file-sharing programs allow the user to download any digital file that another user uploads. Examples include, music, videos, software, and games. Users are not limited on how many files they can upload and download. Many of these digital files on these peer-to-peer file-sharing servers violate copyright laws since government regulation is at a minimum and thousands of copyright protected files are 'stolen' every day. According to riaa.com, "global music piracy causes \$12.5 billion of economic losses every year" (2013).

Media Players

On January 9, 2001, Apple announced the release of a new media player. The application, known as iTunes, was both a store where customers can purchase music at a fixed cost, and a media library where users can store their music. The purpose of iTunes was to create an online store that would be easy to navigate and

access, and would help increase sales for the music industry. By simply typing in an artist's name, song, or album a user can quickly navigate to the appropriate page. On that page the user has the ability to listen to a sample of the song that they might be interested in and the option to buy the song. iTunes was a revolutionary program, because it contained a store, CD ripper, media library, visualizer, as well as other additions that have been added onto it over the years, such as movies, podcasts, books etc. iTunes quickly became a popular application because it also launched the iPod, an accessory that allowed users to export their music to a portable media player. The iPod permitted a user to take their digital files with them, and listen to them on the go.

Even though iTunes was considered to be a successful program that brought an increase of sales to the music department, many people argue that programs like iTunes, have helped music decline in sales. iTunes offers the sale of individual tracks from an artist's album. This allowed users to pick and choose songs from different artists that they liked. In the era of vinyls, cassettes, and CDs the consumer needed to purchase the entire album. Therefore, they would have to listen to all of the different tracks. Never again will a consumer have to purchase an album to obtain an individual track. The digital era has forever change the music industry, and it is up to the industry to find effective marketing ideas to once again make the world of music a growing and thriving market.

Cover Artwork

An area of the music industry that has not yet been explored is the connection the consumer has with the aesthetics of album art. Tangible products

such as records, cassettes, and CDs, all had album artwork. When a consumer picks up one of these products, cover art was the first noticeable characteristic. Holding something that is visual brings an associated connection with the album and the artwork. Album artwork is very similar to branding logos. When a music user sees album artwork they immediately know which artist produced the album. This phenomenon created by artists and record label companies, was one of the best and most effective marketing strategies of that time.

Beginning in 1938, Columbia Records hired Alex Steinweiss as their art director. Steinweiss decided to replace plain covers that the vinyl records were packaged in with cover art. Cover art is an expression that represents the artist. It has symbolism and colors that one can identify with that particular artist or album that is produced. Just as book covers grab the attention of the reader, cover art grabs the attention of the listener.

Album packaging grew in importance as time went on. Rock & roll, which was the most listened to genre of the 1960s and 1970s, was heavily influenced by album artwork. Record companies added gatefolds, lyric pages, sticker inserts, extra sleeves, poster inserts, etc. as a way to gain the customer's interest. Many of the additional features added to the record packaging, gave the listener a deeper insight about the artist. By creating a culture around the artist, consumer interest grew, and customers not only wanted to listen to the music, but also collect the memorabilia. Rock Stars lived glamorized lifestyles that were fabricated by record sales companies to make money by inspiring dreams of the youthful generation. By creating this culture, record companies weren't just selling records; they were also

selling clothes, films, musical instruments, and other commercial products. Figure 3 shows statistics of music revenue from 1973-2009.

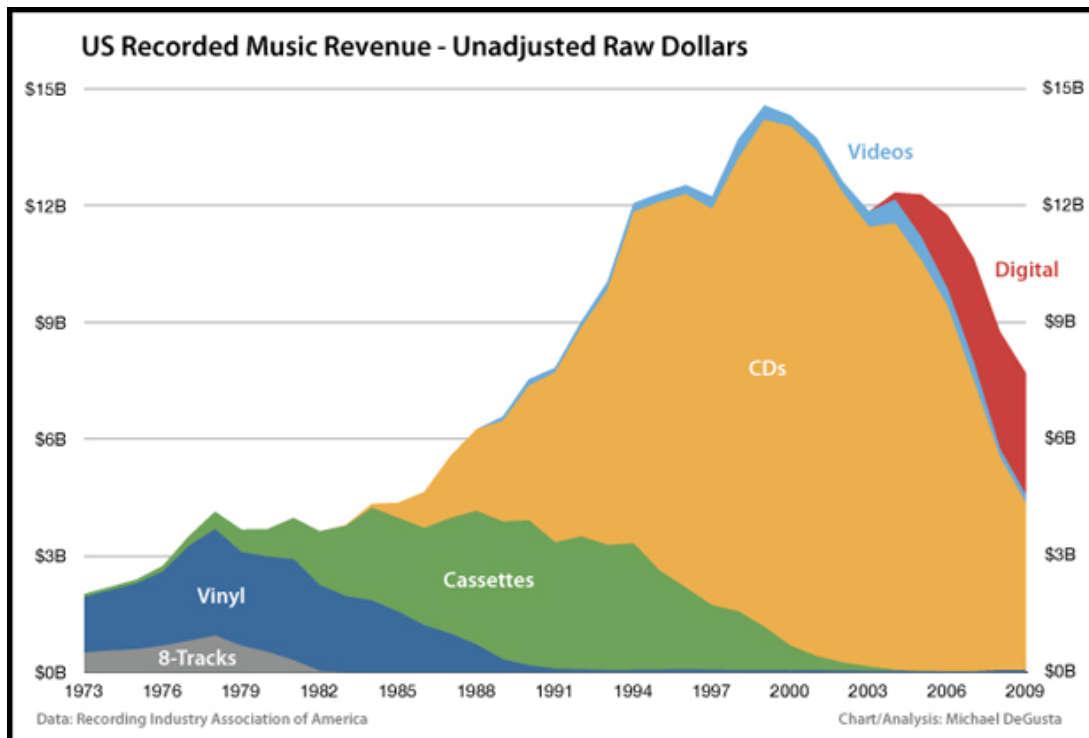


Figure 3: U.S. Recorded Music Revenue

Source: (DeGusta, 2011)

Digital tracks also contain album artwork, but unlike tangible music products it is not a dominating feature. The purchasing of individual tracks allows the consumer to purchase the artist's songs from a collection of different albums. The user, unless they purchase the entire album and the cover art as a whole, does not focus on the album as a whole, because they only know a few songs from the album. This distracts the user, and the association with cover art is no longer made. Art is powerful and though digital sales contain artwork they are not as noticeable as a tangible product. When holding a record, cassette, or a CD, cover art is the first

thing a consumer sees. A digital track has the artwork embedded into the file that shows up on media devices that play the music, but it is no longer the outwardly noticeable characteristic it once was. Users no longer associate a connection between the album and artwork, because individual tracks are purchased. There are other important factors to consider when discussing music sales such as music piracy, but art is a large factor to consider, and could be one of the many reasons why this decline has occurred.

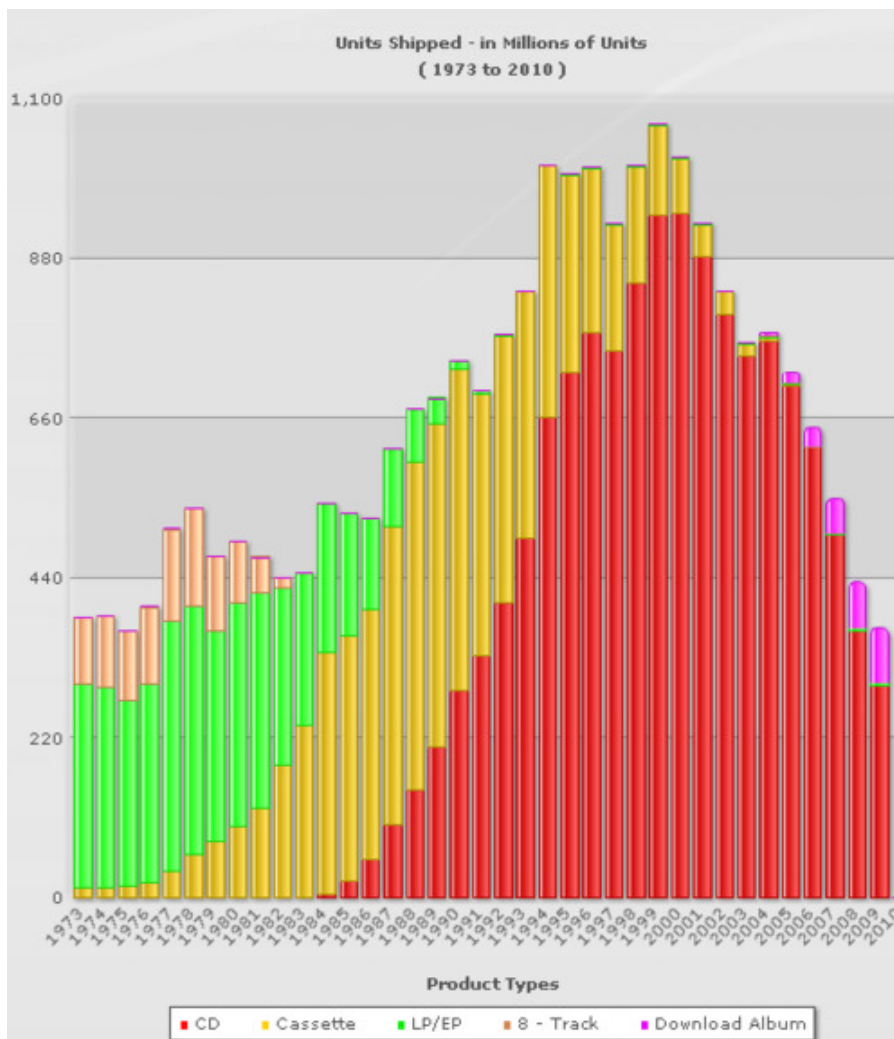


Figure 4: Different Forms of Media Sold from 1973-2010

Source: (Berman, 2011)

Niche Market

According to a recent statistic, vinyl record sales have resurfaced in the 21st century. Starting in 2008, vinyl records have begun to see an upward trend in sales. Nielson Sound Scan reported that sales have increased by 17.7% from 2011. According to digitalmusicnews.com, “most [records] are being sold at indie retailers with a heavy lean towards rock” (Resnikoff, 2013). The reasoning for these sales may be largely influenced by the album’s artwork. Digital tracks are easier to acquire and are more cost effective. Some consumers like vinyl records because it allows the consumer to listen to the entire album. With CDs and digital tracks it is easy to skip songs on the album that may not be as popular. With Vinyl records it is more difficult to skip songs. A popular debate is whether the analog sound that vinyl records produce are better or worse than the digital sound. The analog sound can have “distortions, speed variations, and noise/hiss,” while digital tracks can sound “cold, hard, and uninviting” (Guttenberg, 2011). The choice between the two is preference. Some people who enjoy listening to the vinyl sound say that “the experience is very similar to being at the live recording” (Upton, 2010). Whatever the reason may be, artwork is one of the key characteristics of a vinyl record, and people enjoy having a connection with the music to which they listen.

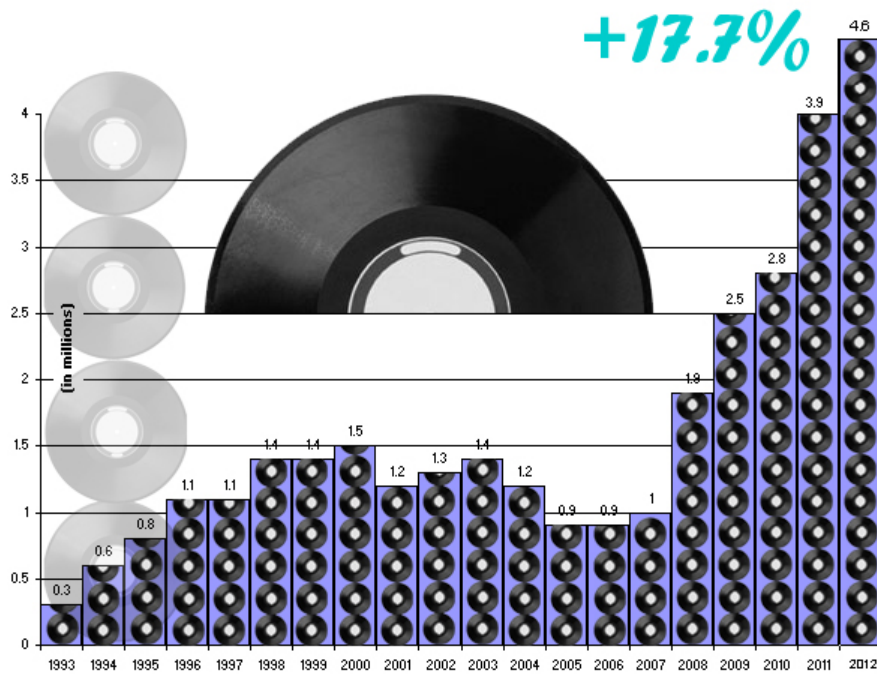


Figure 5: Number of Vinyl Records Sold from 1993-2012

Source: (Resnikoff, 2013)

Chapter 3

Methodology

The purpose of this research was to determine if album artwork could be an effective marketing tool for digital music. I believed that music sales would increase because artwork is a powerful visual that connects the thoughts of the artist with the listener. The artist's depiction of what their collection of songs means to them has proven to be effective in the past, so I believed that it would also be effective in the future. Artwork was one of the key characteristics of vinyl records, cassette tapes, and CDs. The cover art would grab the attention of the consumer. The digital era has incorporated artwork, but not in a manner that made artwork one of the dominant components of the purchase.

My hypothesis was that music sales would be impacted by the inclusion of artwork. In order to test this hypothesis, a website was created that used the aesthetics of album artwork to connect music fans with their favorite artists and the ability to discover new ones. The website featured additional components but artwork was the theme. When looking up a specific artist, the user can see all of the artist's past albums. Each album contains a song list and digital artwork of that specific album. The artwork was the first feature a user sees when looking up an artist's work.

The website was designed to appeal to anyone who enjoys listening to music. There are diverse genres on the website because everyone has different tastes in music. In order to test the website's effectiveness, a mock up website was sent to different age groups.

Here is the link to view the video:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kcgd5QIa3Tk&feature=youtu.be>

Ten of the participants were selected from the 13-19 age group, ten of the participants were selected from the 20-29 age group, ten of the participants were selected from the 30-39 age group, ten of the participants were selected from the 40-49 age group, and ten of the participants were selected from the 50+ age group. I am giving out my mock up website to an equal distribution of age groups.

In order to gather this data, a questionnaire was sent out to the participants who received the mock up website. The questionnaire asked questions regarding the functionality of the website, what they liked, and if they would revisit. The questions asked what the user found to be appealing and what they thought was different compared to other music news websites. Once the results came back the findings were analyzed and the data was sorted out by age group, looking at the pros and cons of the website.

Chapter 4

Results

Each user had to watch a 5 minute video explaining the functionality of the website before taking the survey. After the user had completed watching the video, an online survey was electronically delivered to the user using the website Typeform. The survey contained 15 questions that ranged between multiple choice and free response questions. The following represents data collected from those responses: (Please refer to appendix A to see a list of the questions asked).

The first question had an even distribution of participants. Each age group had 10 people therefore there were 50 people who participated in the online survey. The age groups that participated are as follows: **13-19, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, and 50+.**

The second question showed that there was an even distribution of men versus women who took the survey. There were 25 males who participated and there were 25 females who participated. Though the total amount of participants of both men and women had an even distribution, each age group did not have the same gender distribution, which can be shown by the graph below:

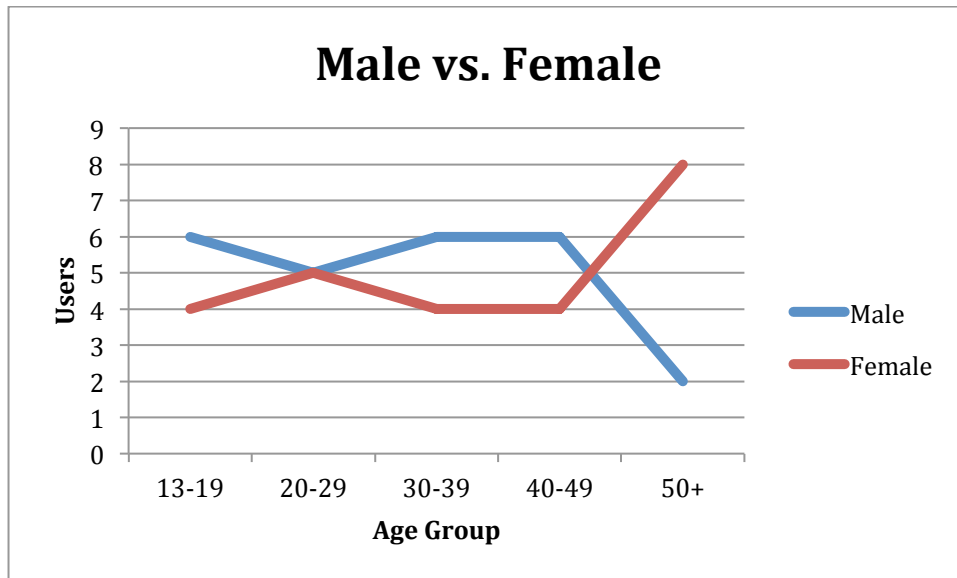


Figure 1: Male vs. Female

The third question was asked to find out if the users surveyed visited other music news websites. (See figure 2 & 3 for results).

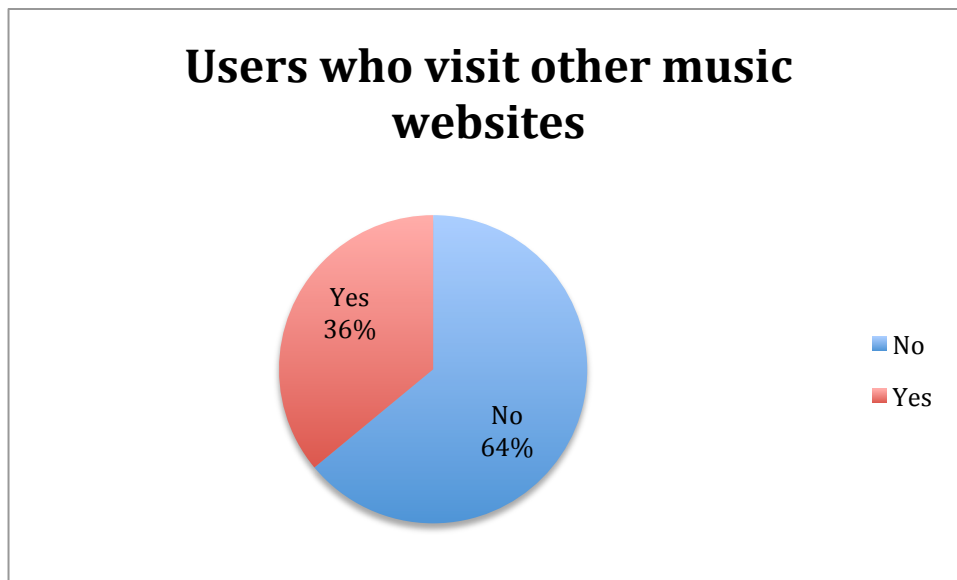


Figure 2: Number of total users who visit other music websites

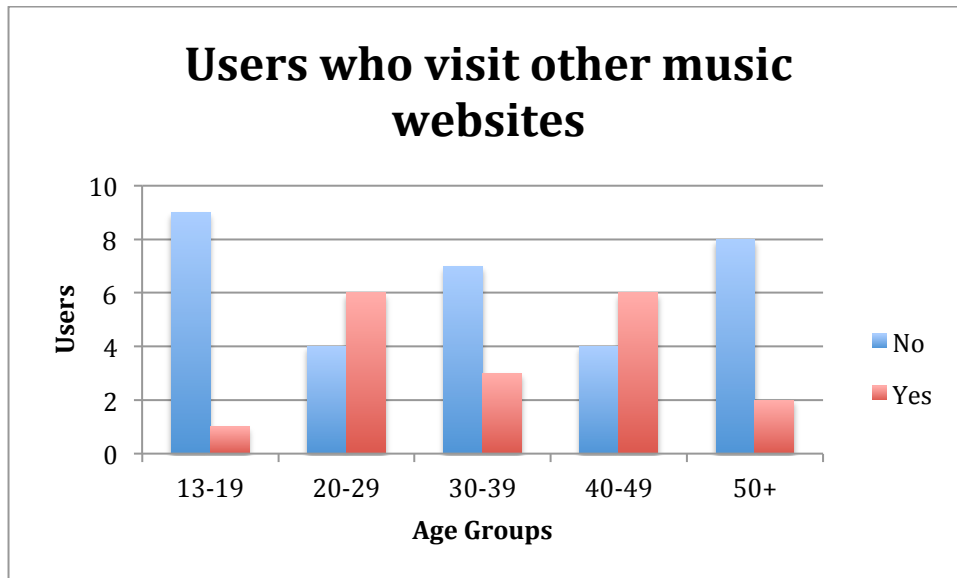


Figure 3: Age groups who visit other music websites

Based on the data collected from question #3 a follow up question was asked to find out what other websites users like to visit to receive their latest music news. The following question was answered by the 36% of the participants who answered “yes” in the previous question. The question allowed the user to select multiple answers.

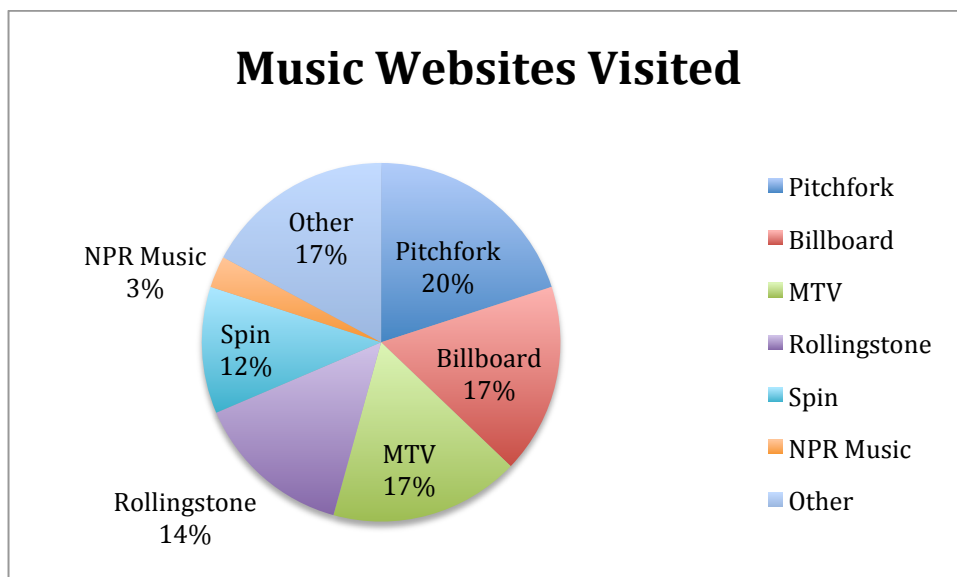


Figure 4: Popularity of other music news sites

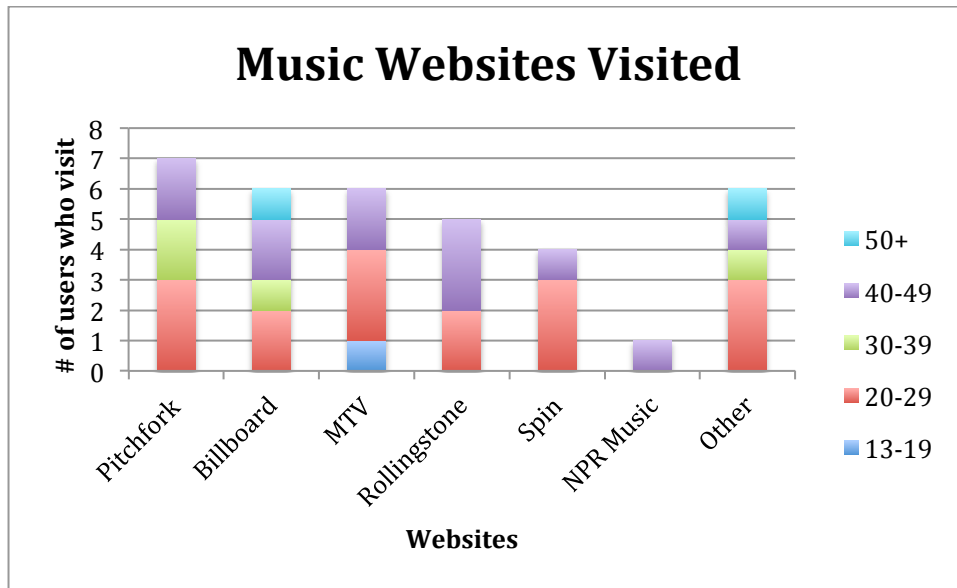


Figure 5: Other music news websites users visit

The fifth question was a free response question that asked what users thought the key differences were between this website and past websites they have used. Most users answered that the website was different from other websites because of its simplicity and its layout. Other common responses included that the user liked the calendar feature and the website functionality. (Please refer to appendix B to see all of the users' responses).

The sixth question asked users if they prefer this music website over others. Below are the results:

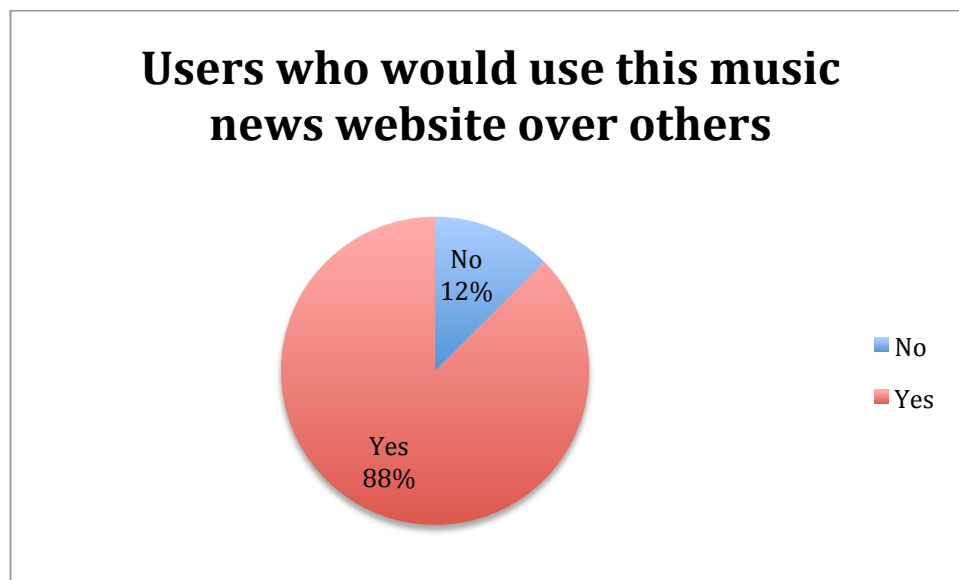


Figure 6: Number of total users who would use this music news website over others

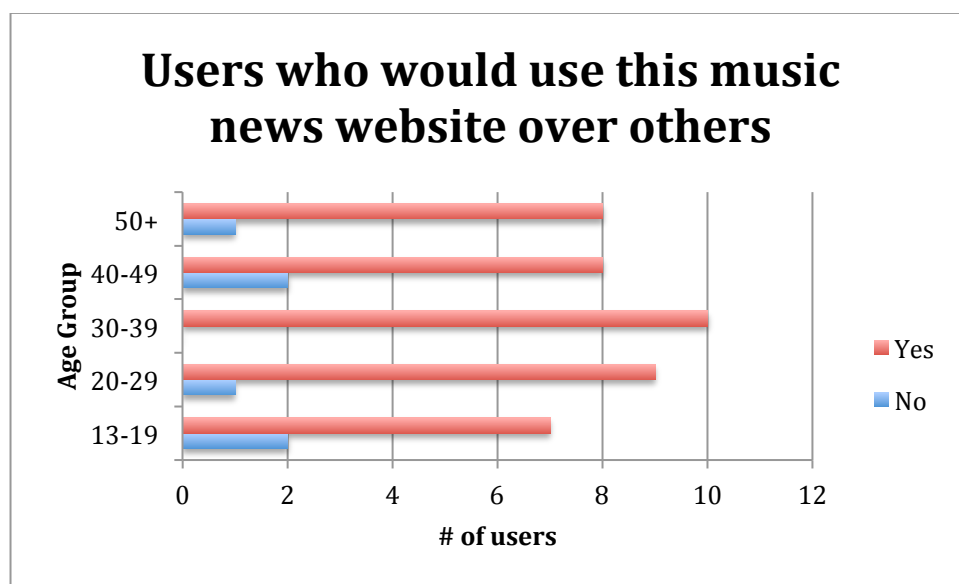


Figure 7: Age groups who would use this music news website over others

The next question was a follow up question. If the user answered, "yes" from the previous question, then the user was asked why they would use the website. Even though some users answered "no," some users still answered the question. The most popular response was that the user enjoyed the website layout. Other common answers were that the user

enjoyed following artists and/or genres, and that they enjoyed the calendar feature.

(Please refer to appendix B to see all of the users' responses).

The next question was another free response question. It asked what components of the website did the user like and if anything in particular caught their eye. The most common response was that the user enjoyed the calendar feature. Other common responses included that the user liked the album artwork, they liked the logo, and that they liked the layout.

The ninth question asked the user if they solely buy their music online. Below are the results:

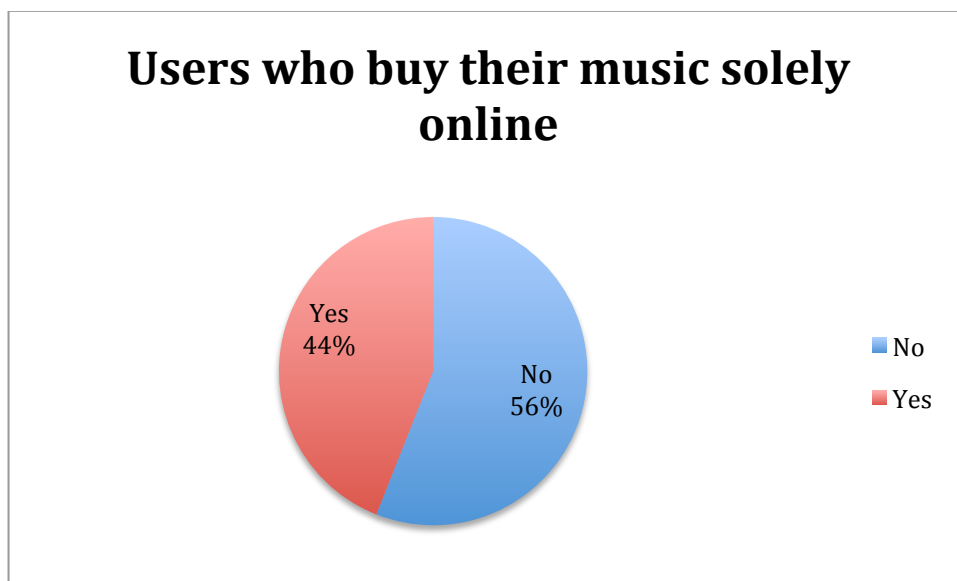


Figure 8: total number of users who buy their music solely online

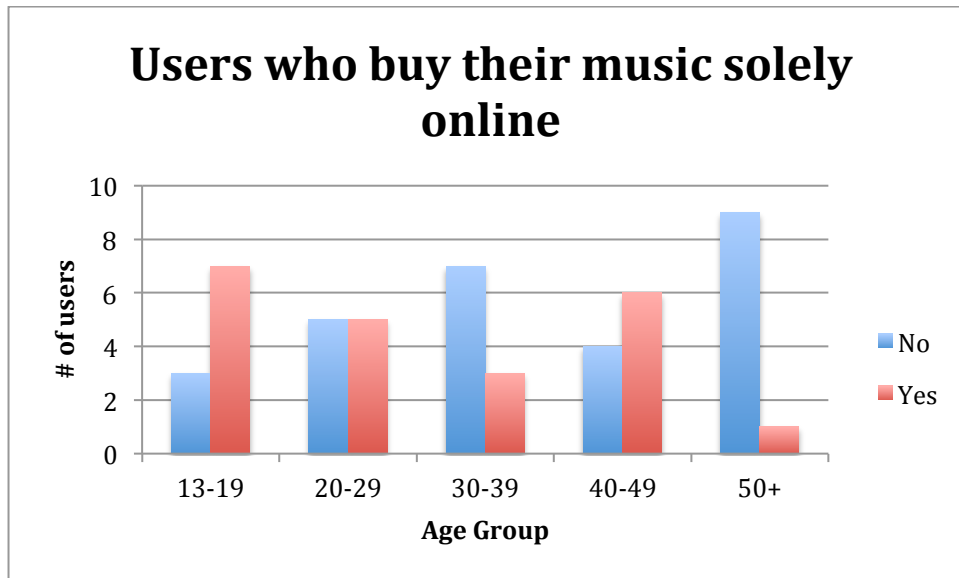


Figure 9: Age groups who buy their music solely online

The tenth question was a follow up from the previous question. If the user answered “no” in their response to question number nine, then they were asked to list the tangible forms of music that they purchase. The user could select multiple answers from the list of options provided. The results are below:

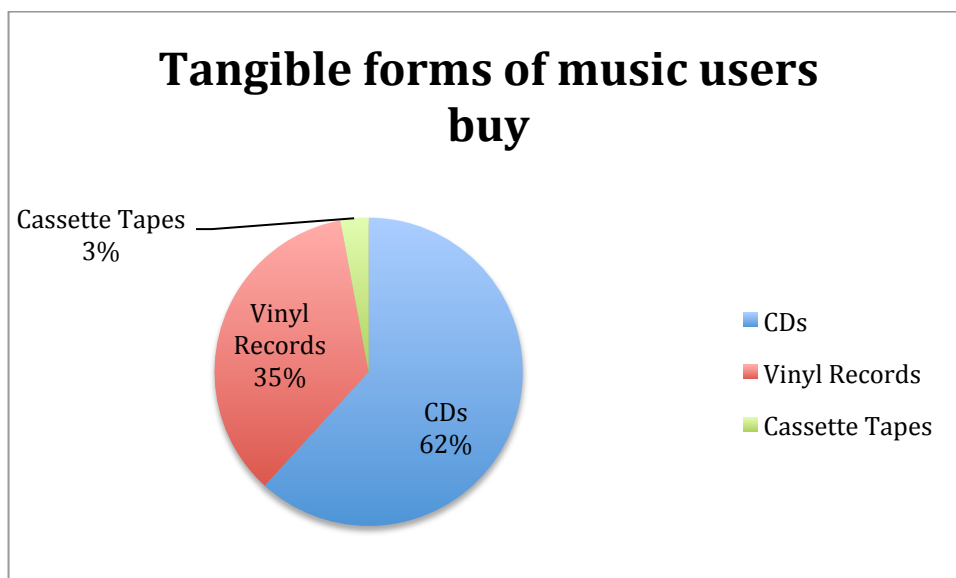


Figure 10: Total number of users who purchase tangible forms of music

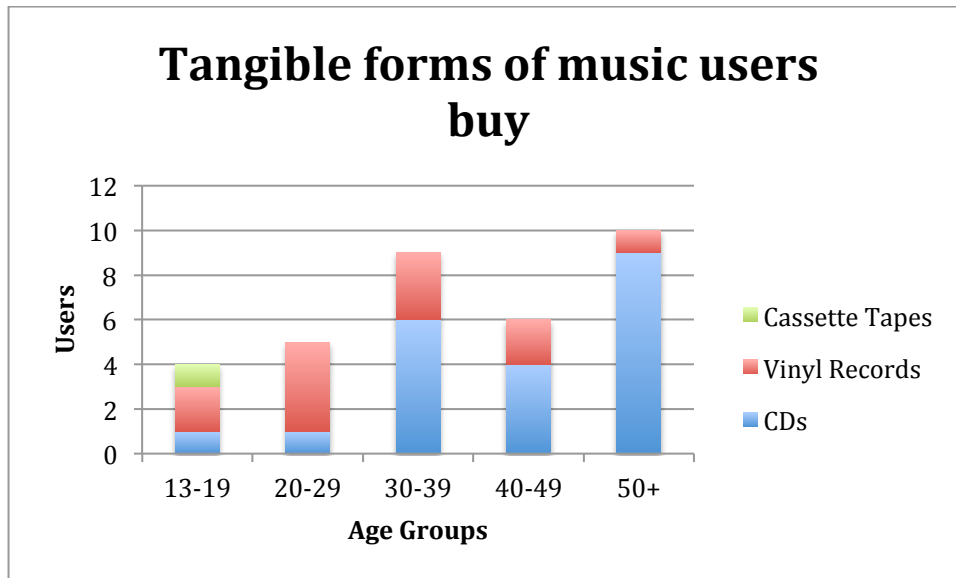


Figure 11: Age groups who purchase tangible forms of music

The eleventh question asked the users who answered “no” to question number nine, why they purchase tangible forms of music instead of buying their music solely online. The user could select multiple answers. The responses are below:

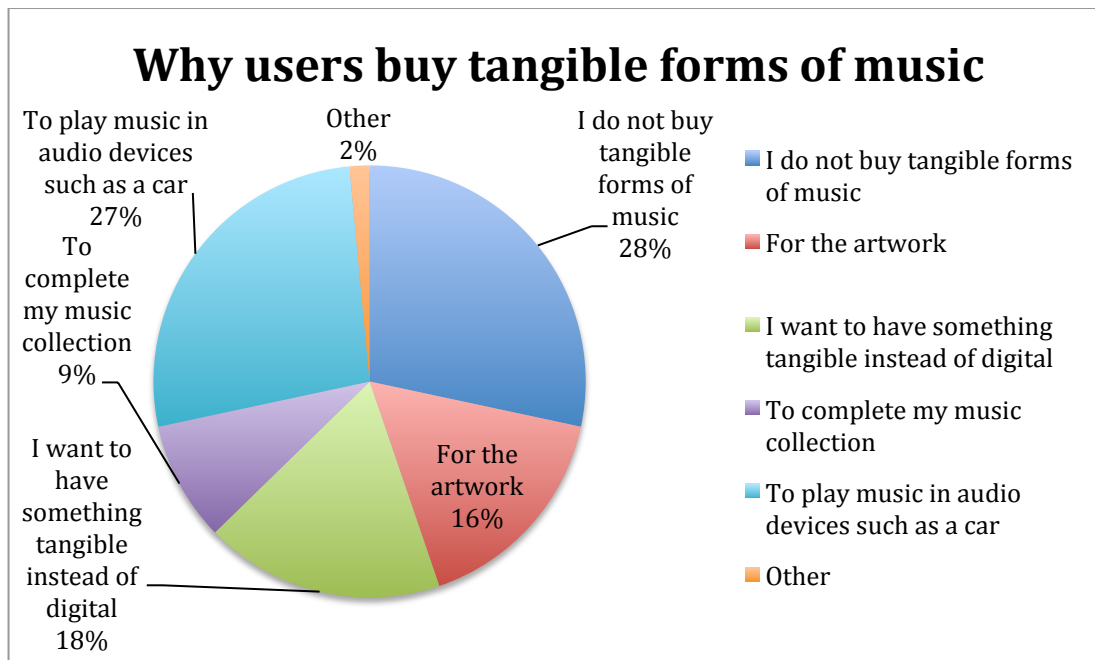


Figure 12: Total number of users who buy tangible forms of music

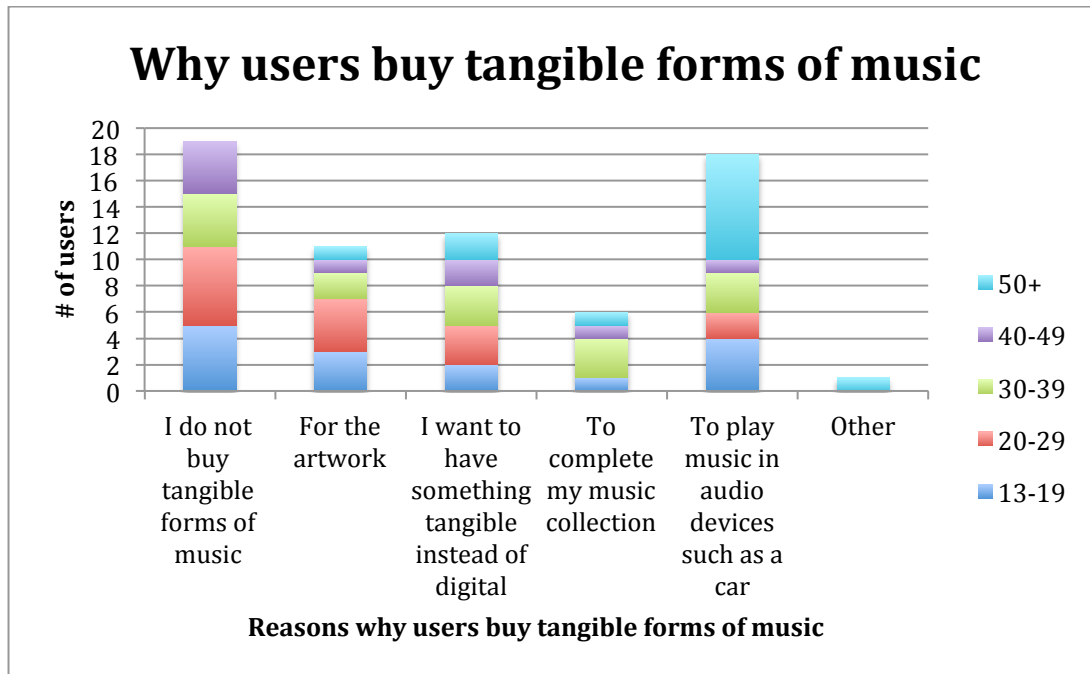


Figure 13: Age groups who buy tangible forms of music

The twelfth question asked if users wanted to see more cover art to be incorporated online.

The results are as follows:

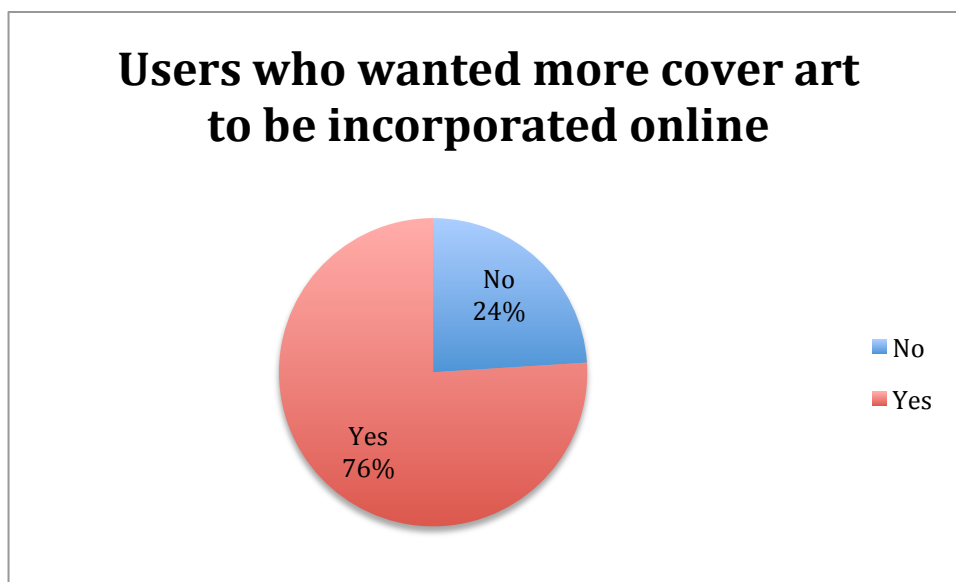


Figure 14: Total number of users who wanted more cover art to be incorporated online

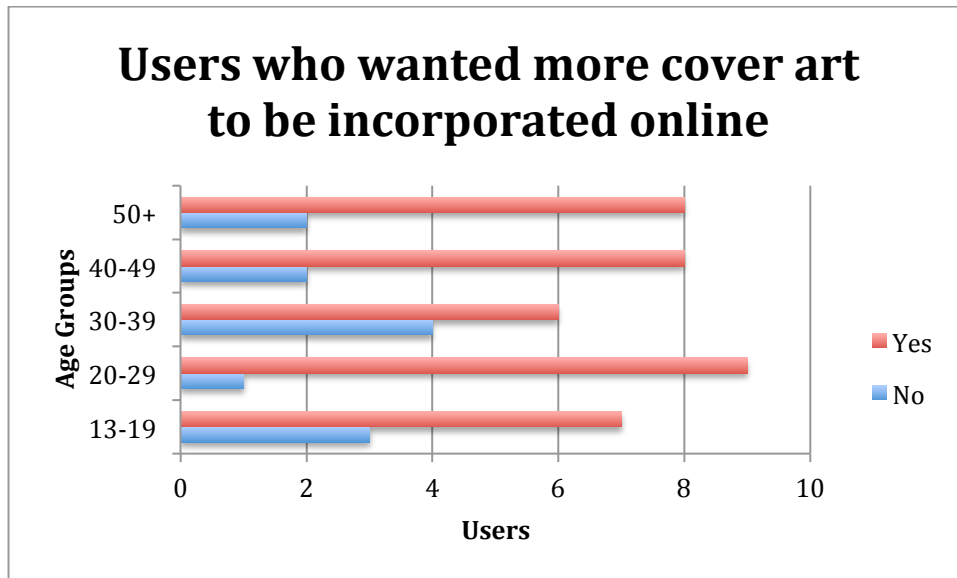


Figure 15: Age groups who wanted more cover art to be incorporated online

Questions fourteen and fifteen are very similar. Question fourteen asked users if they like music videos and question fifteen asked users if they found the addition of music videos to the website something they would use. Both results are similar but have minor differences. See the results below:

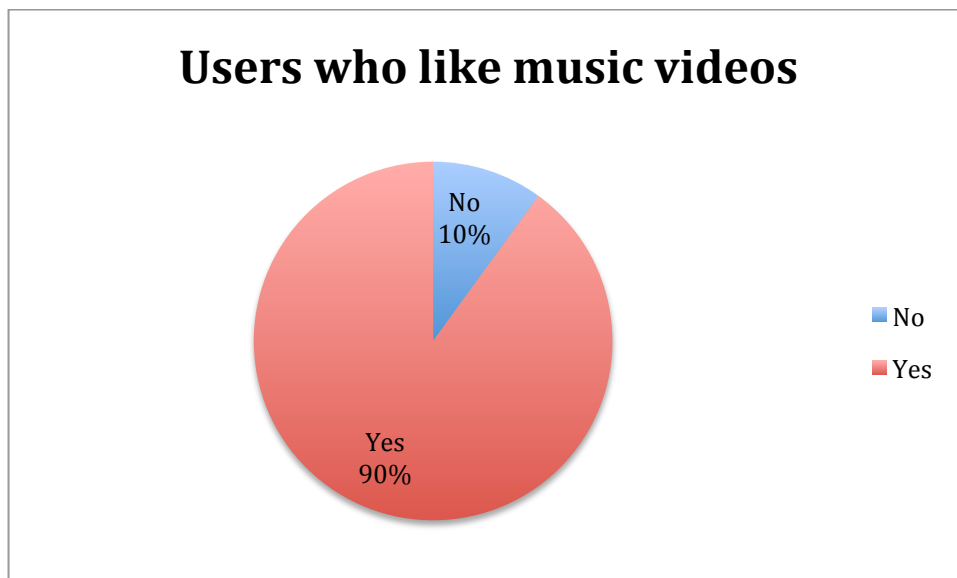


Figure 16: Total number of users who like music videos

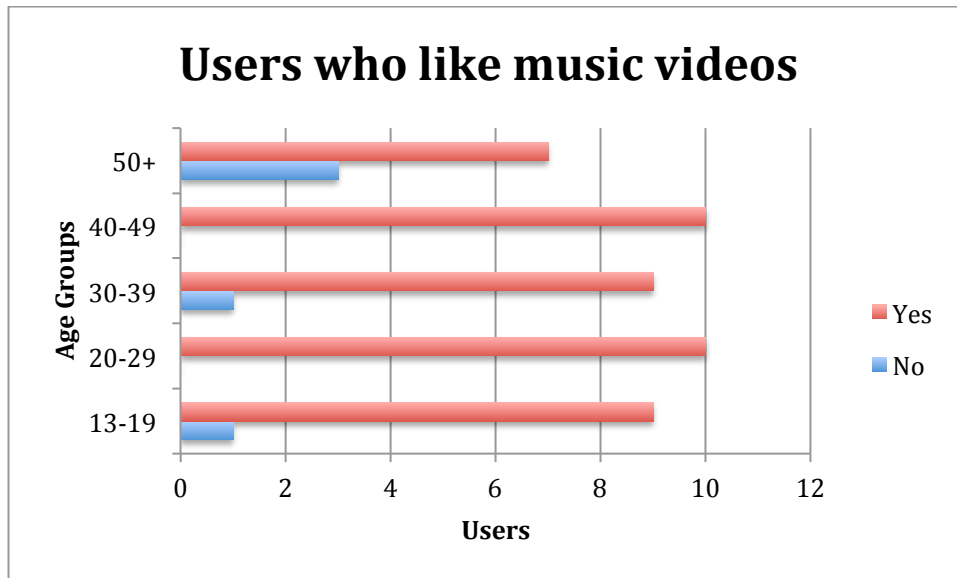


Figure 17: Age groups who like music videos

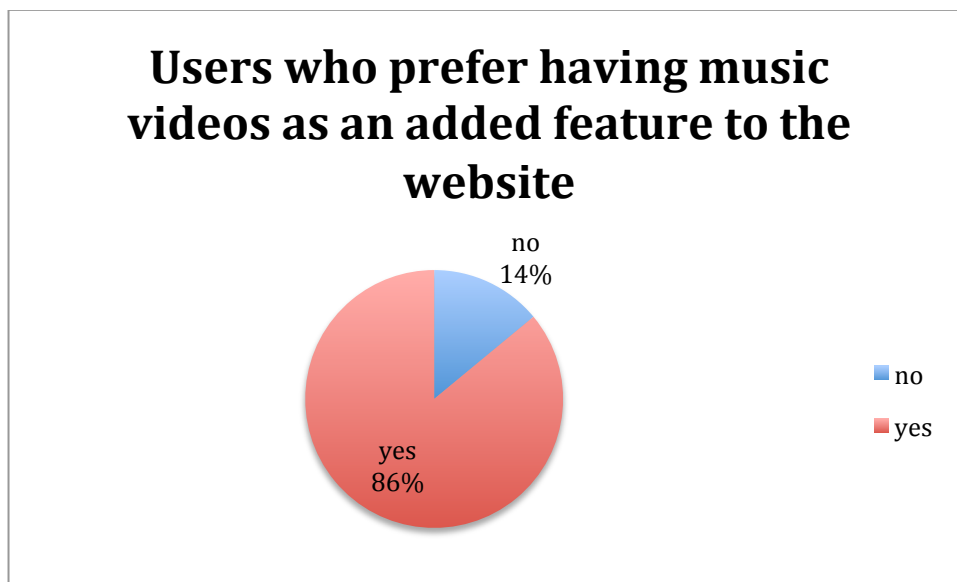


Figure 18: Total number of users who prefer having music videos as an added feature to the website

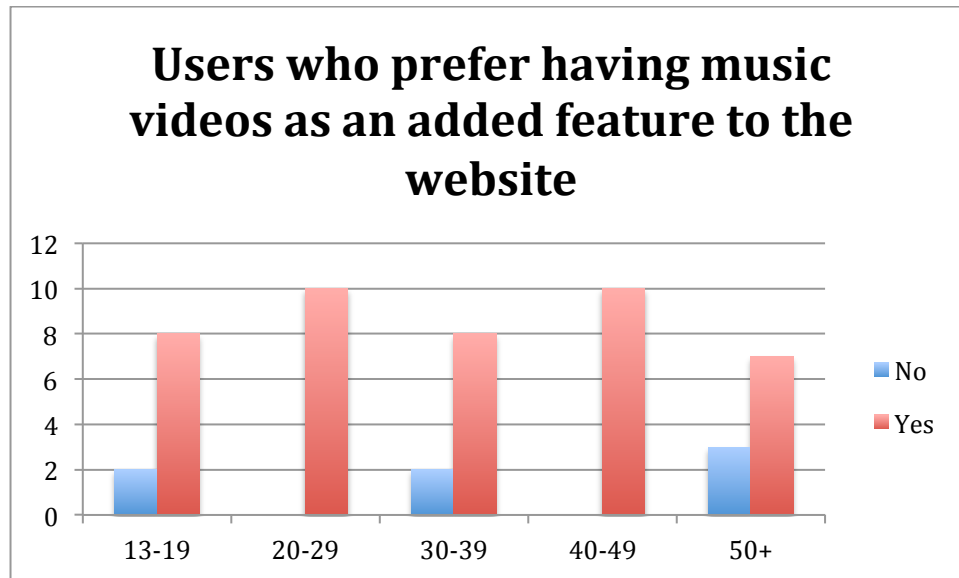


Figure 19: Age groups who prefer having music videos as an added feature to the website

The fifteenth question asked the user to list any improvements they would like to see incorporated onto the music news website. The question was free response. (Please see Appendix B for a list of improvements).

Chapter 5

Conclusion

From the data gathered, results indicated the collective thoughts about the website created and what users like or dislike about present day music news websites. The survey was distributed to different age groups to see the similarities and differences of the user's responses. The purpose of creating this website was to see if cover art influenced the consumer to want to purchase music. This website included this aspect along with other website functionality to provide the user with a unique music news experience. The other website functionality was added to see if cover art caught the attention of the user or if it was the other components of the website. (Please refer to Appendix A & B to see survey questions and user's responses).

The third question on the survey was asked to find out if the users surveyed visited other music news websites. 64% of the total users surveyed answered "no," while the remaining 36% answered "yes." The sixth question asked if users would use this music news website over others, in which 88% of the total users who responded said "yes" and the remaining 12% said "no." This proves that this website had something different about it that grabbed the attention of the user over traditional music news websites. This does not prove that cover art was that particular reason, but it does prove that the average user prefers something different.

Question number eight was a free response question that asked what components of the website did the user like and if anything in particular caught their eye. After reading

the user's responses I noticed that 24% of users wrote about liking the album artwork. This does not prove that cover art would influence the consumer to want to visit the website and want to buy records, but some users did notice it and mentioned it, which shows that though it is not a strong correlation of users who notice the album artwork, it does show that some users did notice it and appreciate it.

The ninth question asked the user if they solely buy their music online. The results varied from different age groups. The results showed that the 50+ and the 30-39 generation bought tangible forms of music, the 20-29 age group was split half and half, and the remaining age groups mostly bought their music solely online. 56% of overall total users who answered this question answered "no", while the remaining 44% answered "yes." This question was asked to see why the users who said that they do not buy their music solely online buy tangible forms of music. In the eleventh question it asked why users buy tangible forms of music and the most popular responses was that the user liked to play music in audio devices such as a car, the user wanted to have something tangible instead of digital, and that they bought it for the artwork. Only 16% out of the 56% of users who said that they purchase other forms of music answered that they buy it for the artwork, which shows a very weak correlation that users buy albums because of the cover art. If users do not buy tangible forms of music for the cover art than more likely than not the cover art online will not be a deciding factor on why they would want to visit the "My Music Hub" website.

The twelfth question asked if users wanted to see more cover art to be incorporated online. The data showed that every age group had more users answer “yes” than “no.” 76% of total users answered “yes” while the remaining 24% answered “no.” This proves that cover art is something the users want to see, but it may not be the determining factor on why a user would want to visit a website like “My Music Hub.”

Users like to see the expression of an artist’s songs in another form other than the song itself. 90% of users who answered the survey said that they like music videos. Music videos are a visual expression of an artist’s particular song. This data shows supports my initial conjecture, because users are drawn to visuals such as cover art, music videos, etc. which might lead to users wanting to see more of these materials to be incorporated online. This can be shown by looking at question fourteen which asked if users preferred having music videos as an added feature to the website. 86% of total users answered “yes” and 14% answered “no.” This statistic does not match the one previous to this question, which had a stronger correlation, but it is not far off. This could show that users want the material such as music videos and other forms of art, such as cover art in the twelfth question to be embodied into one place such as “My Music Hub,” and the combination of these elements is what will grab the attention of the user, which could ultimately lead to increased music sales.

In conclusion there weren’t any data collections that proved cover art is what grabs the attention of the consumer and makes them want to buy music. From this data I would change my hypothesis slightly and say that cover art influences the consumer to want to

support the music industry but it is not the defining factor. Users noticed features such as following artists and/or genres, website layout, and the calendar feature more than the album artwork. Users still wanted to see artwork incorporated but it isn't the sole factor on why a user would want to visit a website such as "My Music Hub." Marketing and sales is not just comprised of one element such as cover art, but the combination of tools, which from the statistics shows that there is a strong correlation of users wanting to visit something new and different such as "My Music Hub."

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Appendix A

1. How old are you?
 - A. 13-19
 - B. 20-29
 - C. 30-39
 - D. 40-49
 - E. 50+
2. What is your gender?
 - A. Male
 - B. Female
3. Do you use music news websites to catch up on the latest news updates about your favorite genre(s) and band(s)?
 - A. No
 - B. Yes
4. If you answered yes, what music websites do you visit?
 - A. I did not answer yes
 - B. Pitchfork
 - C. Billboard
 - D. MTV
 - E. Rollingstone
 - F. Spin
 - G. NPR Music
 - H. Other

5. What was different about this website versus other websites that you use?

Please explain what you believe are the key differences.

6. Would you use this music news website over others?

A. No

B. Yes

7. If you answered yes, why would you use this website?

8. What components of this website did you like the best? Did anything in particular catch your eye?

9. Do you solely buy music online?

A. No

B. Yes

10. If not what other forms of music do you purchase?

A. I buy all my music online

B. Vinyl records

C. CDs

D. Cassette Tapes

11. Why do you buy tangible forms of music?

A. I do not buy tangible forms of music

B. For the artwork

C. I want to have something tangible instead of digital

D. To complete your music collection

E. To play music in audio devices such as a car

F. Other

12. If you are a consumer of tangible artwork would you like to see more cover art incorporated online?

A. No

B. Yes

13. Do you like music videos?

A. No

B. Yes

14. Did you find the addition of music videos to the website something you would use?

A. No

B. Yes

15. What improvements would you like to see with music news websites? Please list the improvements you would like to see.

Survey#	How old are you?	What is your gender?	What was different about this website versus other websites that you use? Please explain what you believe are the key differences.	If you answered yes, why would you use this website?	What components of this website did you like the best? Did anything in particular catch your eye?	What improvements would you like to see with music news websites? Please list the improvements you would like to see
1	50+	Female	This is fantastic. I would use this. This is so much easier to understand and so informative.	I love how you can connect so easily to your favorite artists and also recommends similar genres. I also love the feature of seeing the	I love how you can get a sampling of each song on the album and are able to view the album cover!	This website is so well thought out. It covers all my needs completely!! Wow!
2	13-19	Female				
3	13-19	Male	I didn't select yes	I did not answer yes	I didn't	I don't look at music news sites
4	50+	Female	Love U tube easy....			Everything always has to be improved
5	50+	Male	I do not visit music web sites. I have looked at articles on Yahoo news	I really like how it helps me find music from the same genre	I really like the feature where you can preview albums and can get a sampling of each song on the album	I really liked the features of this program that was created. I would use these features a lot.
6	13-19	Female	Instead of having to search the web for all the different elements for a band it is all on one page. For	It's way more efficient and it is all in one place.	The calendar and the dates caught my eye.	I would like to see the full picture. Everything possible on one page, which I think this website would do well
7	20-29	Female	It helps the user do less work to find subjects they are interested about. It is easy to use and looks nice and	I really like that it generates new artists and the calendar feature is something I have never seen before. It facilitates the user to	I liked that you put the front cover of the album, and then went to it playing on a record and then could navigate the back	It is important to constantly stay updated and to be notified of specific dates like new album releases or
8	50+	Female	Even though I don't use music websites much, I liked how comprehensive this website was. I	Even though I am a novice with this type of app, I would use it because it would help me find other artists that might be interesting to	That you could "view" the albums.	I liked the functions of the website, but the overall graphics and look of the website could be improved
9	20-29	Male	I dont use other websites so i wouldnt know	It's the only one i know about	I like the calendar portion its very organized and cool	I would like to have a link where you can get free songs as well.
10	20-29	Male	The calendar feature that keeps me up to date on concerts in my area	Quick access to the music I want to listen to.	The cover animation when choosing a CD to listen to	Easy navigation through artists and CDs, less ads, saved playlist
11	20-29	Male	Visual aids when navigating through Calendar of all music events, not just concerts. Is the 1 source for everything music, not just pieces of	To keep track of my favorite artists upcoming EPs. Most websites just have general news about the EPs and LPs that	The artwork and photography included in The calendar is a great idea. I think that integrating this in with google calendar or facebook events would promote	capabilities, concert calendar feature Integration with existing platforms — use songkicks API to pull all of the event data. And possibly contract with
12	50+	Female		It is so complete. Everything is right there.	I liked all the different varieties of music listed.	I think it is very complete the way it is.
13	50+	Female	I only like certain types of music and I liked how I would be able to look at my music only	I liked how I would be able to see all the news at one time	It did not seem to be confusing to a novice	Interviews
14	50+	Female				
15	20-29	Female	I like how this website brings together band info, songs, and news info.	It is simple to use, yet contains a lot of information.	I like how there are summaries of bands and the ability to listen to their songs. For instance, I feel like this feature would	I would like to look at a newsfeed of music artists that I like. This news feed would be organized like a Twitter feed

Survey#	How old are you?	What is your gender?	What was different about this website versus other websites that you use? Please explain what you believe are the key differences.	If you answered yes, why would you use this website?	What components of this website did you like the best? Did anything in particular catch your eye?	What improvements would you like to see with music news websites? Please list the improvements you would like to see
16	20-29	Female	I usually use Spotify and I feel like this is a really cool new version of Spotify. I like the calendar idea and	It helps find new bands that I may like and gives me dates of upcoming concerts. I think there should be information about the	The logo looks really nice and clean. It seems like an easy to use app and I can't wait to see it in action!	Add a comment button to the articles. How are you going to weed out bogus reviews?
17	20-29	Male	It tailors a concert schedule specific to artists I would like to see in a convenient well organized calendar. It	I answered "no" because I enjoy Spotify and the free music listening that I can enjoy. I do not generally listen to entire albums, but	I really loved the concert schedule/calendar that was created specifically for my favorite artists. I also	There should be free option. The advertisements on Spotify, however inconvenient, are in the long run not
18	20-29	Male	The layout is very straight-forward and user-friendly, and has a cleaner look than many of the other cluttered	I would be able to put all of my artists and genres into one list, whereas the other sites I use normally consist of only one genre of	I really like the section where one can click on an artist and then sample their music along with the lyrics. It makes it	I would like them to be more organized and tailored to my taste. This website does a good job of doing both of those
19	20-29	Female	The calendar with the ability to see concert dates and to buy tickets	Seems super easy to use and gives the user the ability to look at album lyrics	The calendar with the ability to purchase tickets and being able to read song lyrics as you listen to the music	Music videos
20	40-49	Male	Simplicity, it doesn't feel cluttered		Up votes and down votes	Ease of use, and constantly updating news about the artists and music
21	30-39	Male	This website contained many features that typical music news websites do not have	I like all of the features such as the album artwork and calendar feature	I liked the album artwork and the calendar	It looks great!
22	40-49		I thought that it was pretty similar to other newsfeed sites, but that is not a bad thing, I think that it uses	I don't follow up a lot on music news, but if I wanted to, I would use this due to the design and the ability to track when artists	I liked the red on white design	Not sure
23	40-49	Male	It's personalized to what I want to see, versus what Rollingstone or Pitchfork would want me to see.	N/A	Best component - the vinyl like experience when sampling a record.	Not sure!
24	50+	Male	Easy to navigate. Educational. I like the originality.	Everything is right at your finger tips. Never seen anything so complete and informative.	Calendar for dates and information about bands.	none
25	20-29	Female	I really liked the calendar. I think that would be the most useful aspect for the website other than discovering	The calendar. There are other webpages such as Spotify where I can listen to full albums as well as look at related artists to	The calendar	There is not one website that I always go to because there is not a website that has all the aspects I want in a
26	30-39	Male	i'm not too familiar with music websites, but this seems much more personalized, filters out stuff someone	it is a cool way to be able to track my favorite artists with out having to filter through all the stuff that I am uninterested in	i liked the calendar where you can track important milestones for your favorite artists	Looks great to me!
27	13-19	Female	A key difference is that you can create your own post, rather than waiting for others to update you. Also, now you	I just think it has everything I would need to say informed.	I like that fact that you can place votes on stories and I'm a big fan on being able to create your own posts.	Maybe some more cover art and maybe not sorting stories based on popularity. It should be based on the
28	13-19	Male	The ability to listen to clips of each song on an album is a nice feature that isn't currently available on similar	I think pushing music to the user's homepage, regardless of whether or not they are following the artist/genre would be	I really like the album cover idea!	I think this hits a good area with the ability to follow certain artists, as that is something that does not exist on
29	30-39	Male	I do not use other such websites.	I like the sleek, simple design.	The login page caught my eye.	
30	13-19	Male	It contained a calendar and the ability to individualize music news	I would use it to catch up on the latest news of my favorite artists	I liked the layout of the website	I would like to see a better artist's page

Survey#	How old are you?	What is your gender?	What was different about this website versus other websites that you use? Please explain what you believe are the key differences.	If you answered yes, why would you use this website?	What components of this website did you like the best? Did anything in particular catch your eye?	What improvements would you like to see with music news websites? Please list the improvements you would like to see
31	40-49	Female	I don't use other websites	It is very organized and has tour dates	It has the tour dates	No stupid news
32	30-39	Male	It is very well organized! It also incorporates lots of different info in one convenient place: news,	It's got pretty much everything I would ever want in a music website. Like a 1 stop shop for all things music	Calendar is a very good attribute of the site	Location services (to help facilitate concert/tour dates near the user)
33	50+	Female		Need the website is very user friendly	The website is very well organized a sitting on a non-computer friendly person can easily use this website	I would like to see more classical style music on the online websites
34	30-39	Male	N/A	Seems simpler.	Clean design. Less clutter. More personalized.	I probably would not use any music news website regardless.
35	30-39	Female	it is personalized and has a really nice calendar	The Calendar and interesting articles	Calendar	The genre page is very wide spread and could possibly have examples of each to be more clear
36	50+	Female	N/A	It is clear and precise enough for people to navigate the website.	The layout.	More "Oldies but Goodies", Classical music, Old Standards such as Frank Sinatra, in addition to Josh Grobin,
37	13-19	Female	Being able to set a countdown.	It seems as if it would be easier to log into than others.	I liked that the "M" in the top left corner took you back to the home page.	Easier to work, and more personal
38	30-39	Male	I do not use other music news websites.	It aggregates news which makes it easier for me to stay up-to-date with many bands with only one website.	Aesthetically pleasing and user friendly.	Lyrics
39	13-19	Male	General layout is simpler and catches the eye	Seems simpler than other websites	The homepage has everything laid out in an easy to use manner	Ability to change background as the user would like
40	13-19	Male	I'm not really sure - I don't use similar websites. It looks nicely made and clean though.	It looks clean and easy to navigate.	Everything is simply done and easy to look at. The calendar also seemed like a nice feature.	Because I don't really use these websites, it's hard for me to say. But I suppose if I did, I'd just like it to be
41	13-19	Male	It allows you to filter the musical content based on your preferences	It's more personalized and is ideal for discovering new artists.	The vinyl record animation was awesome!!	Filtering the types of music that are presented on the website as well as a way of posting your own content as
42	30-39	Female	Being able to post your own article about music is pretty freaking awesome. Also, I enjoy how it	Its an all in one- news, concert calendar, recommendations, and journal.	I enjoy how simple and user friendly it seems to be.	It would be nice for it to be social media-like... kind of like Spotify but with more options included.
43	30-39	Female	I think this website is very informative and specific in comparison to other music websites.	I like how specific and user-friendly this website is.	I like the "Artists You May Like" section.	I'd like to see music videos as an addition.
44	40-49	Male	There are a lot of different features	I like the ability to follow artists and genres	I liked the artwork	I liked the website and would use it how it is
45	40-49	Female	Lyrics, samples of every song, sorting by Facebook preferences	keeps a lot of information on one site instead of using multiple sites	record with songs and lyrics	tour schedules, links to tickets, reviews of shows, setlists

Survey#	How old are you?	What is your gender?	What was different about this website versus other websites that you use? Please explain what you believe are the key differences.	If you answered yes, why would you use this website?	What components of this website did you like the best? Did anything in particular catch your eye?	What improvements would you like to see with music news websites? Please list the improvements you would like to see
46	40-49	Female	Populates based on other users like me, how cool!	I like the logo, and it is based on my preferences, not just what the creator likes. Caters to my demographic, you know 40-49	I really like the logo, classic, simple and eye-catching. The calendar tab was also very cool too!	More information about tour dates! I like to get my husband out there, but he likes to plan ahead :(
47	40-49	Male	Sex appeal. Layout is better. Design is better. Like the ability to follow artists I love.	Because it's better overall	Visually it was very nice	It's perfect
48	40-49	Male	The calendar that follows all of your artists shows is very cool.	The music videos and news about bands I like.	calendar	h
49	40-49	Female	I liked the mobility and ease of using the site. It provides a lot of information too.	It is really convenient and provides you with everything you need to know on one site.	The look and the music player.	
50	30-39	Female	I liked everything!	I would use it to better connect with my favorite artists and to connect and find new ones	I liked the artwork and the layout	I liked everything!