

The Future of the Music Experience

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Abstract

This study was intended to gain a strong understanding of where the music industry and accompanying artwork is today, how music is primarily experienced, and how it will develop in the future. The widespread shift from physical to digital platforms has reached the music industry and how listeners experience their favorite music. Although there are many positive results from this shift, it is important to pay close attention to how these changes affect how one experiences music and what is lost in the shift to digital. Even more importantly, where this shift might take music and its artwork's relationship in collecting and appreciating music.

Despite the extreme changes, music and album artwork have a dependent relationship with each other. Although music does not need artwork to deliver a valuable experience. Artwork is an indispensable asset to music's identity.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Statement

There are an infinite number of trends that reflect how easily people are influenced in their interests and behaviors. As technology advances, so does the way people go about interacting with them. It is valuable to understand the trends in reception and growth regarding technology; but more importantly, how people go about experiencing them. Technology's advances influence the way people go about experiencing music.

Entertainment is something everybody is interested in regardless of their background. There are various sub-parts to entertainment, and music is an important one. Music is an essential piece to human behavior and has been a strong interest as early as historians can go back to tribal and precolonial times. Music is a form of expression, so it is no surprise it is part of human behavior and will be around as long as people need to express themselves or find an outlet.

The advancing technology consistently influences how music can be appreciated. Beginning with the earliest vinyl technologies and now emerging into the digital age, music has always been present. The digital age of audio files and streaming has made it easier to access expansive music libraries. The shift of attention towards digital files has resulted in less interest in tangible music. In the past playing music through cassettes, vinyls and CD's presented music as a physical object listeners could experience both physically and audibly, enhancing the overall experience. Music lovers today are losing that interactive experience. It is important to take a moment to consider what this means for how one experiences it, and what this shift in musical mediums will lead to.

The purpose of this research was to explore where the future of digital music might lead and whether or not physical music will remain relevant.

Significance

The accessibility of music has improved due to digital, which most consider a positive change. The downside is the loss of physical interaction. Digitally organizing music takes away from the listeners experience. Having to shuffle through CDs, cassettes or vinyls, listeners have the ability to see the music expressed visually and experience the music in a different art form. Album art is a very important element because it captures the audience's attention while communicating the artist's visual expression of the album.

The audience for this research is music lovers of all ages who find themselves interested, curious, and invested in music. A group of individuals who ultimately care and want to explore where the advancement of technology is leading musical experience.

Musicians are creative artists who commit themselves wholeheartedly to each project they produce. As music enthusiasts, it is beneficial to explore how the current shift from physical to digital will affect the interaction and relationship listeners and musicians have with music. The presence and influence of technology is crucial to understand as well. It is helpful to grasp occurring changes when all the elements are understood and it is made easy to for-see where advancements might take us in the future.

Personal Interest

As a visual artist and music enthusiast myself, I originally found this to be a very saddening trend. Music tells stories and those stories come with meaning and expression from the musician that is lost when listeners do not have tangible artwork. Focusing further into the change we have before us though, I realized this is less of a loss or a sad ending to a great thing. But instead is simply a change to adapt with and embrace. While it is true digital platforms do not offer the same valued experience of handling artwork, it is important to remember there is so much more to discover and experience, that this is just a time of change where the possibilities are endless.

Chapter 2

Literary Review

The introduction of the internet has changed the way we access and share information. It has allowed our culture to shift towards a primarily digital platform. Apple, being a leader in the industry, played a big role in this transformation due to its digital music software. The first version of iTunes was released in 2001 along with Apple's first iPod (Covert, 2003). iTunes 4 was the first version to be available on Microsoft Windows and opened iTunes to more than 90% of PC users (Covert, 2003). Since its widespread popularity, the software has made an effort to incorporate visual elements, but users have shown little interest in those features.

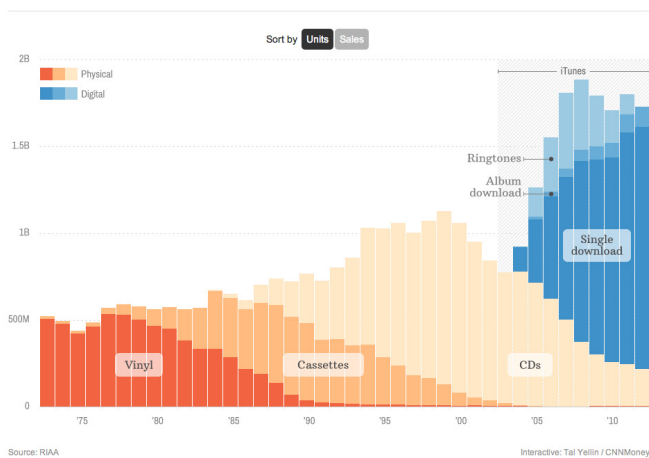


Figure 1. Musical Units distributed. (2003)

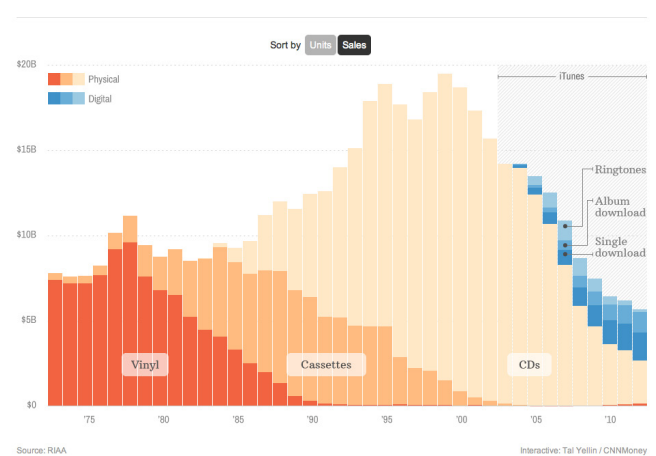


Figure 2. Musical Sales. (2003)

Sales reports show the digital music industry has rapidly taken off as the physical declines. CNN Money's graph shows CD sales at an all-time high at just under \$20 billion in the early 2000's and an all-time low just under \$5 billion in 2010 (Covert, 2003). The digital music sales have not gotten anywhere close to replacing physical sales. They did, however; skyrocket in recorded units at just under 2.5 billion in the mid-2000s, greatly surpassing the physical unit high, which was just over 1 billion in the late 1990's (Covert, 2003). Although digital unit distribution is high, its sales income is particularly low.

Due to the extreme shift in the industry, music companies are experimenting with different combinations of material based on which medium is purchased in hopes to remain relevant. According to Covert (2003), any major players in the industry “have begun to offer CDs and DVDs with bonus material to differentiate physical products from digital offerings at download sites.” Despite their efforts, these offerings have not won over consumer attention. Apple’s iTunes software leads the market in providing a user friendly interface supporting an online music store along with a digital music library (Covert, 2013). Apple also supports streaming with their relatively recent release of iTunes Radio. Competing software like Spotify, Grooveshark and Pandora all allow users to stream and listen to a variety of playlist options either for free or through a subscription. Most have additional features to share playlists with friends.

The majority of music enthusiasts today prefer to stream music online rather than buy any form of music at all. Streaming music allows listeners to access all the available music from one location, given there is an internet connection. In addition to having all the music available from one source, it is accessible anywhere in multiple mediums allowing for variability in experience. The user friendly tool to build a number of playlists encourages the user to personalize a listening experience that could not be accomplished before with tangible music products. A newer interactive feature suggests artists and albums the user might like based on listening history.

Surprisingly, music labels are in support of the growth of the streaming platform. They have agreed to rent their content in partnership with streaming sites, although they often lag in doing so. The motivation behind the labels’ participation is fueled by their hopes to replace unpredictable record sales with a steady and predictable income from subscription fees and payments (Angeli et al., 2010). Music executives have been exploring different areas where they can extend their subscription services. The Wall Street Journal has published that bundling music subscriptions with customers’ cable-TV and wireless plans has been an abandoned area of experimentation due to inconsistent results (Angeli et al., 2010). Pairing music subscriptions with Cable and Internet is only the first of many creative proposals to come from the music industry. They are determined to establish permanent subscriptions as their main source of income (Edgecliffe-Johnson, 2006).

Major record labels are not the only ones searching for what is next in music evolution. The numerous subscription-based music-streaming competitors within the industry are all trying to find an innovative way to differentiate themselves and establish a permanent place in the industry. Spotify is a respected leader in the music streaming

realm. Like many emerging streaming programs, it has both a free ad-supported service as well as a paid subscriber service at the price of \$10 a month. In 2012, Spotify's revenue was \$574 million, which was double the amount from the previous year (Flamm 2013). But despite the increased revenue, Spotify's annual losses increased from \$60 million to \$78 million in 2012 (Flamm 2013). Although the income was greater than the losses, it is crucial the company identifies why their losses are increasing and addresses the issue before it gets out of hand. Music-streaming programs have the biggest struggle with finding a way to offer such an expansive library while maintaining the lowest possible cost for the users and paying minimal subscriptions themselves to the music labels.

Music streaming already has a great following and a vast array of potential. The ability to subscribe to a program and access expansive amounts of music files from various devices at the user's convenience could easily be the future of how music is shared and experienced. Technology and software advances are transforming the classic event of listening to the newest vinyl with a group of best friends, to an interactive community connecting people across the world, allowing them to experience music together (Holsteen, 2014). There are benefits to both tangible and non-tangible musical experiences. Downloading music online gives the listener ultimate freedom and convenience to download anywhere internet connection is present in addition to saving physical storage space. But those who value perusing through various tangible forms of music and take pride in expanding collections argue they lose the experience with digital files. People who value physical copies of music are interested in more than the audio; they appreciate the smaller things that go into producing a CD that are forgotten and overlooked.

An element that constantly goes overlooked is the musician's involvement with the physical production. Artists are often extremely invested in creating a distinct listening and viewing experience for their fans with each project they produce. The biggest element to the individuality of the album other than the music itself is the album artwork. The artwork presented on the front of the jewel case and throughout the packaging sets the tone and captures the consumer's attention. The theme throughout the album subtly prepares the consumer for the musical experience by visual association and artistic interpretation (Baca, 2006). Beyond enhancing a listener's experience by adding a visual element, album artwork provides the opportunity for collaboration between artistic expressions. Musicians frequently work with different artists and photographers to capture or produce their vision for each of their projects. As production has developed, album art has been increasingly innovative by incorporating foils, embosses, visual effects, and even scented glosses to keep listeners interested (Baca, 2006).

The fusion of creative expression produces tangible items that the consumer can experience with all five senses, resulting in a memorable interaction. This amount of substantial influence is lost when the consumer interacts with digital music. Even though digital files can support the album artwork, the size is usually incredibly small and fails to fully generate the intended effect for the listener (Baca, 2006).

Establishing a visual association between a piece of music and complimentary artwork has the same effect branding does with a company. Analyzing how a book jacket influences book purchases is useful in understanding how powerful a product's imagery can be. An article in the Huffington Post notes "a book's cover is the first thing a potential reader sees and it can make a lasting impression" (Long, 2013). The article also raises the point, "if a great design had gut-level emotional appeal and the power to entice readers, a poorly designed cover can be a real turn-off" (Long, 2013). The initial visual exchange between the consumer and the product sets the tone of interest the consumer immediately establishes with the product.

The short amount of time it takes a consumer to visually register an appearance is often the amount of time it takes for that consumer to formulate an opinion and make a purchasing decision. An example of a book cover's influence is a case study where "R.L. Mathewson, a romance writer, went from selling five or six copies a day of her novel, *Playing for Keeps*, to over 1,000 a day simply by updating her cover image" (Long, 2013). The power of a product's visual identity is extremely important, especially within the first few seconds of formulating an opinion on the product. So it is crucial to consider the impact minimizing album artwork will have on listeners' interest and experiences. The lack of dominating artwork to capture consumer attention prevents listeners from exploring new music strictly through their channel of visual curiosity; ultimately muting that creative extension of musical expression.

An additional aspect to consider when contemplating the value of tangible goods is marketing strategy. It is an exciting development to explore emerging social platforms where users control trending albums and are able to download, share, and communicate music with each other. But it is vital to strategize successful ways to market the music. It is much easier to market a product to wide varieties of demographics and target markets as a material object. An effective way to intensely promote a product is through a push strategy. As defined by the International Franchising Association, "push strategies create consumer demand; the marketer pushes the message out to the

target audience and is in control of the message—what it is, how it is seen, and when and where it is consumed” (Rimlinger, 2011). An advantageous way to do this is with a point-of-sale display, where a company provides a store with an individual stand to house and promote their product. These stands are usually closer to checkout where the merchandise is displayed by itself away from competitors and other products to catch consumers on their way out.

The push strategy and point-of-sale display follows the “if it is built, they will come” philosophy. The tactic of this type of marketing is to get the product out in circulation and place it where people will see it. If the product is presented and made accessible to people, discussion will begin to circulate and a greater population will become familiar with the product; increasing both its popularity and relevance. Simply being on shelves gives consumers a chance to stumble upon new material. Unfortunately this level of promotion and marketing requires physical goods, limiting advertising for digital files.

Aside from being easier to market and display in stores to increase familiarity, substantial products have the ability to be valued as possessions. As a listener explores music and continues to purchase the latest from his or her favorite musician or explore different genres; the amount of collected music grows along with the listener’s interests. Over time the listener’s taste might change. If the consumer chose to keep her CDs, the listener has the capacity to reflect on personal growth in relation to each album formulating more of an attachment. Forbes notes collecting is a valuable hobby due to the gained knowledge throughout the process, ultimately building intellectual capital (Jacobs 2012). Which is beneficial, since the monetary value of a CD collection would be low due to the decline in sales and value (Covert, 2013).

An enticing thing about collections is there are often multiple people who find products interesting and have similar collections. Since music is driven by personal preference and interest, each listener’s personal collection will be different. The variation between collections offers an area of social exchange. If enthusiastic listeners share their favorite or most eccentric pieces, the CDs fuel interactivity between friends. This rejuvenated interest could recirculate forgotten albums, nurse old memories, and rekindle distant friendships. But it is not enough to make CDs relevant within current societal behavior.

Despite the marketing advantages and potential sentimental value in tangible music, physical copies of CDs continue to be rejected for digital music platforms. To avoid being overthrown by advancing technology, music companies need to explore niche markets and find areas where they can remain relevant. One area this is possible is through value of artwork associated with music. Creative limited edition artwork and innovative packaging introduces new ways to present old products; new material presented in old ways loses its competitive edge (Jacobs 2012). A basic example of how a CD might be incorporated with its package is implementing the disk in the design. The disk itself is printed with detailed graphics, which is then placed in creatively artistic packaging with a cutout that allows the disk's imagery to participate with the overall effect of the design. The CD has the ability to spin, continuously altering the way the focal point lays within the visual composition of the design. A Russian company that distributes art-house films has partnered with United Kingdom artist, Olga Sinodova on the development of some of these prototypes (Sinodova, 2010).



Figure 3. Examples of Sinodova's designs for an art-house DVD packaging. This illustration shows the effect of graphic disks incorporated with die-cut packaging.

Another interesting and interactive feature CD packaging can explore is augmented reality. Augmented reality is an interesting feature where the user is able to interact with print via technology through apps and QR codes (Holloway-Attaway, 2014). Rethink Agency, a creative marketing company partnered with the band “Jive Talk” to incorporate augmented reality in the packaging for their latest CD, “123 Jump!” (Koikoikoi, 2011).

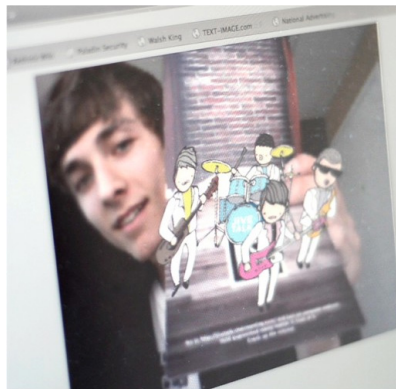


Figure 4. Augmented reality presents animations of the band performing.

Their resulting product allows the listener to view the inside of the CD package through a phone app and watch an animated version of the band performing their music (Koikoikoi, 2011). As the consumer continues to browse through the printed booklet, he can scan multiple QR codes over the band members' mouths to get lip-syncing animations to place over their faces for a fun interactive feature (Koikoikoi, 2011).



Figure 5. Jive Talk's CD booklet with the implementation of QR codes and augmented reality.

These experimental platforms bring exciting new ways to captivate listener interest and revive print's presence in the industry. As technology and user interfaces adapt, tangible music may take on new identities and offer different ways listeners can experience music. Digital platforms offer a variety of conveniently enticing advantages, but print still has the ability to connect users to the music they love in stimulating new ways. The partnership of technology and print opens a realm of possibilities that is yet to be explored. Tangible music has not reached its end in the industry, merely a turning point of which it presents itself.

Chapter 3

Results and Discussions

The purpose of this study was to recognize where physical music lies today and explore its potential in niche markets. The use of augmented reality, innovative packaging and design provide fresh ways consumers interact with tangible music. An experiment was conducted to gather data to measure the influence of experiencing music tangibly rather than digitally. This research included the following:

- Measure the magnitude of influence physical components have on a listening experience
- Compare the experience listening to music digitally versus tangibly

Data Collection Plan

The plan consisted of a combination of a survey as well as a correlational experiment. The survey focused on gathering common ideas and opinions regarding the argument of physical versus digital music. Participants were males and females within an age group from 18 to 25 years of age and briefly polled on topics concerning how music is experienced. These respondents were primarily Cal Poly students. The survey was distributed following their cooperation in an experiment.

The correlational experiment aimed to recognize differences between tangible and physical music. More importantly, to identify which medium was preferred by participants and measure any influence album artwork had on their experience. There were a minimum of 40 participants within the age group. Half of the group listened to a song digitally, while the other half listened to the same song and interacted with the album artwork and CD packaging. The differences in their experiences between the two mediums was recorded and analyzed.

Data Analysis Plan

The data from the questionnaire was collected and analyzed. General preferences, interests, and behaviors considering music were recorded. Predictions of the future of the music industry were summarized and noted.

Analyzing the listening experiment, profound correlations were identified. The listening sheets were collected from the participants and the responses were categorized before being added together. Preferences predicted the sway of the music industry's direction.

Chapter 5

Results

A correlational experiment was held as volunteers listened to the song Only Human by Lyla Foy, followed by a short survey on their listening experience. The participants were broken up into two control groups. They first listened to the song primarily digitally without any album artwork associated with it, while the other half of the volunteers experienced the same song physically and were given the entire album to assist their listening experience.

The participants who had the physical album were encouraged to do what they like with it, whether that was flipping through the music booklet or simply leaving it on the table without interaction. Most listeners held the artwork and looked at the surface and design of the CD packaging for about half of the song before starting the survey. When both groups were prompted with the question if anything was missing from their current listening experience,

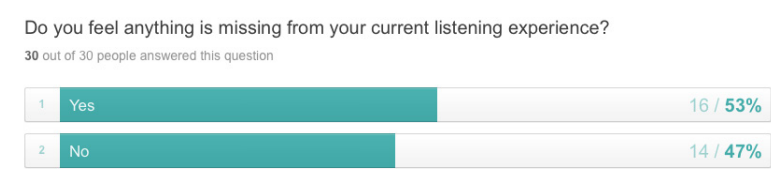


Figure 6. Results from Listening Survey

There is no way to conclude the missing element is artwork itself, but it is important to recognize that over half of the respondents reported their experience was lacking, while half of those respondents were not given the artwork at all.

An overwhelming 70% of the participants noted they primarily listen to music by streaming music digitally online. Despite primarily streaming music, 60% answered they have purchased a piece of music based on it's visual appeal.

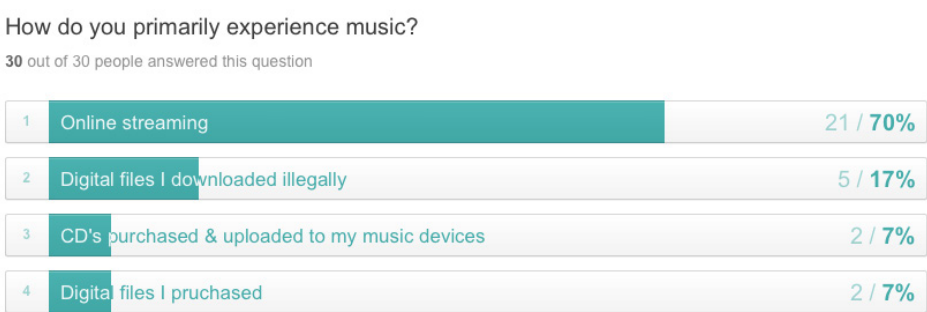


Figure 7. Results from Listening Survey.

Overall, volunteers averaged artwork's influence on a person's listening experience was about three out of five stars, or 58%. While most reported they did not have a strong inclination one way or the other, there was an overall trend that most identified some value in accompanying artwork.

Free response questions were included in the survey and were intended to gauge the differences in the respondents' experiences and interpretations of the song. This purpose was to identify any strong patterns in the differences of song interpretations with or without artwork present. Participants with the artwork described their listening

experience to be calm, relaxed and pensive. A few had an explanation of nostalgia that was provoked by the song. Respondents without the artwork remained consistent with the calm and relaxed feel, but had more of a variety of results and interpretations considering how they experienced the song. A number felt it was melancholy, while almost a mirrored amount felt it was happy, bubbly and “strangely uplifting.” The vast array of differences in how listeners without art reported their experience of the song shows they relied solely on their imagination to interpret the song at their disclosure, instead of using album art as a tool for interpretation.

A theme of what listeners with a copy of the CD felt would improve their experience was a change in environment for a more comfortable setting to enjoy the music. The group without the physical copy felt information about the album was missing; this included artist, production and song information. Explaining how the artwork affected their listening experience, the participants shared how they interpreted the art and how that related to their experience of the song. Most enjoyed the artwork and felt it contributed to their experience. Although they enjoyed the album art differently, their interpretations of the song all remained similar. The group without artwork expressed interest in learning more about the artist and the type of music they were listening to. They also felt the artwork could assist them in fully experiencing the music. Some didn't feel anything was missing at all and appreciated enjoying the song with their imagination.

Concluding the survey, an overbearing 70% responded artwork should continue to accompany music. When asked to elaborate, bold statements in support of artwork's role in music was clear. A reoccurring theme was the listeners were appreciative of the additional information accompanied with a physical album. Most shared their own versions of an “added experience” gained by associating the two. Some felt the artwork didn't contribute much to the technical music experience, but established a relationship between visual and audible stimulation provided by the artist which they appreciated.

Chapter 5

Conclusions

This study was conducted with the purpose of identifying the relationship between digital and tangible music. It was researched considering the future of musical distribution, recognizing the dominating music experiences today. An overwhelming 97% of participants believe artwork should continue to accompany music. But 70% of this same poll experience music primarily through online streaming and 60% said they had bought or selected music based on artistic appeal.

This amount of data derived from three simple questions illustrates the magnitude of the crossroads where the print and music industry currently find themselves. Listeners value musical artwork and appreciate its contribution, yet the way people experience music is changing. Interest is increasingly being lost in physical copies of music due to technological developments. But the artwork associated with those physical copies has not become any less relevant. The artwork has always enhanced the experience and aids in differentiating between musical pieces within a collection, it still holds the same role with music, but in a different product of technology and shifting culture.

Physical music may be gradually becoming irrelevant, but the association between musical artwork and music itself is as strong as ever. Musical production within the industry is changing, so will the way listeners invest, collect, and organize their music.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Listening Survey

Name: _____

Age: _____

M/F: _____

Is artwork included in your listening experience? (Y / N)

To the best of your ability, describe your experience of the song.

(How it makes you feel? What does it remind you of?)

Do you feel anything is missing from your current listening experience?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If so, what would you want added?

In what ways is the album art (or lack of album art) influencing your listening experience?

How do you primarily experience music? (choose one)

- ☐ digital files I purchased ☐ digital files I downloaded illegally
☐ CD's purchased and uploaded to my music devices

List any music hosts/sites you have used.

Have you ever purchased/selected music based on it's artwork or visual appeal?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If so, what were some deciding factors? Did the artwork influence any expectations you had?

How much do you feel artwork affects a person's listening experience?

☐ 1 (not at all) ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 (extremely)

Do you feel album artwork should continue to accompany music?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If so, why?

*Thank you so much again for participating in my experiemnt and taking my survey!
The contest winners will be selected and contacted within the next week.
Best of luck and have a great rest of your week!*

Appendix 2

Listening Survey Results

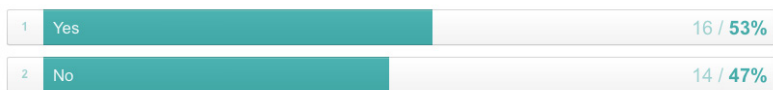
Is artwork included in your listening experience?

30 out of 30 people answered this question



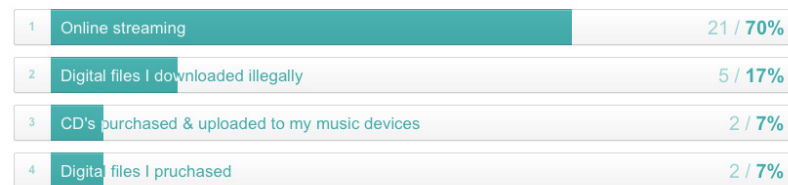
Do you feel anything is missing from your current listening experience?

30 out of 30 people answered this question



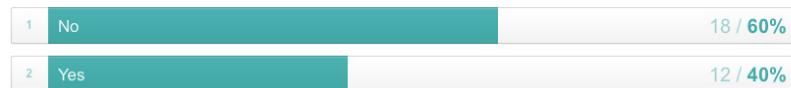
How do you primarily experience music?

30 out of 30 people answered this question



Have you ever purchased/selected music based on it's artwork or visual appeal?

30 out of 30 people answered this question



How much do you feel artwork affects a person's listening experience?

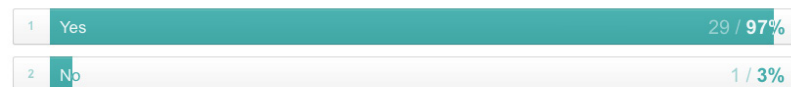
30 out of 30 people answered this question



► Show detail

Do you think artwork should continue to accompany music?

30 out of 30 people answered this question



2.- To the best of your ability, de...	4.- If so, what would you want a...	5.- In what ways is the album art...	9.- If so, what were some decidi...	12.- If so, why?
Upbeat yet mellow. Chilling at a coffee shop		artwork reflects the title of the song "only human" artwork reflects the title of the song "only human"	quality of the photographs, art, colors, typography, readability of CD info	The visual aid or album artwork gives you a little more insight into the mind of the artist/ can be just as meaningful/important to the artist as their lyrics
Deeper, slower song which easily allowed me to go into a deeper thought process. It would have been interesting to have seen visuals with the song	more artwork per song, not just album	Provides a different/deeper look at a song/albums view compared to my own experience. I can interpret a song in my own way, however artwork allows me to see a meaning past words.	Colors used, unique patterns, similar style to the music I listen to	Shows a deeper view of the artist. A different interpretation than I might have though the artist was attempting to achieve.
very calm, relaxed & happy. Feel as if I should be outside.	Being Outside	Feel as if should be in meadow or a somewhat wooded forest during the day/morning		There's an added experience that makes the music more individual & unique. It's like reading an old book instead of reading it on a tablet.
I like it! relaxing & still to listen to.	laying on a couch or cleaning	Really liked the art, Would have liked to have the artist name on the front, but it was cool art & enhanced my experience b/c it was unique	I like when it's a picture of the person or cool artwork as opposed to just text or a simple solid color background. Makes me think the artist has style.	Tells you a lot about the artist/music. you can identify with it
The song was very different. It reminded me of being outdoors. It made me feel relaxed & interested in hearing more of their music.		Artwork is interesting & led me to believe that the music would be different than mainstream popular music	If the artwork is interesting or catches my attention, I will pay more attention to it & probably buy it.	It gives the listener an idea of what they music should sound like & how it should make them feel.
I feel like I'm sinking to the bottom of the ocean.		The album cover inspired the underwater feeling	abstract 7 colorful artwork grabs my eye!	It's what makes music a physical object
It is kinda dark and depressing, but the chorus sounds optimistic. I guess you could call it melancholy emotionally. Also musically simple.		I felt prepared for it to be an indie-ish band upon seeing art. In terms of the emotion behind it I was not prepared.		I think it creates an association. It doesn't change the music, but when I see it (after listening to the music for a while) it starts to evoke the feelings of the music.
it was somewhat nostalgic. Reminded me of upbeat childhood, like the soundtrack to memory of me at a carnival when I was younger.	Someone to listen/dance with	It was beautiful artwork & I spent the duration of the song trying to find the lyrics to this song & reading the lyrics of the other songs		
It made me feel like I was walking/sitting by myself in a hilly green meadow underneath a tree in a white dress. There were lots of flowers and it was windy. No people for miles.		The album art was kind of trippy. made me think of being on drugs (or at least the depiction of it)		It is the artist's expression. I buy the album if I like the music, but the album art is an awesome addition. (AKA Beatles magical mystery tour)
It makes me feel very relaxed & positive. It's the type of song that makes me want to really understand what the song/lyrics mean.	A music video. A music video can say so much.	it makes the music seem like a visual experience as well as a listening experience.		it gives an alternate path to understanding the artist
Personally, it was difficult for me to make out each of the lyrics, but I feel it was a sad song. It reminded me of something you would listen to if someone just broke up with you.	Environment. More comfortable/relaxed setting	It didn't add much for me. It didn't provide too much information, which some may find nice, but I would have liked more.		It provides external context for what you are listening to. I like the album artwork to teach me more about the artist. So it is easier to make an emotional connection to the music.
Calm, bubbly, happy. reminds me of mornings		Made me curious to what her other songs sound like. darker than I expected		another way for the artist to express their message
Happy yet kind of moody. It makes me want to dance. It reminds me of coachella.	A subwoofer to feel the bass guitar. Higher quality sounds, feel like a live experience.	It gives me less idea of who or what the artist is about and how I should feel.	Definitely, great artwork that resonates me piques curiosity is memorable.	Because it allows the artist to explore his music visually and the audience experience music with a visual cue as well. Also great for organizing large musical libraries.
Makes me feel relaxed, blocks everything out around me. The song reminds me of a nice bike/car ride or lying under a tree.		without art the song speaks for itself. Less biased and I feel like I can form my own thoughts about it with the song.		Gives the music a face or something to associate it. Otherwise it would be bodiless sound.
It makes one feel calm. Kind of reminds me of a song that would play at the end of an intense movie.		youtube, mp3.com		it's cool to look at
calm since the song is pretty slow & soft		I don't think it's influencing it at all right now, but it would if I was looking at it.		It's how you remember which album is which
Made me feel good & pumped to do stuff. Reminded me of a trope of song that would be on the soundtrack to a movie or show.	all the info about the song	I want to have more of an idea on the artist's interpretation & who they are		It's fun & adds to the experience
The song made me feel sort of sad, the singer's voice felt lonely. It was slightly creepy, however I liked the beat of the music and enjoyed it more the longer I listened to it.	It would like to know the song name.	It allows me to picture the artist singing.		I think it allows the listener to connect more with the artist.
Something watery. At an overcast beam or in the ocean. It makes me feel calm. Reminds me of long road trips with the window down. Oddly uplifting.	I like lyrics available and I'd be really curious to see a music video.	Album art doesn't add much for me. I enjoy creating my own visuals that represent the song.	Related artists mostly & occasionally song titles. Artwork sometimes indicates the mood of the pieces. Unprofessional artwork is not good.	The albums without art scream low budget or lack of effort.
The song has a melancholy, nostalgic feel. The relentless drum beat, however indicates a persistence in spite of this melancholy theme.		The look of album art shifted focus to solely the sounds. I had no other stimuli.	Not normally. Typically I choose music based on styles I've heard from Pandora/radio or from personal recommendations of friends.	Album art provides a visual stimulus to accompany sound. The feel of the art influences your preconceptions of the music.
It reminds me of old friends, relationships that I don't have anymore.	I like watching music videos	Album art would have made me more likely to listen if it was good or interesting.		it gives a visual representation to music that is appealing to a broader audience.
Melancholy, it sounds like missing someone and being lonely or a rainy day. It feels like missed opportunities and that sinking sad feeling in your stomach.	Florescent lighting in the library doesn't necessarily set the mood.	The song is wholly up to my listening experience	I look for art that fits my mood & sense of identity	I believe album artwork is an important and possibly lost art, but I own a record player.
It makes me feel calm and pleasant, it reminds me of music that would be played in a coffee shop.		I am wondering what the people playing the music look like	I will check out music that has the same general aesthetic as music that I know I already like.	because it can help the musician create the "vibes" or atmosphere that they are going for
Very relaxing song. Reminded me of a few songs by Lia Ices that I used to listen to while studying.	Nothing that I can think of. Maybe a place to relax? haha	I studied the colors and shapes while listening. I don't do that all that often. But I decided it fit really nicely with the mood of the song.	I always love artwork that is pretty or really eye catching. Basically something that I would hang on my wall or put on display. If the artwork is fun and creative, I expect the music to reflect it. If the artwork is quirky and simple I expect the music to be relaxing and indie to some extent.	It's a part of branding that particular artist's image. The album artwork is a huge part of the music.
mellow		No vibrant colors, all very cool feeling colors.		The artwork should reflect what the music sounds/represents. So it encourages somebody to want to buy and listen to it.