Streaming platforms : game changers for the music industry

Streaming services: a revolution in the music industry (8)

The tools we use to access music are constantly evolving , with streaming platforms/services now prevailing over all others. This evolution/shift is the topic of a set of three articles, all issued in 2019 - two opinion pieces from the Irish Times (doc 1) and from the website audioxide (doc 2) together with a college study/paper published by the University of the Pacific (doc 3). They come with charts from The Telegraph (doc 4) dated 2016 providing figures related to streaming services. (65)

These documents raise the following question: to what extent are the changes generated by streaming beneficial for the various parties involved? (87)

These documents examine/explore how deeply streaming has transformed the music industry itself but also artists’ work and listeners’ habits. (85)

The music industry has been experiencing a major and very profitable transformation/shift regarding how music is provided, with traditional media being inexorably replaced by streaming application/services such as Spotify where no less than 30 million songs are available to users (doc). Indeed in 2015, already 100 million people had been seduced into listening to music on Spotify, with 6.7 billion dollars revenue generated by streaming worldwide (doc4 & ). Besides, although revenues from physical products have gone down – 39% against 45% for digital music (doc 4) , the low cost of a subscription - 10 dollars a month – has practically eradicated the scourge of piracy since people no longer feel the need to download music illegally. 108

Streaming has revolutionized the music industry, but it has also deeply transformed the way we listen to music. As these platforms offer a huge quantity and diversity of music styles, users/people can discover an immense variety of music and artists, sometimes away from mainstream music towards less conventional music styles (doc 1&2). Moreover those streaming platforms sophisticated algorithms can analyze our listening habits in order to then provide us with tailored/customized playlists and recommendations corresponding very accurately to our profile and tastes (doc...). Nonetheless , as explained in doc1, such tailoring could prevent us from making new musical discoveries and, as the listening experience becomes more individual, potentially isolate us from others. 107

The changes streaming brings about obviously impact musicians as well. Indeed the musical eclectism of streaming playlists offers an unprecedented visibility to independent artists who no longer need a label to distribute their music, a process that is far easier on digital platforms than on physical products (doc...). These artists are thus provided a direct link with an audience they could hardly reach before/formerly. However these positive evolutions come with a major downside mentioned in all articles, namely the extremely low royalties paid to musicians under this new system, putting “small” artists under much pressure if they are to make a decent living. 102

Streaming has generated deep changes in the music industry, often for the better, however much progress remains to be done so that all parties benefit equally from those evolutions. 29

439 ou 441 (en fonction du choix de la formulation de la problématique)