

<http://www.pocket-lint.com/news/24158/music-download-sales-double-bpi>

Music download sales double, says BPI

1 in 10 people in the UK download music in 2008

by Duncan Geere published on 18 May 2009

Turns out that alongside the sky-rocketing popularity of illegal download services also comes a doubling in the popularity of legal ones. The BPI has announced that 9.5% of the population bought music downloads in 2008, compared with 5.1% in 2007.

The likely reason for the rapid growth is the removal of DRM from the last major label standouts in January 2008. It means that music downloads bought from anywhere can now be played on any device.

Digital singles now account for 95% of the market, selling 110 million copies in 2008 (42% up on 2007) and 10 million digital albums were sold - 65% up on the previous year.

Also of interest is the statistic that a third of the population now owns an MP3 player. It's unclear if this includes phones that have inbuilt MP3 player functionality, or just dedicated MP3 player devices.

Lastly, the BPI claims that 23% of those surveyed between the ages of 16 and 54 used illegal filesharing networks, with two-thirds of them using the networks as often as every month. As the BPI has a history of suing filesharers, it's possible that some of those questioned declined to reveal this info, so the real figure might be much higher.

Next year's statistics will be interesting, as the effects of services like Spotify, Comes with Music and Last.fm are likely to start to be felt in the numbers. Analysts believe that with over a million UK residents using Spotify, digital sales figures could soon begin to dip once more, due to the "access vs ownership" trend.

