

Online music streaming on the rise in Canada, with most using YouTube: report

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TORONTO - There was some head-scratching when Apple recently announced it was buying the headphone and music streaming company Beats in a US\$3 billion deal.

But a Canadian report suggests Apple may be on to something, as audio streaming is on the rise and the use of online music services has doubled in a year.

Nearly two-thirds of the anglophone Canadians polled by phone by the Media Technology Monitor said they regularly streamed music online last year, which was up from 61 per cent in 2012 and 57 per cent in 2011.

The most popular source for listening to music for free online was YouTube, with 53 per cent of the respondents saying they streamed tunes that way.

About one in five said they streamed online feeds of AM or FM radio stations and a similar number used a streaming service like Deezer, Rdio, Songza or Slacker. The use of streaming music services in Canada doubled since 2012, according to the report. Of the regular audio streamers, one in three said they used at least one music service.

Perhaps surprisingly, respondents said the time they spent streaming audio was almost equal to how long they typically spent streaming TV shows, movies and other video clips.

Survey respondents said about a quarter of their online time was devoted to listening to music, about 29 per cent was spent watching video, and the rest was used for surfing the web and other web activities.

The average user who said they regularly streamed audio online estimated they typically spent a little over seven hours a week doing so.

Desktop and laptop computers were still the devices of choice for streaming. About 84 per cent of the users who regularly streamed online said they used a computer for music listening. About one in three music fans said they also used their smartphone to stream audio, one in five said they used a tablet, and one in 10 were playing songs through an Internet-connected TV.

The Media Technology Monitor commissioned Forum Research Inc. to speak with 4,009 anglophones by phone between Oct. 7 and Dec. 1, 2013 about how they used technology. The survey results are considered accurate within 1.5 percentage points 19 times out of 20.

Another recent report by the NPD Group found that while large numbers of Canadians are transitioning to digital music, most listening is still done in their cars.

About 70 per cent of the Canadians surveyed in an online poll said they most commonly listened to music in their cars, followed by using a computer (57 per cent) or their TV (40 per cent).

The online survey was conducted with 2,653 Canadians from Jan. 10 through 22. The polling industry's professional body, the Marketing Research and Intelligence Association, says online surveys cannot be assigned a margin of error as they are not a random sample and therefore are not necessarily representative of the whole population