

Show is going on: Gen Z is embracing the analogue music experience

Recent survey from Key Production has revealed that the proportion of people listening to physical music is greatest amongst Generation Z (ages 18-24).

What is ownership?

The XXth century has been the heyday of debates around this idea. Writers, leaders, theorists have tried to uncover its real meaning in books, books, cold conflicts, and some much warmer.

It is a fact: generally speaking, we own more than our great grandparents did. We own more because we have more choice on the market, we own more because we earn more, we own more because we want more, but we also own more because what we own is physically disappearing.

That Walkman you lost when you were 15, that book whose pages' scent transported you into a carpenter's workshop, these vinyl you owned, black disks on which your youth reflected; all these now fit into the palm of your hand.

Far from being an anti-technology pamphlet, it seems evident that all senses are required to fully enjoy what is yours. Physical items do not just take more room, they represent a chapter of your story, a symbol of your growth.

Against this slow but steady disappearance, we can rely on an unexpected ally: Gen Z.

A research conducted by *Key Production*, the UK's leading bespoke packaging agency for vinyl, CD and cassettes has revealed that the proportion of people listening to physical music is greatest amongst Gen (18-24).

Symphonic Study

Significantly, this was proportionally greater within this age range compared to the other age groups – which all reported between 40 to 45%. Furthermore, when asked about purchasing physical music albums, the highest proportion of those buying CDs is within the 18-24 bracket (34%) alongside the 45-54 age group (34%).

Key Production is a Certified B Corp and works with music industry bodies ensuring the best practices for sustainability within physical music production are met throughout the whole supply chain. Founded in 1990, the London-based company is best known for its work with artists such as Nick Cave, Alt-J, IDLES, Little Simz, Ezra Collective, PJ Harvey and Raye on her Brit Award winning album – amongst many more.

This insight into the younger generations' music consumption follows the annual reports from the British Phonographic Industry (BPI) and the Digital and Entertainment Retail Association (ERA) which revealed that physical music sales continue to grow in the UK – with vinyl sales increasing for a 16th consecutive year and CDs reporting its best year in 20 years.

A cycle of nature and music

Ahead of Record Store Day this Saturday, the annual celebration of record stores and physical music across the UK, this latest research supports the ongoing trend of physical music popularity – but shows that it's not just older generations listening to and buying physical music.

We know vinyl and CDs are popular again but it's encouraging that it's not the generations who grew up with them! From the warmer audio quality, to the beautiful artwork and holding a physical record in your hands – buying physical music formats just can't be matched and it makes me happy that younger people recognise this too and are embracing the analogue music experience.” says *Karen Emanuel*, CEO of Key Production .

What's more – the survey found that between all the age ranges, 18-24 year olds are more willing to pay a small premium on buying vinyl LPs if the records were to be produced with a proven reduced impact on the planet (71%).

This finding comes ahead of Earth Day on Monday and during a time when the

environmental impact of vinyl production is being discussed across the music industry – with singer Billie Eilish recently questioning the music industry’s attitudes towards producing multiple varieties of vinyl releases and announcing an eco-friendly album plan.

“Seeing that younger music consumers are more willing to pay a bit more for environmentally friendly music is really significant”, Karen Emanuel continues.

Article by PAUL FERRETTI