

# THE EVOLUTION OF

# sound

From the phonograph to TIDAL, the distribution of music is ever changing. The way people listen to music not only alters lifestyles, but the entire music industry.

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While attempting to make improvements to the telegraph and telephone, Thomas Edison created the phonograph, one of the first devices specifically used for recording and playing back audio. Edison's invention started a long path of audio engineering and innovation that carried into the 21st century.

**1877**  
PHONOGRAPH



ELECTROSPECTIVEMUSIC.COM

**1925**  
COMPACT CASSETTE



Victor Talking Machine Company and Columbia Records licensed the electrical record playing system developed by Western Electric. They began issuing electrical vinyl records. These records became the dominant method for music distribution throughout the mid 1900s, and remained at the top even with the development of the Compact Cassette.

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The Learjet Stereo 8-track cartridge was developed by Richard Kraus, the Lear doubled the storage of the four-track tape cartridge. Within a few years, it became the most popular form of music production, even surpassing vinyl records. This was largely due to its use in the car industry. Ford began offering it as an upgrade option in all its models in 1967, and later it was modified for home use aiding its growing popularity.

**1963**  
LEARJET STEREO



HUBPAGES.COM

**1982**  
COMPACT DISC



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Invented by American James T. Russell, the Compact Disc was commercially released in the U.S. His patents were licensed to Sony and Philips and a year later Sony produced the Discman D-50, the first portable digital music player. Sales rates for the CD reached their peak in the 1990s, and since then have been rapidly dropping.

Napster became the first widely used music streaming service. It was a free website that allowed users to share their MP3's with other users. However, most of these files were bootleg recordings or unreleased music, causing artists like Madonna and Dr. Dre to file lawsuits against the site. In 2001, Napster was forced to shut down after a crushing lawsuit filed by the Recording Industry Association of America.

**1999**  
NAPSTER



QUORA.COM



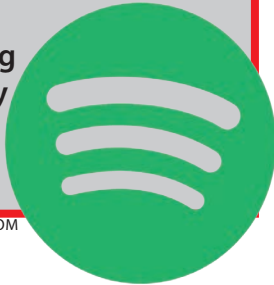
**2003**  
ITUNES MUSIC

CIO.COM

Apple releases the iTunes Store, the first legal digital catalog of music. Steve Jobs made deals with five major record label companies to offer their content through iTunes. Individual songs were sold for 99 cents each, with the artist making a nine cent profit. iTunes Store software was only compatible with the iPod and Mac computer.

Spotify is a music and media streaming app that is offered free, or for monthly payments for the upgraded "premium" version. Spotify became instantly popular, in June 2015 it recorded 75 million active users. However, lots of artist disliked the app and thought they were being unfairly compensated for their music and accused Spotify of "stealing royalties." Artists like Taylor Swift and Adele have chosen to withhold new music from Spotify.

**2011**  
SPOTIFY



TWITTER.COM

**2015**  
TIDAL



HELLOGIGGLES.COM

**2007**  
SOUNDCLOUD



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Created by founders Alexander Ljung and Eric Wahl-fors, the social networking site Soundcloud allows users to record and upload originally-created audio and share it with people around the world. Users can keep up with their audience by tracking how many plays, likes, reposts and downloads they receive on their sounds. The app is currently ranked third in most downloads for music services in the U.S.

To keep up with increasingly popular services like Spotify and Pandora, Apple ventured into the realm of music streaming with iTunes Radio. Like the other apps it generates playlists based on users' preferences or on trending music. It was first offered free to all iTunes members, but after merging with Beats Music in 2015, users were charged a monthly fee. Apple Music currently boasts 10 million subscribers.

**2013**  
APPLE MUSIC



Relaunched in 2015, Tidal is the first artist-owned streaming service. It is headed by Jay Z, but co-owned by 15 other artists including Beyoncé, Kanye West, Rihanna, and Nicki Minaj. By charging higher subscription fees, Tidal claims to pay the highest royalties to artists restoring value to music that has been lost through streaming sites. Lots of these co-owning artists have turned exclusively to Tidal to provide their music, but this was not received well. Earlier this year Tidal hit one million subscribers and is still lagging behind in comparison to Spotify and Pandora. While Tidal hoped to compensate artists, it's high prices ended up sending many streamers running back to cheaper, or illegal streaming sites.

123RF.COM



**1895**  
GRAMOPHONE

Emile Berliner founded the US Gramophone Company in Washington D.C. Concert bands and artists would come to the company headquarters to record their pieces which would be produced and sold by Berliner's company. They often had multiple artists record the same song since popular songs would sell out quickly and making duplicates difficult.

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With the invention of the radio receiver came the transistor radio. These were small, portable radios that revolutionized the way people listened to music by allowing them to tune in anywhere. Although first produced by Texas Instruments, Japanese companies like Sony and Toshiba soon began to dominate the U.S. markets with their transistor radios.

**1954**  
TRANSISTOR RADIO



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Sony created the first truly portable music player: the TPS-L2 Walkman. Only slightly larger than cassette tapes, the device is battery operated and came with its own pair of lightweight headphones—forever altering people's listening habits.

**1979**  
WALKMAN



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**1998**



Korean company Saehan created the MPman F10. This was the first MP3 player of all time. The Internet provided for easy sharing of these small information files, and websites like www.mp3.com arrived that offered thousands of free, downloadable MP3's created by independent artists. Through these mass-sharing methods, music piracy grew, and record companies' sales began to drop.

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Steve Jobs unveiled the iPod—a 5GB MP3 player that gave listeners "1,000 songs in your pocket." While its sleek design fit comfortably in a buyer's pocket, the device was not seamless. iPod users still relied on and often illegally downloaded music via websites like Napster.

**2001**  
IPOD



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