

The Dark Side Of The Tune: MusicTank publishes new report highlighting the hidden energy costs of digital music consumption

- *Streaming an album over the internet 27 times can use more energy than the manufacturing and production of its CD equivalent*
- *Unlicensed file sharing could consume the equivalent of up to four times the annual combined electricity consumption of all UK households*
- *Do ever more complex cloud, mobile and streaming services represent sustainable consumption models or do they present us with an environmentally unsustainable digital future?*
- *Conference announcement tbc*

Today (September 13th), industry think tank MusicTank publishes *The Dark Side Of The Tune* – a new report highlighting the hidden energy costs of digital media consumption and implications for the music business.

Authored by renowned innovator Dagfinn Bach, the report focuses on the environmental impact of current shifts in music consumption from ‘ownership’ of physical or digital products towards the range of ‘access’ or cloud-based services such as YouTube, Spotify, Deezer, Rhapsody, rara, Napster, we7, Last.fm, Pandora or iTunes Match.

It has been estimated that the global ICT industry contributes as much greenhouse gas to the atmosphere as all the world’s airlines combined. With the current trend for streaming music direct to computers or portable devices, Bach highlights the resulting energy costs of digital services and the potential impacts on network infrastructure.

Intending to kick-start debate, the report also considers ways to offset energy inefficiencies, such as local storage, caching and mass storage devices.

Speaking about the report, Keith Harris, MusicTank chairman said: *“The uptake of smart devices, combined with the advent of mass connectivity and high speed broadband continues to revolutionise our consumption of music. These changes also have considerable implications for the environment. Where, in the pre-digital era, music fans stuck a needle on the groove or hit a play button, today they are increasingly turning to cloud-based streaming services powered by energy-hungry server farms.”*

Dagfinn Bach added: *“Digital music is not distributed in an environmental vacuum. While CD and vinyl pressing plants are becoming rarer, the growth in data traffic caused by digital content services comes with its own risks and problems. I hope this report shines a light on the issue and opens an important debate, both in the music*



industry and beyond.”

Sponsored by HP, The Dark Side Of The Tune is available as a freely downloadable PDF via this link: <http://www.musictank.co.uk/resources/reports/energy-report>

Notes for Editors

MUSICTANK

MusicTank is the UK's music business network, an initiative of the University of Westminster, set up with the support of 14 UK music industry organisations.

MusicTank aims to foster new collaborations and circulate innovative ideas, best practice and cutting-edge strategies to increase innovation and productivity across the business. Regular think tanks bring hot topics into sharp focus and help pinpoint the opportunities created by disruptive technologies.

MusicTank conferences deal with everything from record production to copyright review while occasional social evenings blend the entertaining recollections of music business virtuosos with the opportunity to develop valuable industry contacts.

MusicTank aims to override traditional partitions by providing improved access to expert knowledge via musictank.co.uk, the leading music business web-site, offering free industry discussion on new business techniques alongside useful reports and comments from leading lights. MusicTank also produces a free monthly newsletter to keep subscribers up to date with all the latest music developments.

www.musictank.co.uk

DAGFINN BACH

Dagfinn Bach is President, R&D director and co-founder of Bach Technology AS, the company behind the MusicDNA format. Working for Western Norway Research Institute in the late 1980s Dagfinn led a cluster of pilot projects including development of the MP3 in music production and distribution, digitisation of music archives, and the creation of one of the first mixed-mode audio/multimedia CD-ROMs.

Dagfinn went on to become the initiator and coordinator of several important European Commission funded projects, and was appointed external expert and evaluator for the INFO2002 Multimedia Rights Management Systems call for proposals in 1998. Following this Dagfinn was hired as consultant for Nokia Ventures Organisation to conduct a feasibility study on mobile distribution of music in the Chinese mainland market.

Since founding Bach Technology in 2007, Dagfinn has overseen the development of the MusicDNA format. MusicDNA is a smart media extension that enables music fans to access the wide range of music-related content they want alongside the music itself – from lyrics, artwork and tour dates to blog posts, videos and twitter feeds all in one application.

MusicDNA allows content owners to create products that give back to the music fan that deeper experience they had when music came on a physical format. Launched



at Midem in January 2010, MusicDNA has been hailed as the successor to the MP3 with support from across the value chain, including rights holders, distributors, digital service providers and retailers.