

DM@X 2026

Canadian Media Production, and the Music Industries in the Global Marketplace: Audiences, and Future Prospects

February 2026

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Report Mandate & Objectives

Mandate

- To gather and present information on global trends in the music and audiovisual production industries.
- To analyze the impact of these trends on the Canadian music and audiovisual industries.

Objectives

- To set the stage for a lively DM@X conference.
- To refresh the 2025 DM@X Report.
- To stimulate further discussion on policy, strategy, and economics in other venues.



Audience & Discoverability

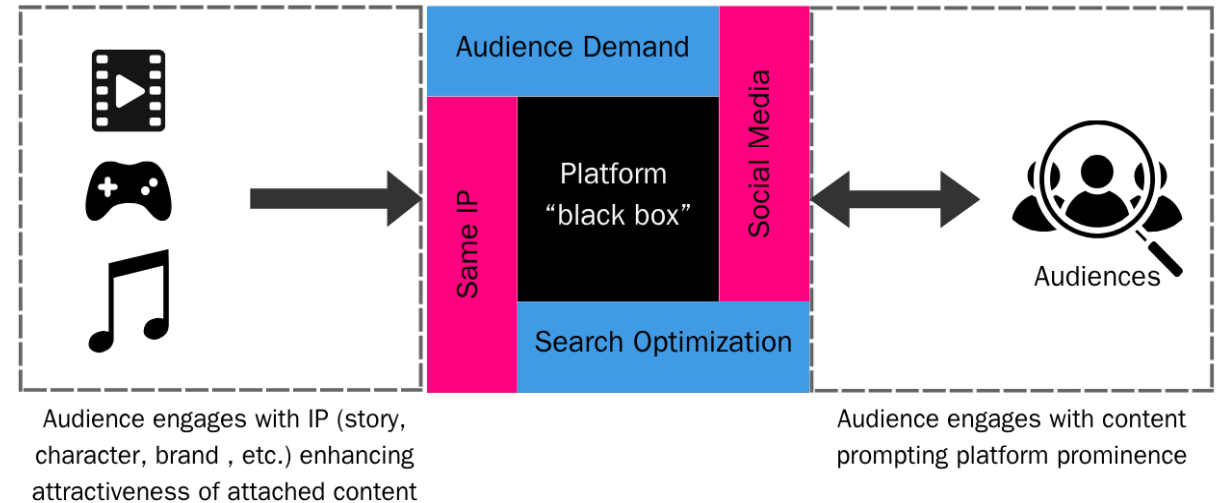
Discoverability is an output of audience development.

- Prominence & placement help, but visibility is driven by effective/authentic engagement.
- Creators can develop IP through approaches that facilitate audience participation.
- Many factors determine discoverability: *word-of-mouth, demand, SEO, recommendation systems, the zeitgeist.*

Audience interest drives prominence.

- Platform algorithms respond to audience engagement.
- To maximize visibility and algorithmic inclusion:
 - Engage audiences early and consistently
 - Cultivate sustained demand
 - Maintain strong online presence
 - Leverage relationships with existing content and IP

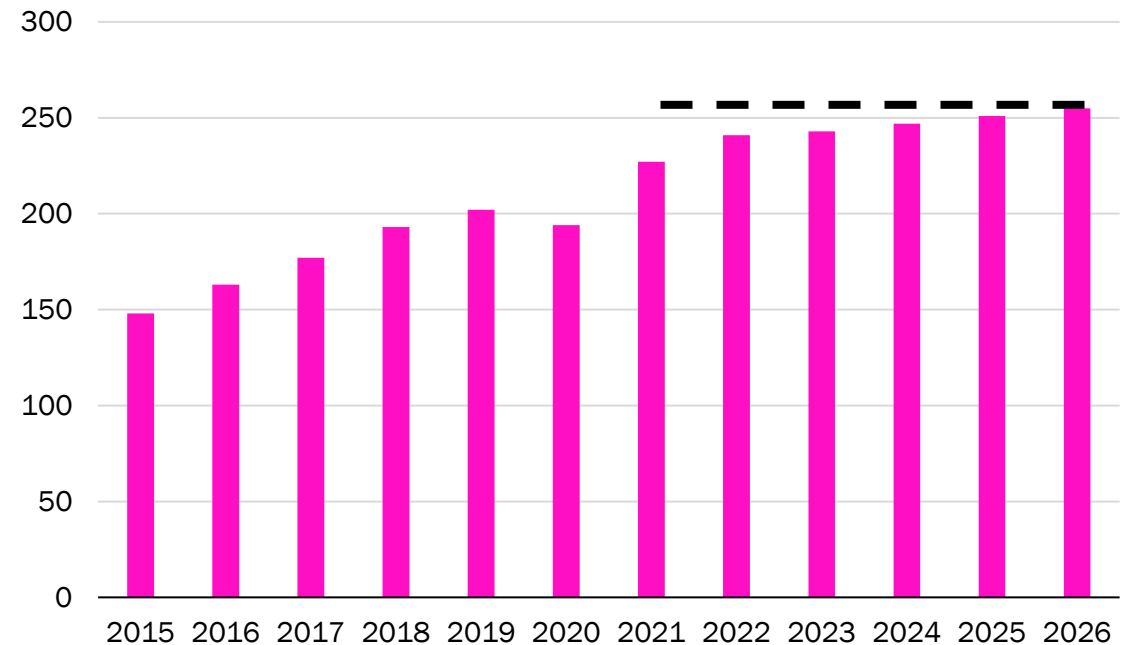
Discoverability as a function of audience engagement by both creators and platforms



Global Content Spend

- Total world-wide content spend has essentially plateaued since 2022 rising by just \$12 B since 2022 to hit \$255B in 2026.
- Streamers anticipated to cross \$100B content spend mark for the first time in 2026 (40% of total global content spending).
- Spending by broadcasters including PayTV, commercial and public entities is holding steady except in the U.S. where large studios are focused on feeding their online offerings.

Film and Tv Content Spend Worldwide
(\$ US B)



Pulse Check: Canadian Broadcasters

Broadcaster revenues continue to decline

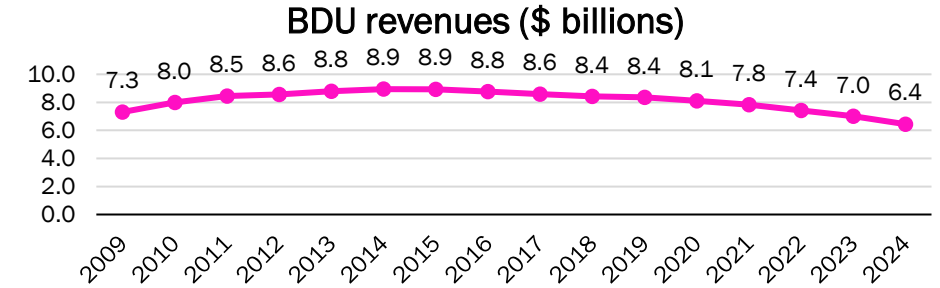
- Total revenue hit \$8.9B in 2015 decreasing to \$6.4B in 2024.
- BDU subscriptions erode despite household growth: dropping from 80%+ of households (2009) to ~58% (2024).
- Ad spending continues shift from television to digital .

Continued challenges for broadcasters

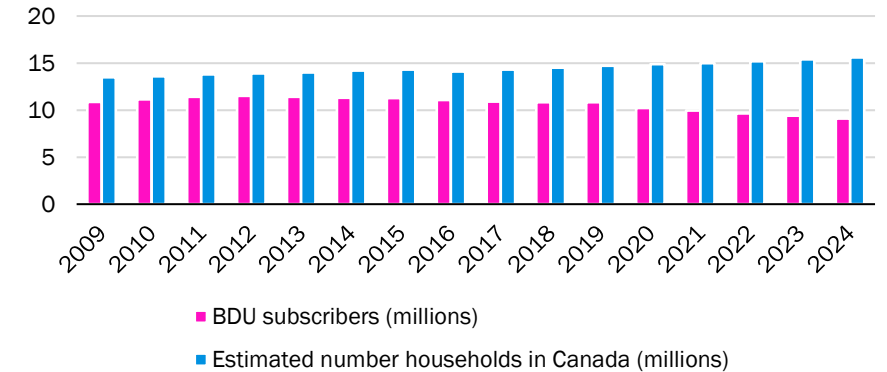
- WildBrain exited broadcasting, citing the model is no longer commercially viable.
- Financial distress continues for Corus as it pursues survival measures of recapitalization and debt restructuring.

Emerging Opportunity

- CBC News expands local coverage with 11 new bureaus.
- Strength in PNI/CPE: For every dollar of revenue broadcasters earned in 2024, they spent \$0.42 on Canadian programming (excluding PNI), \$0.11 on PNI, and \$0.20 on non-Canadian programming.
- Bell Media acquired a majority stake in UK-based Sphere Abacus, strengthening its global content distribution capabilities opening potential expanded reach for CanCon.



BDU Subscribers vs. Canadian Households (millions)



2025 Q1 Advertising Spending:



Digital
\$939.5M
 +5.1%
 (12-month change)



Linear Television
\$420.7M
 -8.6%
 (12-month change)

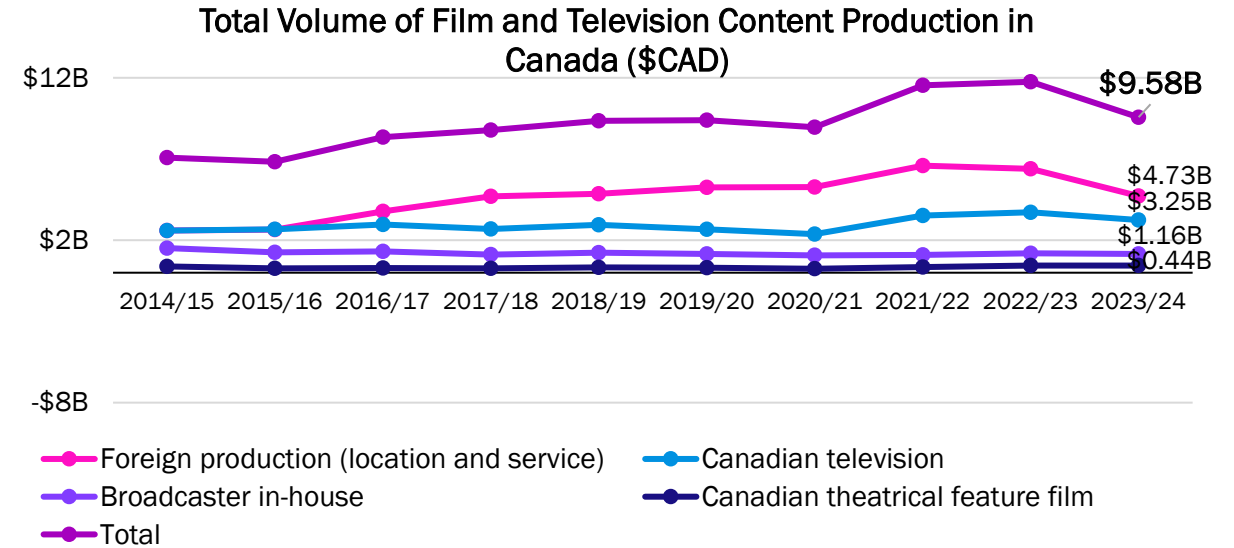


Canadian Production

2023/2024 saw a downturn

- Production spend down 18.5% from 2022/2023 (\$11.75B) to 2023/2024 (\$9.58B) due to fewer commissions, Hollywood strikes, and the end of pandemic overspending.
- The industry still packed a punch with 179,130 jobs and \$11B GDP.
- 2025 Federal Budget transition support: \$150M CBC top-up (2025/2026); and a total of \$150M to Telefilm, \$127.5M to CMF, \$26M to NFB allocated over 3 years starting in 2026/2027.

Early 2024/25 data signals a rebound, though production is unlikely to return to the 2022/2023 peak, which was inflated by COVID-delayed activity.

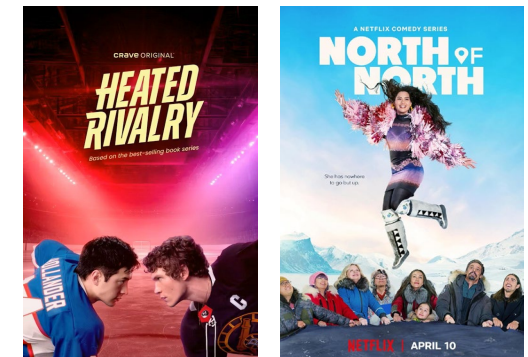


Canadian Content Generating International Success:

2026 Oscar Nominees



Top Ranking TV



Global Industry: Policies and Regulations



Implementation of the Online Streaming Act:

- Streamer's appeal of 5% contribution decision is ongoing (since Dec. 2024)
- **Part 1 CanCon decision** (Nov. 2025): Streamers appeal data transparency rules; CMPA appeals 20% copyright threshold as insufficient for Canadian control.
- **Upcoming: Part 2 CanCon definition and market dynamics** decisions
- In the future: specific Conditions of Service.

Policy development:

- Minister of PCH, expresses intent to **modernize** supports for the Canadian film and television industry. This is to include:
 - An **Advisory Board** to explore a single-agency model for the CMF, Telefilm Canada, and the NFB.
 - The **Indigenous Screen Office (ISO)** is to remain an autonomous agency.



- **Australia's** new legislation: streamers to spend 7.5% of local revenues on Australian content, with penalties of up to 10x annual Australian revenues for non-compliance.
- A coalition of streamers is pushing back, arguing the law is unnecessary since they already invest at higher rates than Australian broadcasters.



- **15 EU countries** have implemented financial obligations under the AVMSD.
- European Commission will review the AVMSD in 2026 to assess effectiveness and may streamline.
- European Parliament has reaffirmed its support, despite criticism from the U.S.



- **UK** rejected proposed levy on streamers' local revenues, citing the need to attract streamer investment, and enable producers to secure higher upfront fees.
- **Ireland:** media commission introduced draft legislation, but the government will not proceed unless it determines a levy would "not impose an undue burden".



Global Trends: Collaboration & Consolidation



Legacy broadcasters, streamers, and tech players cooperate to compete.

Collaboration: To meet audiences where they are, increasing viewership (subscriptions and advertising revenue).

- **TF1 + Netflix Deal:** TF1 Group carriage deal with Netflix in)2026.
- **BBC + YouTube Deal:** BBC original content, across genres, specially for YouTube audiences.
- **Other :** Disney+ and ITV (UK), Prime Video and France Télévisions (France).

Consolidation: Not new but signs of acceleration. Ownership concentration for increased market power and financial efficiency, may lead to fewer commissions.

- Skydance acquisition of Paramount (SEC and EU approved 2025).
- Paramount and Netflix vying for Warner Bros. Discovery. Paramount bid rejected; Shareholders vote on Netflix offer anticipated March 2026. The Sale is subject to (international) regulatory review.



Global Trends: Attention and Power Shifts

Audiences are fragmented across platforms, devices, and formats with increased geopolitical tensions at play.

The Livingroom Screen: *YouTube vs. Netflix*

- YouTube revenue is over US\$60B across ads and subscriptions vs Netflix's US\$45.2B (2025)
- YouTube represented 10.4% of all TV viewing in the U.S. compared to Netflix at 8.4% (2025).
- Netflix adapts to YouTube's strengths:
 - Adding video podcasts (Spotify, iHeart) in 2026 to capture fast-growing demand ($\approx 40\%$ CAGR, 2024–2029).
 - Testing vertical feeds (like YouTube Shorts).

Emerging formats: *Micro-dramas/Vertical Content*

- Ultra-short form, serialized “soap-opera” content designed for vertical, smartphone viewing (originated in China).
- Beyond China, U.S. is market leader: estimated at \$1.4B USD in 2024 and \$9.5B USD by 2030.
- Leading platforms: ReelShort, DramaBox; studios investing (e.g., Disney, Fox Lionsgate, Hallmark).
- SAG-AFTRA issued first vertical-focused agreement.
- Vancouver becoming vertical content production hub.

In the Background: *Geopolitical Tensions*

- Increased political attacks on news, public broadcasting, and global media regulation.

Global implications:

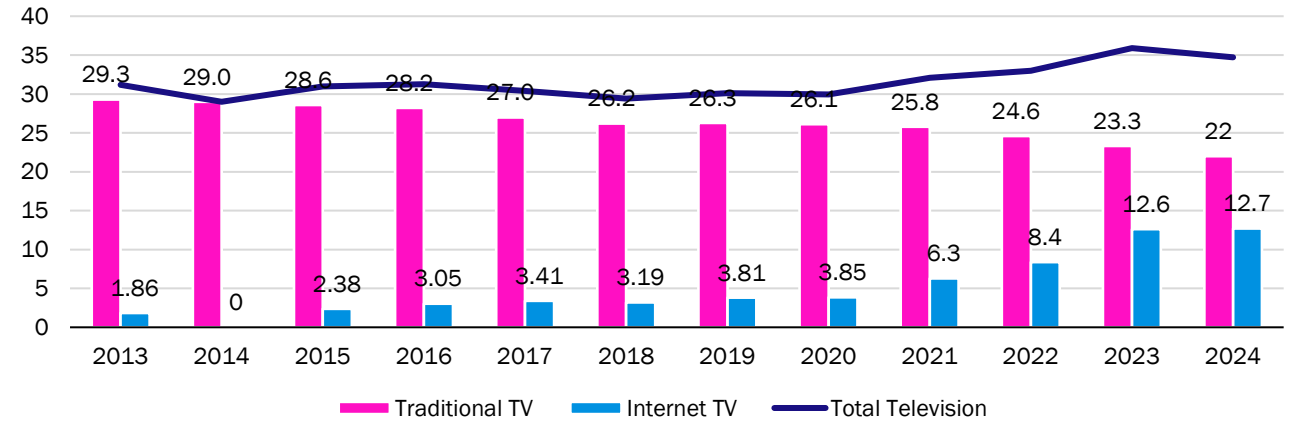
- Proposed 100% U.S. tariffs on non-U.S. film production
- U.S. calls EU regulations censorship of American content;
- U.S. calls to rescind Online Streaming Act, citing discrimination and undermining USMCA.



Canadian Viewing Habits

- **Traditional TV viewing decreased 25% from 2013 to 2024; however, 95% Canadians (18+) still watch traditional TV monthly.**
- **Internet TV doubled in 2021 and continued to grow** an inflection point likely due to COVID restrictions.
 - ~3 in 10 households are online-only (SVOD/FAST), driven by younger viewers; but fewer homes maintain 4+ services suggesting Canadians may be feeling the financial pinch of multiple subscriptions.
- **YouTube reaches 98% of all Canadians and generates CAD \$1.8 billion in GDP.**
 - Over the past decade, it has maintained a consistent 70-75% market share penetration.

Average number of hours Canadians 18+ watched traditional television and Internet-based television each week, 2013-2024



*Internet TV is defined by MTM as the full program or clips from TV programs watched with the use of a computer, smartphone, tablet, or Internet connected TV.

Demographic Snapshot



Weekly traditional TV consumption is highest among people aged 50+ years (87%); while online audiovisual consumption peaks among those 35-49 years (83%).



Francophones are more likely to consume traditional audiovisual content than Anglophones. BUT 64% of Quebec youth (aged 15-29) watch non-Quebec content (vs 35% across all age groups combined).



Elbows Up: Heated Rivalry



Heated Rivalry succeeds because it is a great story – it happens to be unmistakably Canadian.

Key Ingredients

Original Canadian IP	Canadian-owned IP from Rachel Reid’s popular book series and adapted by Jacob Tierney (<i>Letterkenny</i> , <i>Shoresy</i>)
High Risk Greenlight	Crave (Bell Media), took on the risk of developing a queer sports story, acknowledging it could be a significant failure.
Build in Fan-base	Fans of the book series and BookTok groups learned about the series production, generated buzz within existing fan base.
True CanCon	Produced/filmed in Canada, using public funds, tax credits and Canadian cast and crew.
Global Distribution	HBO Max acquired U.S. rights nine days before it premiered leaving little time for additional promotion – yet it succeeded globally.
International Breakout	#1 on Crave and a top-five scripted debut on HBO Max in 2025, proving the show travelled well beyond Canada, fast.
Perfect Timing	The release aligns with broad concerns around human rights, and audience interest in sports and romance.



What We Learn – and Why It Matters



Heated Rivalry



North of North



Shoresy



Sullivan's Crossing

Demonstrates Value in Risk-taking

- *Heated Rivalry*, and shows like it, demonstrate the Canadian system works when risk-taking, originality, authenticity, ownership and control of content is enabled.
- Canada can originate valuable, exportable IP that platforms compete to acquire.
- Learning from these success stories to modernize support could strengthen the ecosystem and foster more opportunity for success. .

Discoverability in Action

- *Heated Rivalry* demonstrates the force of content developed with specific communities of interest.
- Community momentum (BookTok, fandoms) came first; distribution deals followed.

Canadian Soft Power

- These series, and others, project an inclusive Canadian identity and distinct voice amid political tensions and threats to Canadian sovereignty.
- Their international success functions as Canadian soft power, shaping perceptions and understanding through culture.

The industry already knew all this. But now the world does.

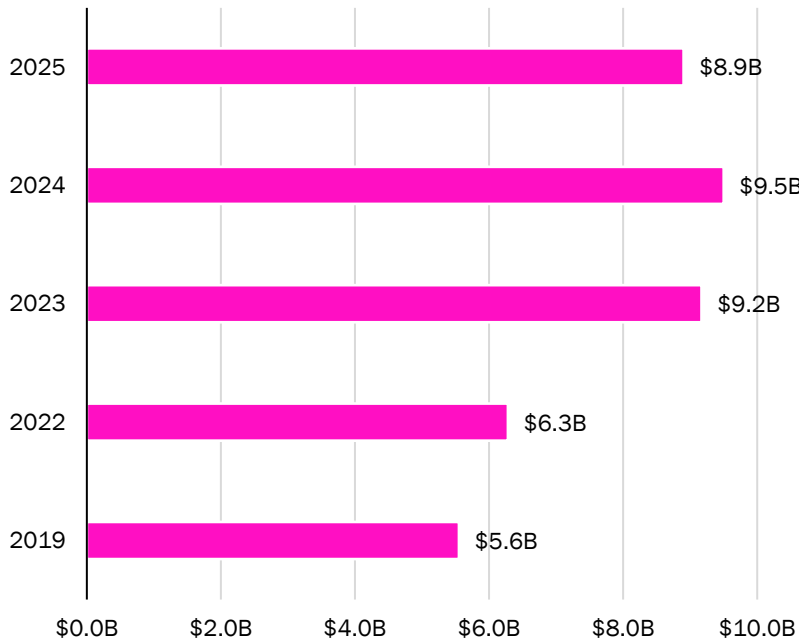


Snapshot of the Global Music Industry

\$38.2B
Projected Global Live Music Revenue (2025)

\$20.4B
Estimated Global Music Streaming Revenue (2024)

Worldwide Top 100 Tours Total Gross (US\$ billions)



- **Major worldwide tours gross declined 6.1% in 2025 to \$8.9B**, after three years of post-pandemic growth; major acts (e.g., Coldplay, Beyonce, Oasis) continuing to drive strongest box office results.
- Attendance at **small and mid-sized venues continued to fall in 2025**, down roughly 7–9% since 2023. Higher ticket prices offset some losses, but lower turnout continues to strain club revenues.
- Daily uploads to streaming platforms reached roughly 106,000 songs in 2025, about 12% below the 2023 peak. Independent distribution continuing to dominate as major label share fell from 8% (2024) to 3.8% (2025).
- Lower production costs from **generative AI drove a surge in AI-generated and fraudulent uploads**, prompting Spotify to remove roughly 75 million spam tracks in one year.

Sources: [IFPI Music Industry Report \(2025\)](#); [Luminate](#); [Pollstar](#); [Pollstar 2](#); [The Guardian](#); [Variety](#); [Music Business Worldwide](#).



Snapshot of the Global Recorded Music Industry

% change from 2023 to 2024

+7.3%
Streaming

-3.1%
Physical

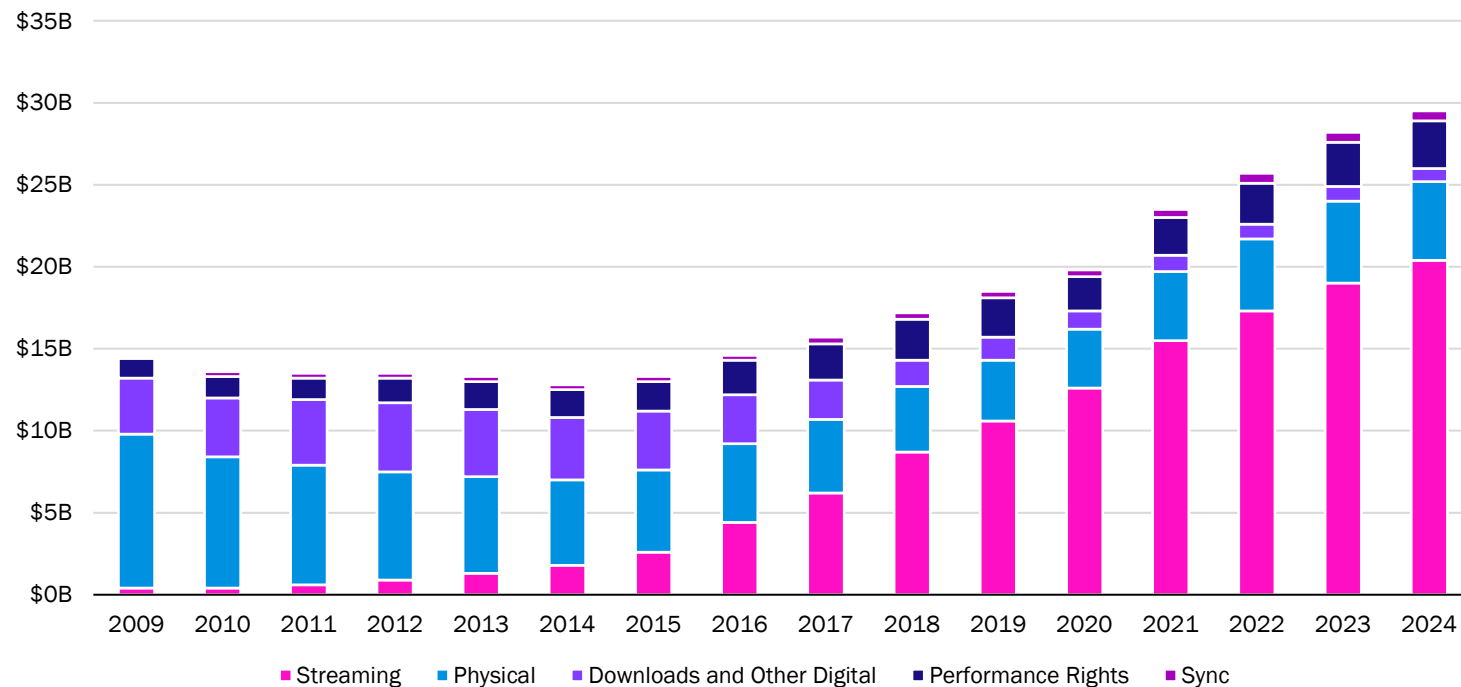
-7.7%
Digital Downloads

+5.9%
Performance Rights

+6.4%
Sync

+4.8%
Overall Revenue Growth

Global Recorded Music Revenue (\$USD)



\$29.5 B
Total revenue for 2024

69.0%
of total is from streaming

Source: [IFPI, Global Music Report \(2025\)](#);

Key Trends

- Recorded music revenues continued to grow globally, though growth slowed year over year to +4.8% in 2024 from +10.2% in 2023.
- Physical media declined after a strong prior year, falling -3.1% in 2024 – while still remaining above all years from 2016 to 2022.
- Paid subscription streaming continued to expand worldwide, reaching 752M subscribers in 2024, or ~9% of the global population.
- Content supply continued to accelerate (driven by factors like low-cost distribution, accelerated and AI-enabled creation), intensifying competition for audience attention.



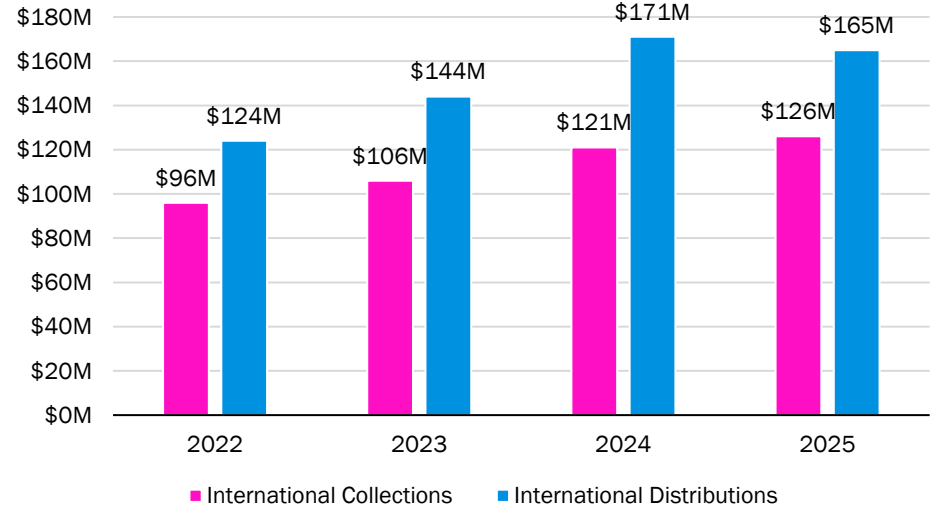
State of Music Rights in Canada

\$67.14
Average digital streaming royalties earned by writers (2021)

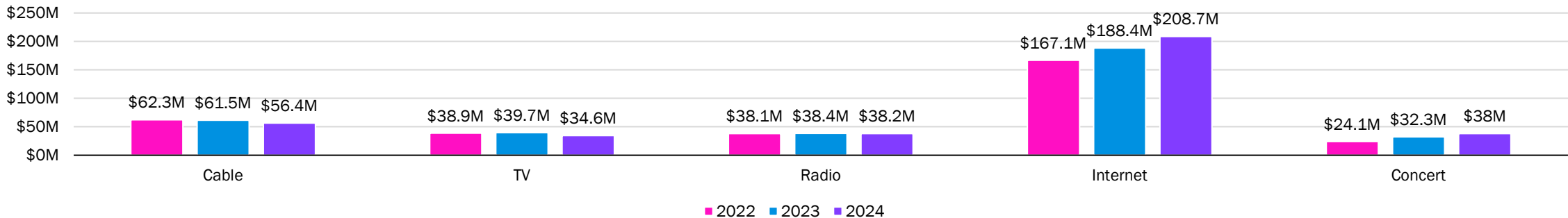
International distributions are funds distributed to foreign societies; international collections are funds from foreign societies distributed to SOCAN members. Distributions dipped in 2025, suggesting a dip in Canadian consumption of foreign music, while collections continue to grow year-over-year.

Rights revenues track with broader industry trends, with streaming growing while other sources continue to drop. Live performance rights revenue also grew, tracking with global growth in live music revenues.

INTERNATIONAL COLLECTIONS VS. DISTRIBUTIONS (\$M)



DOMESTIC PERFORMING RIGHTS REVENUES (\$M)



News and Trends in the Canadian Music Industry



iStock/Indieground Design, Unsplash/Ana Luisa O.J.

- Canada ranks **eighth globally as a recorded music market and third as a music exporter**, despite slower growth in 2024 relative to the U.S. and global markets.
- Canadian recording companies saw **+25.8% revenue from 2021-2023, outpacing foreign-controlled companies operating in Canada** over the same period (+19.6%).
- A 2025 CLMA study found that **live music in Canada generates an estimated \$10.9B in annual GDP impact, 101,640 jobs, and \$3.73B in tax revenues.**
- Budget 2025 **extended the Canada Music Fund’s \$16M annual top-up for FACTOR and Musicaction**, maintaining stable federal support for Canadian artist development.
- The Online Streaming Act implementation for music centred on **defining what qualifies as a “Canadian musical selection”** and whether streamers’ direct investments qualify as regulatory contributions.
- Recent commentary has raised the question of **“Listen Canadian”** amid **“Buy Canadian”** sovereignty discourse, as U.S.-based platforms continue to shape music consumption patterns in Canada.

Sources: [IFPI, Global Music Report \(2025\)](#); [Luminate; Canadian Live Music Association](#); [Government of Canada; The Walrus](#); [StatsCan](#).



Other News in the Canadian Music Industry

In October 2025, Canadian music organizations urged Parliament to **address generative AI**, arguing Canada can shape AI practices through copyright rules and transparency on how music is used in training data.

“Nearly every song ever written by a Canadian songwriter has already been scraped and is already stolen by these AI companies without consent, credit or compensation.” – Margaret McGuffin, CEO of Music Publishers Canada.



The Indigenous Music Office released an updated study on **pathways to international markets**. It identifies growing global demand for Indigenous music and gaps in export readiness, for **investment in an Indigenous-owned music ecosystem** and enhanced export support.

“A strategy to increase the export capacity of the Indigenous music sector is timely as demand for Indigenous music is growing in Canada and around the world.” – Pathways to International Markets report.



Discoverability in the Canadian Music Industry

In a more **global and algorithm-driven music market**, discoverability has shifted from traditional marketing toward **continuous fan engagement and iterative release strategies**.

Discoverability has increasingly become an **artist-led responsibility**, requiring **continuous content creation**, audience engagement across platforms and live settings, and ongoing release strategies such as waterfall releases to maintain visibility over time.

Industry support has become contingent on **artists showing existing audience traction**. Discoverability and sustained fan engagement serve as early-stage screening mechanisms, while industry rely on metrics such as streams, followers, and engagement before investing – shifting audience development upstream.

Global and diaspora-linked markets are playing a growing role in discoverability for Canadian music, with Punjabi-Canadian and Nigerian-Canadian artists/companies building audiences abroad and within diaspora communities; charting a new borderless approach to discoverability of Canadian music.



Challenges to Discoverability in Canada

- Canadian artists begin to scale globally → transition to U.S. labels and infrastructure. Result is a **structural talent drain**, as long-term economic and industry uplift increasingly occurs outside Canada.
- **Global collaboration pushes some successful Canadian artists outside MAPL thresholds**, limiting how that success can be counted or leveraged within Canadian broadcast and regulatory systems.
- **Music discovery increasingly relies on metadata, yet inconsistent standards** mean country of origin and songwriter information is often incomplete, reducing visibility and making Canadian music harder to track and monetize.



- Breaks out from Canada through YouTube and streaming, building a global audience early
- Career scales through U.S.-based labels and infrastructure (RCA Records)
- Later releases fall outside MAPL thresholds due to international production and co-writing
- Continues to be recognized in Canada, but financial and industry benefits largely accrue outside the Canadian system

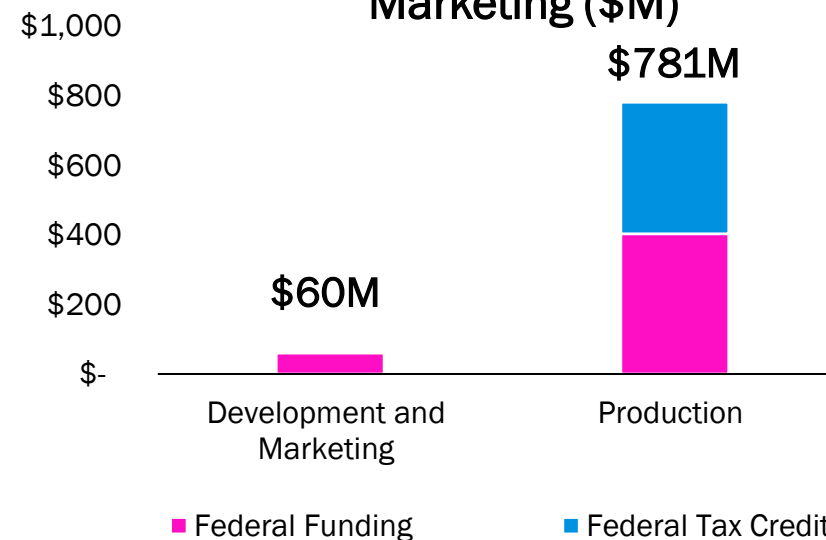


Shifting Focus for Global Success

- **From production to development of IP+Audience:** sustained investment in engagement for the full content lifecycle.
- **From platform-driven to audience-driven ecosystems:** Enabling creators to own and grow IP across markets and formats.
- **From volume to value:** Fewer, stronger projects with audience and market strategies.

Outcome: Canadian IP that travels globally—converting creative output into lasting audience loyalty and export growth.

Estimated 2023-2024 Federal Support for Content Production vs. Development and Marketing (\$M)



It is not about making more content, rather it's about making content that resonates.



Developing IP & Audience Together



Changes the conversation between platforms and creators



Advances projects with greater potential for commercial success



Enables creators to transition audiences from project to project



Builds sustainable companies with more long-term value



Supports broader Canadian cultural and economic objectives

Focusing on audience and IP development gives creators and producers the leverage they need to maximize their commercial potential and build long-term enterprise value.



Understanding Discoverability

For a deeper dive:

[Audience at the centre: Discoverability, Promotion, and Prominence of Canadian Content Across the Broadcasting System](#)

Prepared by Nordicity for the CRTC

- **Discoverability is multifaceted:** It is a complex, system-wide challenge shaped by market structure, technology, and audience behaviour – hard to grasp from any single vantage point.
- **Cross-sector parallels, with differences:** Audio and audiovisual require similar audience-first, outcomes-based approaches that acknowledge sector-specific dynamics (detailed in the report).
- **Start early – put audience at the centre:** Discoverability is facilitated from development onward; early and strategic ongoing audience engagement/validation are critical to shaping content that connects.
- **Sustain efforts throughout the lifecycle – a shared responsibility:** Maintain discoverability efforts across production, launch, and catalogue, with each stakeholder contributing according to their respective role.
- **Regulation & Beyond:** Discoverability cannot be solved by regulation alone; coordinated, cross-industry policy and program actions are essential to support and foster needed shifts in industry practice for durable results.





Nordicity is a leading international consulting firm providing public and private sector clients with social impact, economic analysis, strategy, and policy solutions across the creative and cultural industries.

Presented by:

Nicole Matiation, AV Sector Lead

nmatiation@nordicity.com

Research support provided by:

Christiana Puntillo, Senior Consultant

Brian Christensen, Senior Analyst

Shubhita Aggarwal, Senior Analyst

