



CONTENT CREATORS COALITION

May 2, 2018

Mr. Oliver Schusser
Vice President, Apple Music and International Content
1 Infinite Loop
Cupertino, CA 95014-2083

Dear Mr. Schusser:

We have noted that in recent reports, Apple is considering eliminating paid music downloads. While we understand Apple has indicated those reports are not accurate, we are taking this opportunity to communicate how important downloads are to the music community and to express our hope that you will continue offering them to music fans.

Apple has been a partner to artists ever since the iPod and the iTunes download store launched the modern era of digital music, working to innovate new devices and distribution methods while respecting the value of a healthy creative economy as the foundation of these technologies and businesses. In your new role as steward of the company's music offerings, we hope you will carry on that tradition of mutual cooperation and respect, and we reach out to you in that spirit.

The promise of digital music has always been its ability to give fans more choices and options to find and listen to music and to give music creators more ways to reach and connect with their fans.

As you know, while growing quickly, many subscription and ad supported streaming services still do not produce a living wage for artists.¹ On the other hand, while downloads have slowed, a sale still produces far more income to creators than a stream.² Even with the rise of streaming, downloads continue to supply 15% of industry revenues, a vital pillar in the many-legged-stool it takes to make a successful music career and to help artists hoping to cobble together a middle class living from their work.³

Cutting off downloads would undermine the ability of hard core fans to collect specific albums, tracks, performance, and versions of their music – leaving them at the mercy of streaming catalogs and the imprecise search functions that still plague many services, especially for listeners focused on genres other than country, pop, and rock. As 9to5Mac's Ben Lovejoy observed last year, "With classical music, for example, there are almost infinite numbers of

¹ [Digital Music News, 8/24/2017](#)

² [The Guardian, 4/3/2015](#)

³ [Recording Industry Association 2017 RIAA Revenue Statistics, Released 3/22/2018](#)

permutations of orchestra and performance, and Apple Music will never offer anything more than a tiny subset of these. The same is true for live performances of less well-known artists.”⁴

Downloads also protect fans from the vagaries of technological shifts, rights disputes, and legal changes that can cut them off from valued music if the only source they have available are streaming databases. This won't be an issue for most listeners, of course, but Apple has always strived to serve not just casual fans, but people whose identity and self-expression is closely tied to the music they love.

Finally, we note the remarkable resurgence of vinyl recordings. No one saw this coming just half a decade ago, but it is a real vital component of the music business today, and especially important to some of our most passionate fans. It is an object lesson in business prudence and caution before making sweeping pronouncements like “downloads are dead.” At a time when many look at the great companies of Silicon Valley and see hubris and indifference to the costs of company decisions, we hope Apple will take a broader view.

Clearly, many consumers are turning back to vinyl in search of high quality, “warmer” sound. With Apple Music's devoted following and modern broadband speeds, we believe there is an opportunity for Apple to be a leader in providing music fans higher fidelity digital recordings. To that end, we ask that you consider adding high-resolution downloads (48kHz/24 bit and higher) to Apple Music's offerings. As artists, we want more fans to be able to hear our music as we intended it to be heard when it was recorded.

We are grateful for Apple's longstanding partnership with music creators and encourage the company to reflect on that partnership and its longstanding mission to offer real and valuable choices to artists and fans and opt to continue to provide a paid download option on its platform.

Congratulations on your new position at Apple. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Content Creators Coalition Executive Board:

Rosanne Cash
Melvin Gibbs
Tommy Manzi
John McCrea
Tift Merritt
Matthew Montfort
Maggie Vail

⁴ [9to5Mac, 12/12/2017](#)