

IFPI Finland appoints Ranger to compile download charts

Music industry trade association IFPI Finland has appointed UK based Ranger Computers to compile the country's official charts of downloaded music starting in June 2011. Ranger, who already compile sales charts of physical music for Finland, will produce separate download charts and combined charts of both physical and downloaded content.

The agreement, which runs for 4 years through May 2015, will allow Ranger to deploy its new 'Ultimate' web technology to download product for the first time. Ultimate is a web based system that operates 'in the cloud' and is an entirely new concept for chart production. Ultimate accepts content from manufacturers, distributors and retailers whenever it is available and in some cases as it actually happens.

The new download data will be integrated seamlessly into IFPI's physical chart system, which is already powered by Ultimate. Where product ID's match the sales will be automatically combined into a single total for chart purposes. Ultimate also allows similar products with different UPC or ISRC codes to be combined manually.

The new system is designed to dramatically reduce the cost of preparing accurate and reliable music sales charts when compared with traditional systems. It allows secure access to all major participants in the chart production process (Record Companies, Distributors, Labels, Retailers and Media Organisations) so that each organisation can review and if necessary correct the information that they have provided. Comprehensive security rules ensure that each organisation can only view content pertinent to its own operations, ensuring that competition guidelines are complied with.

New facilities developed especially for Ultimate allow contributors to supply content in styles and formats of their own choosing, rather than requiring the development of expensive IT processes that have become a bottleneck in some traditional systems. This includes data submission in Excel spreadsheet format direct to dedicated email addresses.

Both suppliers and retailers can view sales own products as they happen, and in many cases in real time. This greatly enhances the collaborative spirit that is essential in the production of successful charts, allowing each user to view their own progress and to correct any mistakes that might have crept in to descriptions and other data in good time for the all important publication deadline. Ultimate allows authorised IFPI users to view the build-up of the charts as individual sales reports come in, providing early warning of potential issues such as items falling into the wrong chart category and avoiding the need for after the event re-publication.

The system analyses sales into individual product groups such as download and mid price and also provides a unique real-time independent sales chart. Independent retailers are equipped with Ranger's patented 'Otis' bar-code scanners, which report sales from over the cell-phone network as they actually happen. Retailers contributing to the new system can review their own sales data through the reports and summaries that are available at the touch of a button. Users can compare the current weeks' sales with previous weeks, months or even years.

Once released for publication by IFPI, the weekly record charts are forwarded automatically to media users like broadcasters and magazines. The Ultimate site contains a complete history of all of the charts it has generated.

Ends

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Photo: The important Finnish Music market is here represented by two times Emma-winner and female artist of the year Anna Abreu, shown at the Emma awards held in March 2009 in Helsinki. (picture by Tomi Palsa)