

Albums - End of Year Analysis

Analysis by Sales Threshold

Fewer albums reach the 500,000 sales barrier in 2007

The number of albums selling in excess of 100,000 copies fell to 190 in 2007, the first time this annual total has dipped below 200 since 2000.

Accounting for half of this decline were titles selling between 500,000 and one million. The number of million sellers fell only slightly and has hovered between 4 and 8 per annum since 2000.

It would appear from this analysis that the number of biggest sellers has remained fairly steady, but the next tier fell away sharply in 2007, contributing significantly to the market decline.

As fewer albums went on to break the half a million threshold, totals in the other sectors held up quite well, especially in the 250,000+ bracket.

Top 100 Album Sales

Sales across the Top 100 down in 2006

Sales of the Top 100 albums fell by 18% in 2007 compared to 2006. As total album sales fell by less than 11%, this means that losses further down the chart must be much smaller. This was analysed in much more detail in the September report (p5). At the very top end of the chart, the top four albums of 2007 all sold more than their

Number of Albums Sold by Sales Threshold

	100,000- 249,999	250,000- 499,999	500,000- 749,999	750,000- 999,999	1m+	Total 1.00k+
1998	103	34	12	8	7	164
1999	125	40	12	4	7	188
2000	139	29	13	5	13	199
2001	139	55	9	14	4	221
2002	141	48	18	7	6	220
2003	178	39	19	10	7	253
2004	174	43	19	13	7	256
2005	138	55	14	13	8	228
2006	129	56	19	9	6	219
2007	118	54	12	1	5	190

Source: TNS Base: albums expenditure

2006 counterparts, yet overall sales of the Top 10 fell by 7%. The largest losses were for those in the 11-20 sector, which fell by 26%.

Since 1998, it is again titles towards the top end of the chart which are selling fewer copies. Albums at positions 41-100 actually sold more last year than they did 10 years ago.

% Change by Chart Position

	2006-07	1998-07
1-10	-6.7%	-14.9%
11-20	-26.1%	-27.0%
21-30	-24.9%	-19.0%
31-40	-21.2%	-3.3%
41-50	-20.3%	+0.5%
51-100	-17.2%	+20.9%
Top 100	-17.8%	-6.3%

Comparison With US Market

Data released by Nielsen Soundscan has shown that although digital sales are continuing to demonstrate strong growth, the American market as a whole fell in 2007.

USA:

- Total album sales down by 15%
- CD albums down 19% to 449.2m
- Digital albums up 54% to 50m
- Single tracks up 45% to 844.1m
- Top 10 albums down 1%
- Top 100 albums down 12%

Although the overall pattern of sales in the US is similar to that of the UK, the rate of decline in the US album market was greater (15% compared to 11%).

It is interesting, however, to see that the Top 100 albums in the US outperformed the total market; cumulative sales of the hundred best sellers were down by 12%, compared with 15% for the total market. In the UK the reverse was true - the Top 100 was down by 17.8%, while the total album market was down by 10.8%.

A contributory factor to falling sales in America was the decline in two important genres - Rap albums fell by 30.0% and Country sales dropped by 16.3%.

Breakdown of Top 100 Album Sales 1998 - 2007 (m)

