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## The Net

### Survey: Swappers buy music, too

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By Reuters

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**Offering some insight to the recording industry as it struggles to boost sales online, a survey finds that Web surfers who download music from song-swap sites are more likely to buy music online, as well as offline at retailers.**

The research put rap music as the No. 1 genre purchased by online fans, which may help record companies gain a better understanding of who their online customers are.

The survey released Wednesday was based on 36,000 Internet users and released by Web tracker Nielsen/NetRatings.

It showed that nearly 31 million active Internet users aged 18 or older--representing 22 percent of the active Internet universe--downloaded music in the past 30 days, and 71 percent bought music in the past three months.

The research indicated that in the past three months, online music enthusiasts were 111 percent more likely to buy rap music than average Internet users, Nielsen/NetRatings said.

Nielsen/NetRatings classified online music enthusiasts as people who had downloaded music in the past 30 days, whereas the average Internet users are people logging onto the Internet for surfing and other purposes.

Dance and club music ranked No. 2, with those who down loaded being 106 percent more likely to have purchased dance and club music than the average Internet users during the past three months and 77 percent more likely to buy alternative rock.

R&B, soul music and rock rounded out the top five.

Greg Bloom, senior Internet analyst at Nielsen/NetRatings, said that understanding the preferences of online music enthusiasts may help recording executives in their attempts to successfully woo fans from the free swap, or peer-to-peer services, which let people get songs

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The major record labels blame the popularity of such free services as Kazaa and Morpheus for sharp declines in CD sales. But other industry watchers argue that declining sales are the result of fewer hit albums being released and a weak economy.

"The de facto standard may be a few years away, but understanding the genres of music that sell well online and offline will be crucial to generating revenue along the way," Bloom said.

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