



The current market share of Jazz

# HOW IS JAZZ DOING TODAY?

By ANDREA LEIBER

Recorded music sales slumped world-wide last year, the third annual decline in a row. Continued sales substitution from unauthorized online music services, economic uncertainty and strong competition for consumer spending from other entertainment sectors contributed to a dramatic decrease in the majority of territories and genres. Almost lost in all the gloomy news was the fact that a small and less mainstream type of music bucked the downward spiral: Sales of recorded Jazz in the USA and in the main markets of Europe not only resisted the other genres' trend to losses, but also increased, as comparisons between 1998 and 2002 show. Jazz' market share grew in the USA from 2.76 % to 3.2 %, in the UK from 1.4 % to 2.0 % , in France from 2.2 % to 2.7 % and in Germany from 1.1 % to 1.8 %.

Although the tendency in all these countries points straight upwards, since Jazz is a niche market, small influences can have considerable impact. Even in the UK, where copying music is not allowed and the economic situation is much better than in other European countries, Jazz underwent a certain up and down. One explanation for Jazz' success could be the ongoing buzz created by Ken Burns' popular public TV documentary on the history of Jazz that aired in some countries. In the UK, one single artist, Norah Jones, accounted for a massive 29.6 % of Jazz sales, all attributable to her 2002 debut success for Blue Note "Come Away With Me", that helped lift sale

results from 1.1 % to 2 % within one year. In the USA, the firm economic position of Jazz is not so surprising, since national products traditionally take the largest share of the market.

Astrid Kieselbach, Universal's Director for Jazz in Germany, speaks on behalf of her European colleagues, saying: "Although we are extremely happy for today's situation, I am sure that we should give our best in caring for our artists, not to miss the next Norah Jones."

(Sources: IFPI, RIAA)

(Written in English by Andrea Leiber)