

To whom it my concern,

For over 17 years Believe has been focused on helping local artists around the world grow at all stages of their career. With local teams of experts in their field, well connected in the local music ecosystem and passionate about the rich diversity of the local music scenes

<https://www.believe.com/>

Believe Canada, established 10 years ago, has been at the heart of the mutations our industry has experienced. With offices in Montreal and Toronto, we serve a very diverse group of producers and artists, ranging from established labels to independent artists, from household names to emerging talent.

Believe through our label & artists solutions, our artist services, products or Tunecore (a global DIY platform for independent musicians) helps build audiences and careers. With expertise spanning all musical genres in English and French, our team works closely with music creators, adapting services to suit their ambitions and development stages, from domestic releases to international campaign management, thanks to digital expertise, fairness and Believe's relationships with all relevant distribution platforms.

The landscape of the Canadian market is quite unique and complex. The way producers and artists have been adapting to the new realities of the music industry in the digital age is a challenge that has been taken at a different pace based on many factors (geography, culture, language, maturity)

The Canadian market is segmented, a lot of variables come into play. Some producers are thriving more than others in this new industry, especially those who embraced the streaming world early on.

The French-Canadian Quebec market is only beginning the shift required to survive in the digital world. Certain genres like Hip-Hop/Rap are already at the forefront of this evolution in Quebec and are paving the way to what are solid success stories, it's not all doom and gloom.

Believe has been and is part of that journey. A big part of our mission is educating. Thanks to our technology we're pushing forward our producers and artists in a constantly changing environment.

There are some gaps between markets in the Country as far as maturity, making the needs in Quebec different than the rest of the country for example. Physical sales in Quebec were still a thing not very long ago, while the rest of the country has abandoned the format much earlier.

Education in this transition is part of the Believe mission. At least for those who embrace these new opportunities.

On that front some strong results have emerged.

For example, through our partnership, Spotify has invested in making Canadian francophone music available and accessible, including investing in French speaking employees, and partnering with Believe artists on campaigns. It was the case with "Du Québec", which celebrates culturally important artist releases and moments within the province, through playlisting and marketing initiatives. It was the case as well with Spotify playlists like "Rap Queb", that offer relevant cultural editorial curation that appeals to listeners. This works has paid off: 7 out the top 10 most streamed French-Canadian artists on Spotify are

based in the Rap/Hip Hop genre and are distributed by Believe. Overall, 13 out of the top 20 most streamed French Canadian artists on Spotify are distributed by Believe.

Streaming and the new ecosystem in which our artists and producers evolve now has permitted tremendous growth for an industry that was in a downhill spiral.

This ecosystem and its global ramifications work but has specific set of rules that vary from one platform to another. They each have their own recipes, their own DNA which can't be tampered with without taking the risk to uniformize the platforms. And uniformization is the opposite of music and culture.

Furthermore, it's technically inconceivable anybody could regulate (through quotas or anything else) UGCs or algorithms

UGC (User Generated Content), like fan mash-ups, cover songs or dance challenges, should be clearly carved out of the Bill C11. We have a keen interest in preserving the vibrant and authentic connection between artists and their fans, and the current draft text would cover that type of content as well.

As pointed out by our YouTube partner:

"Fan videos are critical to the music ecosystem; they shape culture and generate a huge portion of revenue for artists through 'content ID,' technology that automatically identifies music usage within fan-created content.

We know that genuine engagement has helped Canadian artists go viral and foster global connections. The authentic and creative ways in which we connect and celebrate music need to be protected."

Everybody agrees revising the current law is long overdue, and the international corporations must participate in the effort and contribute.

But let's not forget streaming is not radio broadcast, it is about play on demand and choice of a platform in connection with its content and the music available on it. The regulations to help our local Canadian cultures must take this into account.

The local Canadian cultures are adapting to the new global market and our ecosystem needs to be supported and encouraged without disturbing what is working.

The questions about discoverability are legitimate but need to be addressed by clearly understanding what the new landscape is.

As discussion around updating Canada's broadcasting laws continues, it is important that any changes preserve what is already working in the digital marketplace, in addition to improving what must be improved.

Audio streaming services like Spotify have been critical allies and partners in the success of our Canadian-born artists, including enhancing the discoverability of local indie artists both here in Canada and abroad in foreign markets. Over the last ten years the music industry has continued a transformation driven by consumers who expect on-demand access and endless opportunities to listen to their favourite artists. Through this change, Believe has partnered with organizations that show they can adapt to changing listener behaviours in ways that reduce the piracy, that has harmed so much the music industry, and enhance the market opportunities, both domestically and globally, of Canadian artists.

While we are enthusiastic to see that our industry and government continue to identify ways that could increase artist compensation and discoverability in Canada, we would like to applaud those in the industry who put a primary focus on paying rightsholders and uplifting underrepresented groups in Canada's musical and cultural landscape. It is important that reform efforts not lose sight of what is already working.

The long-term growth and protection of the Canadian culture is central to this new bill, and it needs to be evaluated in the context of a global market. Realistically this global market will not accommodate one over all the others. meaning no one should change an algorithm of a popular playlist just for one market.

Our producers and artists need this new law, but it should go hand in hand with a revision of our current funding system, so that it reflects the efforts of those embracing the new streaming world.

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