

Flash Drives to be adopted by major Asian record label as replacement for CD.

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The Death of the CD is at hand. Sales have plummeted nearly 53% over the last 5 years and a whole generation of consumers are now no longer even familiar with the CD as a concept or the idea that a record store is the place to find the "next big thing".

Record labels have reacted either by standing by and watching as the retail industry tanks or by litigating to death their very own consumers in a futile effort to put the download genie back in the bottle.

Now for the first time a major international Label, Pony Canyon of Japan has completely dropped the CD as a retail concept in exchange for the Flash Drive. They have approached several major media-consulting firms and flash drive design firms including Flash Drive Direct of Vancouver to help re-shape the retail market for the implementation of the Flash Drive

"This generation wants to buy its music, what they don't want to buy is a CD," states John Graham, long-time music industry analyst and current director of Flash Drive Direct design and manufacturing house ("What the labels have failed to recognize is that the download consumer still wants to buy a tangible tactile product. They are the wealthiest youth generation in history with an estimated annual disposable income of over 20 billion dollars. They lay claim to some of the largest discretionary retail spending. Note the sales of Mac's, iPods, cell phones, \$200 jeans and more," concludes Graham.

"The retail experience for the download generation is alive and kicking. The difference is that today's down loaders grew up on MP3 files not CD's," Graham goes on to say. "When MP3's came along they were first played almost exclusively on computers. However, necessity being the Mother of all inventions, retailers then created the MP3 player industry. As a result the CD player and the CD retail business went the way of the Dodo."

A recent Harvard study on retail trends cited an anomaly in the download generation's retail therapy that was not anticipated. It found that consumers 14-29 would buy music from a retail outlet if two things were changed. One being that the retail environment better represented their personal expression of taste and secondly that if the music were loaded onto a digital device such as a flash drive they would buy it.

The study went on to say that on a secondary level of understanding "the consumer had veered away from the CD as it offered little in the way of new media interactivity". The consumer had found that the CD only offered a 1 dimensional experience and had no "bells and whistles".

John Graham of Flash Drive Direct goes on to explain, "the problem with the CD in recent years was not just a lack of a solid CD's worth of material but the high cost the consumer paid for what amounted to nothing more than a \$15 expense for 1-2 singles, a bunch of filler and no killer! The labels only have themselves to blame for much of this."

The new delivery device that will recapture the spirit of the vibrant 80's and 90's CD sales boom is the digital flash drive. To date many artists have released limited edition and on-line sales of flash drive albums. However, there were 2 consistent failures in these tentative approaches. Firstly the retail environment had no rack space to best showcase the drives and perhaps more importantly the artist and labels did not grasp the enormous range of expression that the flash drive offered.

The drive would contain the tunes but what has not been fully understood was what else the flash drive offers. The drive not only delivers songs but videos, print files of all of the artist's previous CD covers, tour posters, band bio's and more. It also could easily be formatted to link to outside websites where the consumer could buy tickets, visit the band's website, download coupons and link to a wide variety of on-line and real world experiences. The flash drive is much more impact as a retail tool when viewed as a web portal, multi- media storage and song delivery device than just a mere replacement for the CD, as the CD was for the LP.

Flash Drive Direct does work for the corporate world along with new media ventures with record labels, film studios, television and more.

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Flash Drive Direct is a designer and manufacturer of flash drives for the music business, corporate and promotional marketplaces.

[You can find this press release here](#)