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Imeem Unseats Yahoo: Top U.S. Music-Streaming Site

By Eliot Van Buskirk May 13, 2008 | 2:23:30 PM Categories: [Digital Music News](#)

Imeem has taken over Yahoo's throne by becoming the No. 1 streaming music site in the United States.

Yahoo, which had acquired large music sites like Broadcast, Launch Media and Musicmatch in order to become the top-ranked music-streaming site in the country, has slipped into second place behind imeem in Compete's [list](#) of the top 20 U.S. streaming music sites for March.

Imeem's expensive label deals, which allow it to offer on-demand music from all four majors, plus indies -- combined with emphases on social networking and reaching out to blogs -- have paid off handsomely. The site's unique U.S. visitor count rose 58 percent over the previous March to 10.3 million.

Compete called the streaming sector "the largest category in online music in March, 2008," and says its data shows "the most popular options for listening to music online are free."

Here's a quick summary of how imeem and the other newcomers clambered up the chart as Yahoo slipped to second:

Top 20 Streaming Music Sites

(Ranked by US-Based Unique Visitors, Mar '08)

Site	Rank	March, 2008 Unique Visitors	% Change vs. March, 2007
imeem.com	1	10,268,904	58%
music.yahoo.com	2	9,658,665	-14%
music.aol.com	3	4,631,468	-30%
music.myspace.com	4	4,511,408	-3%
projectplaylist.com	5	4,186,025	-23%
music.msn.com	6	2,843,152	-12%
HYPEM1500*	7	2,344,620	148%
pandora.com	8	1,972,788	126%
ilike.com	9	1,420,983	149%
last.fm	10	1,401,093	8%
jango.com	11	665,791	New
live365.com	12	476,013	-14%
qloud.com	13	408,543	164635%
mog.com	14	390,228	432%
reverbnation.com	15	238,443	808%
hypem.com	16	127,328	126%
deezer.com	17	92,789	New
songza.com	18	66,352	New
seeqpod.com	19	65,224	2961%
muxtape.com	20	52,118	New

[SeeqPod](#) and [ReverbNation](#) launched in 2006, while Pandora [added](#) social features and the original MP3.com catalog [showed up](#) on iLike.

In 2007, MOG [realized](#) that YouTube had the rights to stream all sorts of music legally and that, as a result, one of the best ways to offer a music service was to mash YouTube through music filters. Meanwhile, Yahoo [infuriated](#) Musicmatch users by upgrading them to Yahoo Music Engine, which they didn't want, causing us to [wonder](#) why they bothered paying \$160 million for Musicmatch in the first place.

In 2007, Deezer [launched](#) a free on-demand music playback service, [QLoud](#) and [Songza](#) got in on the YouTube musical mashup game, Jango [launched](#) its extremely social streaming radio (we gave away 100 free invites) and imeem [began](#) offering label-sanctioned music on user slideshows. The same year, Pandora [added](#) yet more social features and SeeqPod [started](#) letting people embed music from servers all over the world on their blogs for free.

What was Yahoo doing while all this was happening? Thinking about [shuttering](#) its DRM-ed music subscription service.

Capping off the year, and dealing what could have been the crucial blow to Yahoo, imeem [signed](#) deals with all four major labels for free on-demand music streaming.

Last.fm signed similar [deals](#) in early 2008 and SeeqPod integrated with the [iPhone](#) and an [online ticketer](#). Muxtape, meanwhile, [launched](#) on March 25, so it was only online for seven days of March 2008, yet still made the list.

In what could become another blow to Yahoo, imeem has [opened](#) its massive media catalog to third parties with an API that allows outside developers to create music apps that access its library. It's said to be expanding its relationships with music blogs over the next several months.

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What's up with the two entries for (what appears to be) the Hype Machine? (#7 and #16).

Posted by: **Fred von Lohmann** | **May 13, 2008 2:49:30 PM**

I've been using imeem for a while now, works great.. you can upload any # of songs, sample albums.It's just really easy to use, most blogs use it for there music playlist.. I have @ mine <http://theinfamousyndicate.blogspot.com/>.

Posted by: **Noles** | **May 13, 2008 6:06:40 PM**

Fred, here's Complete's asterisked note: "The Hype1500 presents aggregate traffic to the more than 1500 music blogs tracked by the Hype Machine, a popular blog aggregator. The Hype Machine itself is ranked separately from its network at #16."

Posted by: **Eliot Van Buskirk** | **May 13, 2008 6:43:49 PM**

Yahoo has already said they are getting out of the drm subscription music business and entered some sort of agreement with Rhapsody.

Posted by: **Jim** | **May 13, 2008 11:09:47 PM**

It would be a more useful measurement of music streaming services if it included metrics for syndicated content (widgets and applications), seeing as many of the top players like Imeem, Playlist, iLike, Qloud, and ReverbNation are likely to be delivering the vast majority of their music streams that way. Quantcast.com has the ability to track this metric, but it requires that site owners embed tracking code in order to self-report. The result is an incomplete data set (maybe Compete should put a function in for this?). Full disclosure, I am a co-founder of ReverbNation, where we give Artists tools to 'take the music to the people' (read: syndicated content) versus asking them to bring the people to the music. So, I am biased about how 'music sites' should be measured.

But I think that many of the other companies would feel the same way as I do in this world of highly distributed applications. Site traffic is often dwarfed by the reach of syndicated content that can live at MySpace, Facebook, Blogs, etc.

Speaking of blogs, it would be very interesting to understand who is providing the music streaming mechanisms at the 'Hype1500' blogs. My guess is that most of it is coming via widgets or apps from the other companies on the list.

Posted by: **Jed Carlson** | **May 14, 2008 7:40:03 AM**

Good point Jed...

Quantcast has network coverage for three of the sites on the list projectplaylist clocks over 10 million uniques on its players from the US <http://www.quantcast.com/p-e059sb-sW00wM> reverbnation's widgets scores 20 million users from the US <http://www.quantcast.com/p-05---xoNhTXVc> and imeem shows a whopping 38million US users visiting a page containing an imeem widget every month. <http://www.quantcast.com/p-03KgZ0RV6Ztmc> But look at the worldwide figures, over 100million users are visiting pages with imeem players over the course of a month. The 'pseudo rank' of the network is #14, higher than facebook.com. the average internet user is more likely to see an imeem player than they are to visit facebook.

Posted by: **Still Rob G** | **May 14, 2008 9:51:54 AM**

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