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Apple Makes Music Push in Radio After Losing Ground to Spotify

The tie-up with TuneIn to distribute Apple's radio stations aims to introduce the company's music service to more people

By **Rolfe Winkler** Aug. 27, 2025 9:00 am ET



Apple Music has been losing market share of digital music subscribers. Photo: Carlos Luján/Zuma Press

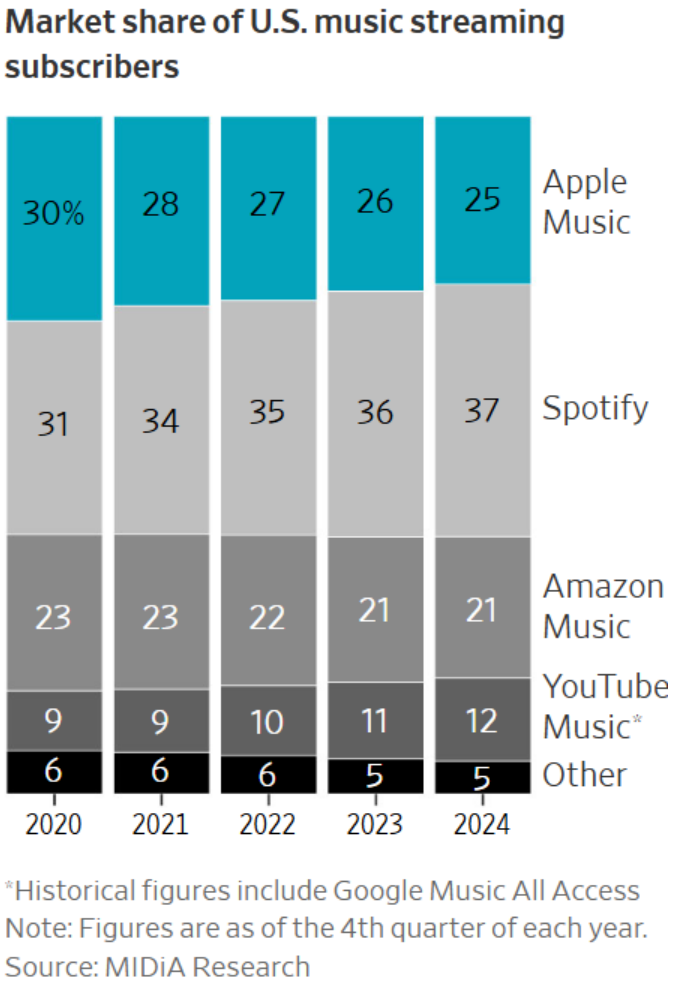
Apple will distribute its curated radio stations on a global network of home speakers and connected cars, a push to extend the reach of its music service.

The deal with digital radio platform TuneIn is the first time Apple Music's six radio stations will be available outside the company's app. Beginning Wednesday, the Apple stations will be available to TuneIn's 75 million monthly active users.

Apple wants to bring some of those users into its own ecosystem. Many of the company's music subscribers sign up through free trial deals after they buy a new device. The aim is to convert Apple Music's radio listeners into paying subscribers to its music service, which has fallen further behind Spotify in recent years.

Apple's market share of digital music subscribers in the U.S. fell to 25% at the end of last year from 30% in 2020, according to MIDiA Research, while Spotify's share increased to 37% from 31% over that period. Apple's share also has fallen globally, to 12% from 16% since 2020, MIDiA estimates.

An Apple Music spokeswoman didn't respond to a request for comment.



Streaming music services struggle to distinguish themselves when each provides access to roughly the same catalog of music, unlike streaming video where Apple TV and rivals like Netflix carry unique content.

To sign up subscribers, Spotify and others funnel users from free, ad-supported options designed to provide just enough friction that consumers convert to paid, ad-free plans.

Apple Music has no ad-supported option. In addition to signing up customers through free trials, it tries to draw people in with its radio offerings, where song selection is curated by humans as it always has been with traditional radio. Spotify, by contrast, emphasizes algorithmic music curation. Apple launched its first radio station in 2015 and now has six total after adding three more in December.

Apple approached TuneIn about the tie-up around the end of last year, according to TuneIn's Chief Executive Richard Stern. He said he was excited to bring the new radio offering to his platform. The stations have no commercials and offer a good listener experience, he said. TuneIn's network of connected devices helps terrestrial radio operators reach beyond their local markets.

A link inside the TuneIn app and on its website will redirect users back to Apple Music, where Apple can convert them to paying subscribers.

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