

## Music strikes a chord for SA's consumer class

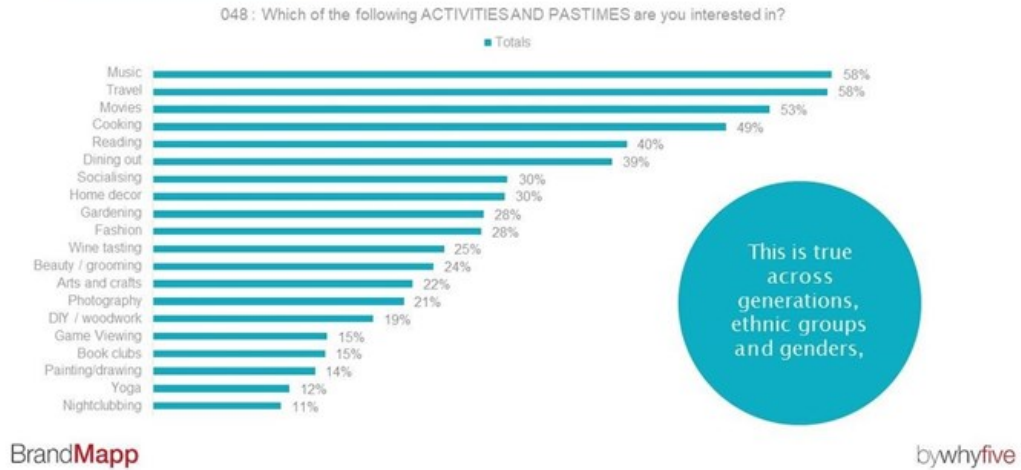
When it comes to the interests and activities that elevate our daily lives, South Africans living in households earning R10k or more put music first, even slightly ahead of their travel aspirations. We're not alone in prioritising our music consumption. According to the 2025 [Global Music Report](#), worldwide recorded music revenues grew for the tenth consecutive year in 2024. Despite a severe cost-of-living crisis that has triggered household cost-cutting across most countries, music revenue still rose by 4.8%, reaching US\$29.6bn.

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According to [BrandMapp](#), South Africa's largest survey of the country's tax paying base, 58% of respondents cite music as their top pastime, ahead of the appeals of travel, watching movies, cooking, reading and dining out. Brandon de Kock, director of Storytelling at BrandMapp says: "What is interesting is that when we apply filters such as generations, ethnic groups or gender, music still tops the charts. Like cooking on fire, music seems to be one of our unifying forces in society, even though different demographics inevitably have different preferences when it comes to musical genres and artists. I think it's just part of our DNA. No matter what else is happening, South Africa's consumer class still needs to feed its soul, and music remains our favourite way to do this."

## Of all the things consumer class adults are interested in life, **music remains No1** on a par with travel



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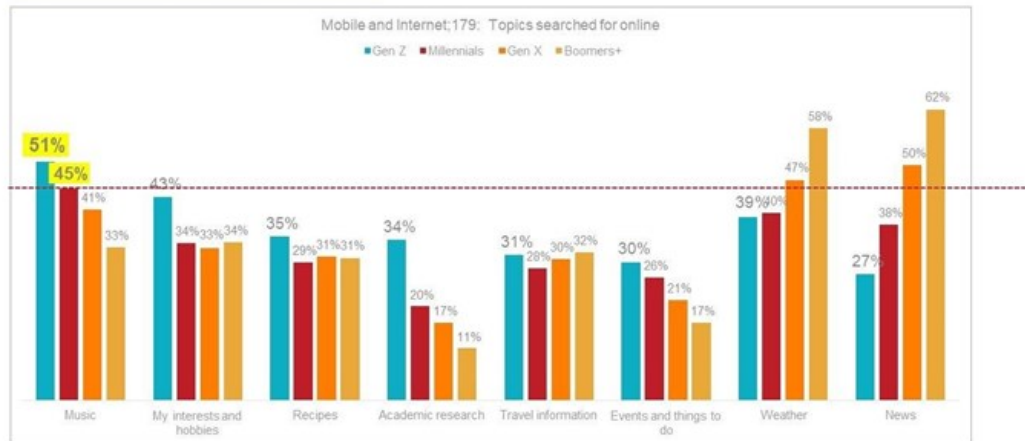
### Live music is more popular than live sports

Of course, we are one of the world's top sports-loving nations, but BrandMapp shows that live music even actually rank higher on our wish-lists than live sports events. De Kock says: "BrandMapp doesn't just tell us how important music is in the lives of South Africans, but also how that translates into consumer behaviour. In response to our question about attending live events, 44% of adults say they will attend a stadium music event this year, and another 44% say they plan to attend an outdoor music festival. De-duped, that's an aggregate of 62% of adults planning to attend a large-scale live music event in the coming year, significantly topping the 41%, who are likely to go and watch a sports event in 2025!"

"While the younger generations are obviously more likely to tick the 'live music event' box, there are still substantial percentages of the older generations who don't want to miss out on their favourite artists or the camaraderie of a stadium experience. So, it is not surprising that Andrea Bocelli's three concert dates easily sold out this month in Cape Town and Pretoria. And chances are if you wait much longer, it is unlikely you'll find a ticket for Travis Scott's Johannesburg Circus Maximus concert in October." According to Ticketmas South Africa, in 2024 they sold well over half a million tickets for live music events, a growth of over 50% from 2023, at an average of R1,100, and they expect continued growth this year.

### Music, embedded in the day-to-day life of the consumer class

**For Gen Z and Millennials, music is thing they spend most of their time searching for online – more so than news and weather!!**



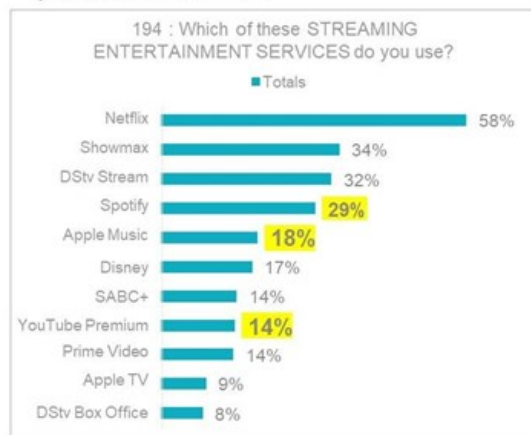
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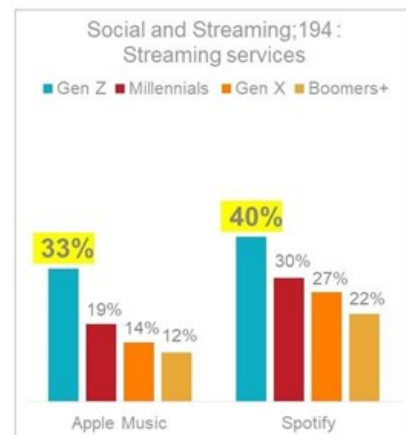
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The draw of music is not just about big, memorable experiences. BrandMapp highlights a myriad of ways that music is playing out in everyday life. After the weather and the news, music is the third most common internet-searched content on a weekly basis. The country’s consumer class searches for music more often than for directions or recipes. De Kock points out there’s an age differential here – with Gen Z and Millennials searching for music online more than anything else.

And part of it is because there are just **so many ways to listen to your favourite tunes**, including streaming services – especially if you’re a Gen Zer!



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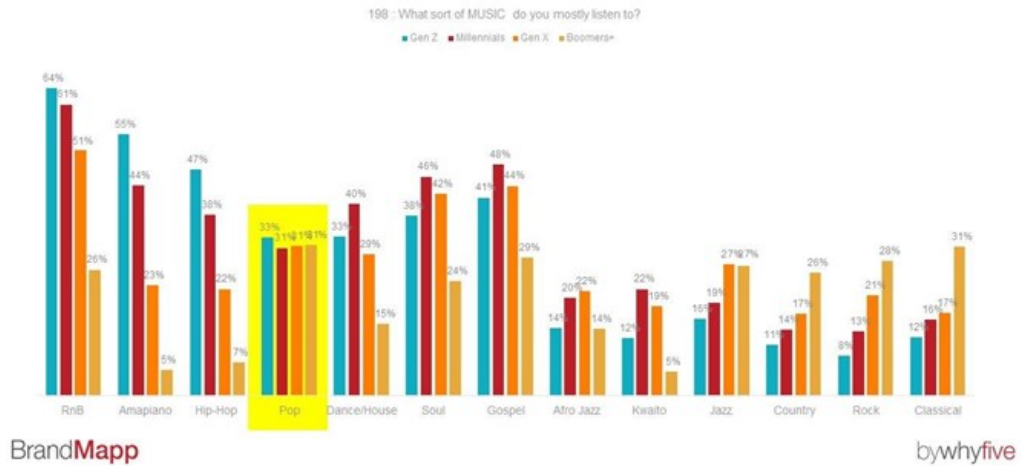


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Listening to music is the top single online activity. 60% of South African adults in the consumer class are listening to music, ahead of watching movies (54%), watching TV (34%), and searching for jobs (34%). De Kock says: “This is huge. And, when you put the generational lens on this, we see that 74% of Gen Z say they are regularly online to listen to music, and even Millennials are more likely to be listening than watching when they are online. Streaming platforms, Spotify and Apple Music, as well as YouTube Premium are all significantly on the rise with 33% of Gen Z using Apple Music and 40% using Spotify.”

We know it, but here's the proof: **different generations have very different musical tastes!**



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When it comes to radio, which is highly popular in South Africa, enjoying the music that is played is the overwhelming reason to have a favourite radio station. De Kock says: “The bottom line here is that the impact of music on the consumer class is absolutely massive. It’s just an essential part of being human and therefore a priority in people’s lives and a significant driver of consumer behaviour. Our musical preferences form part of our identities, and it helps us find our ‘tribes’ in a sea of loneliness.

“Even in ongoing tough economic times, we are finding ways to fit music costs into our household budgets because there’s no question of living without a backtrack to our lives. But more than that, music brings us together, gives us chances to relax and to find pure enjoyment in a stressed out world. It’s such a powerful force that I can only feel sorry for the tiny group of 1% of adults who ticket a box to say that they are ‘not interested in music!’”

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BrandMapp is a unique South African dataset that uses a mega-sample of more than 30 000 respondents to profile the 12 million adults who live in mid to top-income households earning in excess of R10 000 per month. Now in its eighth year, the BrandMapp survey is a bespoke, independent survey that powers the WhyFive consumer insights consultancy.

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