Spotify claims it actually had a better Weeknd than Apple Music



Yesterday, *The Verge* reported that The Weeknd's latest album, *My Dear Melancholy,* had a very strong debut on Apple Music, pulling in 26 million streams in the first 24 hours. The lead single, "Call Out My Name" pulled in an additional 6 million streams, surpassing the 3.5 million streams the single pulled in on Spotify during the same period, according to The Weeknd's label, Republic Records.

Obviously that would be a huge win for Apple Music given that it has around 120 million less users than Spotify, didn't have two exclusive music videos from the project, and didn't have The Weeknd promoting its service.

But there's a twist! Spotify says the numbers it initially gave Republic Records were in fact wrong. "Call Out My Name" was actually streamed 7.5 million times in the first 24 hours according to Spotify, and *My Dear Melancholy,* pulled in 29 million streams, beating out Apple Music (as it should, given

the whole 120 million extra users). Here's what a Spotify spokesman told me:

> *The Weeknd's EP My Dear Melancholy, received nearly 29 million Spotify streams within the first 24 hours of release, while the single "Call Out My Name" received 7.5 million streams within the first 24 hours of release. These numbers do not include streams of two videos for songs from the EP that can only be found on Spotify.*

But wait, there's more! I asked Republic Records, again, how many times "Call Out My Name" was streamed, and they said 6.5 million times, a full million less than what Spotify is claiming. That 6.5 million total also lines up with the publicly available data on Spotify's daily streams, which says the song was played 6,473,226 times on March 30th, when it was released.

The possibility remains that there's a delay on Spotify's chart counter — though delays usually aren't five days, and you'd think the label would know how many times its music has been streamed. You know, since they own it.

There are also bigger questions, like why is counting streams so hard? Why is Spotify giving incorrect data to a major label to promote while calling it the "largest Spotify debut of 2018" and not checking to see if that's accurate? And again, counting — why so hard?

Spotify keeps facing down lawsuits about royalties and record-keeping, and incorrectly counting streams for one of the biggest artists in the world doesn't seem like it will help its case.

Many questions, not enough answers.

https://www.theverge.com/2018/4/4/17200530/spotify-the-weeknd-apple-music-streams-counting