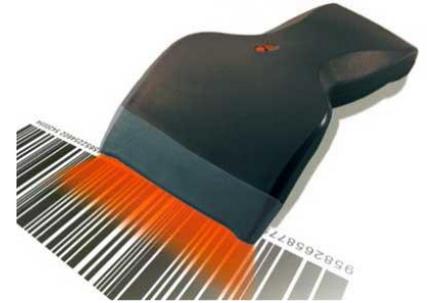


The new Ultimate Chart System Version 2016

Introduction

The ever-changing landscape of music distribution demands ever better sources of hard information about actual, rather than presumed, consumer behaviour. Ranger's 'Ultimate' chart system provides a near real time flow of actual consumer behaviour information direct to National groups, Trade Associations and other bodies involved in the Music Business.



Working in 'the cloud', Ultimate is an automated system that acquires retailer sales data and merges across formats to produce integrated sales charts as well as detailed information on individual brands, methods of distribution and of course actual label, title and artist performance.

Music streaming has reached major proportions in some Markets and Ultimate is designed to integrate streamers' reports with traditional music channels (Physical and Download) through various weighting processes. In some countries streaming exceeds 50% of the Market measured in this way and Ranger have pioneered the production of integrated Streaming charts in including physical, digital and streamed titles.

Countries using the Ultimate system have become amongst the first in the world to include Streaming Equivalent Albums in their National charts, using a scheme originated by IFPI in Stockholm, Sweden. Ultimate implements this scheme automatically, detecting which streams comprise complete albums and calculating an album equivalent based on agreed parameters.

A sense of ownership!

The chart production process is a collaborative exercise involving retailers, who supply the sales data, producers who supply the metadata that identifies the products that retailers report, and end users who consume and re-publish the results. The active involvement of all these parties is essential to the chart process and Ultimate is designed to give each type of contributor 'ownership' of their own part of the system.

This means that retailers and producers are able to log in to their own part of the system and view the progress of their own sales or products against the industry background. Of course, these types of contributor are not able to see their competitor's results, only their own against the whole market! In addition, contributors receive automated email responses to each data submission, allowing corrections to be made often before the chart team is even aware that a mistake (incorrect data format, for instance) has been made!

A crucial benefit of this active collaboration is the product contributors (record companies and labels, for instance) are able to identify similar products that should be 'linked' together to share a common chart position. This relieves a considerable workload from the National team and ensures that charts don't have to be re-issued because a minority component that should be linked to a significant title goes unnoticed at the bottom the chart! Of course, active collaboration also ensures that product metadata is corrected before reaching the

published charts and that occasional unidentified items are picked up by the people best placed to know what they are.

(‘Linking’ is a drag n’ drop process is a simple process that allows administrators to combine items for a shared chart position simply by dragging a caption for one item onto that of another, ‘linking’ the two. Content owners (Record companies, Labels, etc.) can also be allowed to carry out this process in regard of content that they have originally submitted).

Automation

Ultimate is fully automated, meaning that the capture of retailer data and industry metadata proceeds without human intervention. The system is easily adapted to suit contributor’s existing data formats, avoiding the need for elaborate IT support and eliminating the traditional barriers to entry that have frustrated both retailers and record companies in the past.

Ultimate’s cloud based web design allows contributors of all types to securely access their own areas of the system, allowing them to maintain editorial control of their ‘own’ contributed content.

Ultimate charts are compiled in real time and are visible to administrators as secure web pages that allow editorial supervision and publishing release. Once published, charts are available on-line and in a variety of file formats suitable for distribution to media and other interested parties.

The Charts

Ultimate produces sales charts that meet the requirements of each territory or trade organisation for publication in public media and private distribution. These charts are built to agreed rules that are specific to each territory and are presented to the local organisation’s team for moderation prior to release. Reasons for moderation include the combination of similar releases for a shared chart provision and relocation of items such as mid-price into appropriate charts.

Charts are built to the user’s specifications and typically include best-selling combined album, singles and video charts as well as charts for specialist genres, mid-price sales and streaming. The content generated by Ultimate is entirely the property of the end user organisation, subject only to it’s arrangements with contributors.

Reducing cost of ownership

Much of the cost of ownership in traditional chart systems is tied up in elaborate IT procedures for harvesting and collating content. Unfortunately these procedures often require expensive support infrastructures at both ends of each link and are sometimes impenetrable to end users. While Ultimate can also

Now with added Streaming!

The 2016 version of Ultimate seamlessly integrates streaming data with traditional formats, including physical and download album sales.

employ traditional data transfer technologies, it sidesteps this issue in most cases by allowing participants to subscribe, and obtain, content using simple formats like, for instance, industry standard spreadsheets.

This ‘de-mystifying’ of the data submission process has an important and sometimes unexpected benefit: Instead of being isolated from the content submission process, contributors can actually ‘take ownership’ of the process and the data submitted by it. This change in emphasis has a strong effect both on the quality of data submitted and on the cost of operating the

process. Authorised users are able to participate in the chart production process in a way that simply isn't possible in traditional systems. By 'empowering' contributors and end users alike, Ultimate strongly reduces the need for costly centralized management and IT infrastructure.

Result presentation



Ultimate provides secure access to a number of different types of user, such as for instance media, record companies and retailers. Each user type enjoys specific privileges appropriate to their situation. Typically, all users are able to view the total market size and a rolling chart of week-on-week sales.

Administrators are able to view the entire chart process in real time as contributions flow in from retailers, vendors and others. Chart content is accumulated on a weekly or other basis in a series of prototype, or 'work in progress' charts. These so-called 'WIP' charts allow administrators to view the submitted content prior to publication and make any necessary corrections. Because these charts work in real time, administrators can spot any developing problems with the content as they happen, rather than waiting for the end of the chart process.

Once approved, Charts are published with a single button click.

Ultimate holds a complete record of published charts and any previous chart can be recovered through a simple calendar interface. If a chart needs to be recalled because of some unidentified issue (an item being disqualified because of a breach of chart rules for instance) the chart can quickly be returned to the 'WIP' state, edited and re-published.

Showing chart for the Week ending 2012-01-24 21:59:59 +C (2 days ago)

Chart Type: All Products Albums Download DVD Independent Live Indie Mid price Singles Streaming Presales

Download Chart

Week ending 2012-01-24

Key	
1	Chart Position
2	Previous Week's Position
+	Highest Entry
+	New Entry

[Download as Excel Spreadsheet](#)
[Edit this chart](#)

1	Robin - Frontside Ollie	↑	51	LMFAO - Party Rock Anthem	↓
Universal Music 2 weeks in chart			Universal Music 31 weeks in chart		
2	Adele - Rolling In the Deep	↓	52	Emeli Sandé - Heaven	↑
XL Beggars 50 weeks in chart			Virgin UK		
3	Adele - Someone Like You	↓	52	Sean Paul - Got 2 Luv U (feat. Alexis Jordan)	↓
XL Beggars 16 weeks in chart			Warner Music 7 weeks in chart		

Retailers can view the content that they have submitted and compare it with the whole market. They are provided with a dedicated 'Own Product' page that ranks their own sales in the form of a personal chart that can often provide sales analysis faster than their own internal management system!

Vendors (Manufacturers, Labels, Distributors and others supplying product to the market) can view sales of their own products. This real time snapshot of sales as they happen provides far faster and more accurate information than is available by other means. It enables vendors to spot issues that otherwise might only come to light on publication of the charts, such as errors in the metadata that cause items to be incorrectly listed or excluded entirely.

Media users are provided with access to the published charts so that they can reproduce or abstract the content into their own vehicles. Charts are provided with additional analysis such as previous week's positions, movement indicators and other data that makes the content ready for public distribution.

Data Feeds can be provided to automatically populate end user websites and

other types of media. Ultimate can also be supplied with a public-facing website allowing the published charts and chart history to be viewed by consumers.



Access from anywhere

End users can access the system from anywhere using conventional computer terminals, cell-phones and tablets like

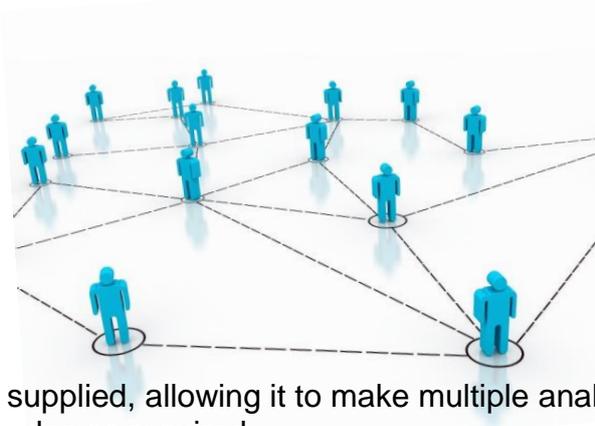
Apple's iPad. Prior to publication, metrics are presented to suitably Authorised users in the form of 'work in progress' data where they can be reviewed and amended as required. Standard facilities include the ability to identify 'mystery' products through the system's built in catalogue data and direct links to popular search engines. Similar products can be combined in an instant for a single sales position by an intuitive drag n' drop procedure.



'Multi channel' metrics

The retail world is ever evolving, with new sales channels emerging continually. Ultimate gives special emphasis to the process of combining sales for items in different formats, combining both physical and digital versions of the same product for a shared chart position, as one example. This is achieved through Ultimate's unparalleled flexibility in holding descriptions of items

in their native form, while allowing them to share a common chart identity.



Territorial Flexibility

Ultimate has been designed to compile sales data for individual territories. It is also able to integrate results for districts or regions where there may be different policies for reporting periods or sales qualifying rules. Ultimate can achieve this because it retains all inputted data in the native format as

supplied, allowing it to make multiple analyses of common data using different rules as required.

Security



Ultimate provides information for use by both Vendors and Retailers. Built in security features mean that contributors are only able to view information relating to their own products, not those of their competitors. However, all parties can view the sales of their products in relation to the total market size.

Ultimate is hosted on secure web servers and is designed to

give a high degree of security to both users and contributors of information. Security options include SSL (Secure Socket Layer) for web pages and TLS (Transport Layer Security) with optional mutual authentication to verify a user's identity. Optional hardware keys are also available. Access can be restricted to specific IP addresses or to specific computers as required. Each user is given a secure login.

Access to Ultimate is logged in an audit trail which records the history of each user's login activity, including the IP address used. All users' login rights can be managed in real time by administrators, who can add, edit, or remove accounts or access rights as needed.

Summary

Ultimate provides trade associations, retail groupings, distributors and other parties with a reliable and affordable method of collating sales data and presenting the results. The system is unique in its ability to acquire sales data from across the entire range of retailing, from the largest established chains to the smallest independent operations and spanning physical, download and streaming formats.

Ultimate is highly customisable and uses the latest technologies to provide users with flexibility and responsiveness to new and evolving requirements. While incorporating high levels of security, Ultimate allows many stakeholders in the data to have appropriate levels of access, ranging from allowing individual retailers to check their own daily sales right through to trade associations whose role is to monitor an entire marketplace.

For more information, please contact:

Mr David Viewing
Ranger Computers Ltd
2 Meeting Lane
Duston
Northampton NN5 6JG UK

Phone: +44 (0)1604 589200

Email: David@rangercom.com

Web: www.rangercom.com

About Ranger: Ranger Computers Ltd have supplied retail automation technology to the entertainment industry since 1993. The company collects independent retail sales data in the UK and Ireland and supplies record chart services to members of IFPI.