

VIRGIN MEGASTORE GO BACK TO VINYL RECORDS

**"Collectability is one reason for vinyl's comeback
Annual sales of vinyl Records in the UK continues to rise!"**

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Virgin Megastores U.K. hopes to “transform the way consumers perceive record stores” by giving “more space than ever ... to vinyl records,” reports Tony Glover in The Business.

Yes — Vinyl Records !!!

According to Rob Campkin, the head of Music at Virgin Megastores in the U.K., vinyl is now outselling CDs when it comes to the latest records.” He comments: “Up to 70 percent of sales of new releases are vinyl.” According to the British Phonographic Industry, “annual sales of vinyl singles in the U.K. rose sixfold to over 1m, accounting for 14.7 percent of all physical singles sales in 2005, up from 12.2 percent in 2004.” Rob Campkin says “collectability” is one reason for vinyl’s comeback.

He comments: “Vinyl is far more iconic ... The record sleeve offers the consumer art work as well as information about the performers and song lyrics.” Adds Roger Daltrey of The Who: “We threw away an art form that was so much more than the record ... Sometimes the covers were more important than the music. The more fingerprints you got on it, the more it was a part of you. With a CD, you start with a nice plastic box and end with a scratched plastic box; it has no character whatsoever.” Of course, you can count Roger among those who simply think Vinyl Sounds Better than CDs, too. Vinyl’s comeback cuts across demographics, as younger consumers are buying classic rock albums in vinyl, while older consumers are “increasingly augmenting their collections with LPs from modern artists such as the White Stripes.”

In many cases, consumers are buying both the CDs and the vinyl versions, the former for convenience and the latter for love. Predictably, it’s the major record labels, having sold their souls to CDs decades ago, are slow to jump back into vinyl,

the irony of which is not lost on Roger Daltrey, who thinks "it was the switch to CDs that ultimately led to the music labels' horrendous problems with digital music piracy." Virgin, meanwhile, predicts that digital music downloads "will account for no more than 10 percent of the overall market by 2009 and that the appeal of vinyl will continue to grow to shoppers who want to take home something tangible and lasting." Indeed, Virgin hopes its vinyl strategy will "offer consumers enough added value to head off growing competition from cut-price supermarket CD offers and internet download services." ~

Tim Manners, editor posted by www.vinylrecords.co.uk