

For many Americans, vinyl records bring back memories of growing up in the 60s and 70s.

At that time, people listened to Elvis Presley and The Beatles on black discs spinning on a turntable. Today's younger generation did not grow up with vinyl records. But for them, vinyl is cool.

Fourteen-year-old Jack Lowenstein visited Crooked Beat Records in Washington, DC.

"I prefer to buy vinyl records over CD."

Nineteen-year-old Sarah Griffith likes them, too.

"More recently I've started buying more, you know, like old punk records and stuff."

Jonathon Oldmixon is in his 30s. For him, records are collectibles.

"I don't have a preference. However I'll admit there are some things that I want specifically on vinyl because they have a certain aesthetic appeal to them. The picture on the cover is really nice or the record itself is really nice."

Nielsen SoundScan reports on music and audio sales in the United States. It says vinyl records were the fastest growing music media in 2010. About three million were sold. Still, sales of vinyl records in America are small compared to CDs and MP3s.

Bill Daly is the owner of Crooked Beat.

“Since 2007, vinyl has grown to where it is now -- 99 percent of our sales. In 2007, when they started introducing new vinyl releases, free MP3 download card with it, that's when the sales started surging.”

He says his online sales of vinyl are growing.

“We ship all over the world almost every day. You name the country; we've probably shipped there because there's not very many record stores around the world anymore.”

Furnace MFG in Virginia was mainly known for manufacturing CDs and DVDs. Now its main product is vinyl. Company head Eric Astor says meeting demand for vinyl has been hard.

“They haven't made a new vinyl pressing machine since the early 80s, so you have to find the equipment that's available and there's not a lot of equipment available.”

Eric Astor has partnered with vinyl factories in Germany and Holland. The records are sent to Furnace’s headquarters, prepared and shipped. Astor says his company produces more than two million vinyl records a year.

For some people, they are a reminder of a time before digital media. Joe Pollock has been collecting vinyl for seven years.

“I go through my collection, I pick out what I want to hear, I put it on, there's that, you're touching it, you're feeling it. There is warmth to it. And you have to sit through a whole album.”

As Eric Astor notes.

“A record that's pressed well from start to finish can sound much better than anything digital because of the fact that it's not in compressed, whereas with any sort of a CD or even a high-res digital file there's always a little bit of compression.”

Astor says nothing beats a real record. He says vinyl’s popularity will continue to grow. I'm Mario Ritter.