MARKETING TO MEN 18-34

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Peter Leimbach, VP Multimedia Ad Sales Research, ESPN
Chris Lighty, CEO, Brand Asset Group and Violator Management
Michael Mohamad, SVP, New Business Development & Partnership, A&E Television Networks
Peter O'Reilly, Director of Marketing & Fan Development, National Football League
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REGIONAL MEXICAN

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With his new single dancing up the charts, Chris Brown shrugs off the notion of a sophomore slump.

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260 DEGREES OF BILLBOARD

HOME FRONT

WORLDWIDE

WWW.AMERICANRADIOHISTORY.COM
Flavorless Top 40?

Why U.S. Radio Needs Some Italian Dressing

Once upon a time in America, there truly existed "the station that everybody can agree upon." At the signature heyday of top 40 continued through the '70s and '80s, as anyone over 40 knows, the format truly personified the best of all genres: pop, R&B, ballads, rock, dance, and country. On one frequency, one could hear Billy Joel, Madonna, Pat Benatar, Juice Newton, Barry Manilow, Loverboy, Kool & the Gang, Blondie, Devo, Alabama... on and on.

However, by the mid- to late-90s—as the Telecommunications Act turned broadcasting into a business that was arguably more accountable to Wall Street than listeners—pop radio began to polarize as formats split into "super-serving" niches.

By 1996, top 40 top 40 learned heavily toward modern rock—the Smashing Pumpkins, Alanis Morissette, Pearl Jam and the like—unfortunately abandoning the variety that had always defined mass appeal. Soon after, hip-hop became top 40's genre of choice. As a result, of course, adult top 40 was born to "feed" pop titles to grown-ups who perceived rap as an invasion.

Meanwhile, adult contemporary branded itself as the at-work network, where the playlist was dumbed down to innocuously blend into the background. Instead of singing along, you were informed that drowsy DJs and equally sleepy music would never invade anyone's personal space—just tune in and remember the moniker in case you were called upon by Arlington.

I've covered U.S. radio for some 20 years now and, I suppose, regarded such fragmentation as an organic rite of passage. But after just returning from 10 days' vacation in Italy, I came to realize that stationside, if anything, has devolved. This could be due to broadcast management's call to arms by shareholders. Or it could be a lack of courage and creativity on the part of programmers grooved in an era where nothing of various music—instead of what was once known as diversity—is now termed a "train wreck."

One station in particular, Napels-based Radio Kiss Kiss Italia, which covers much of the region (population just around 1 million), proved that the original concept of music for the masses remains alive and well.

That single outlet was the frequency of choice everywhere I traveled within the region, a radio station whose broad melodic playlist met with enthusiastic across-the-board acceptance. Each morning in our restaurant in Sorrento, 45-year-old proprietor Maria capped the Zoo-like morning show as she cheerfully served fresh bread, tomatoes and cheeses. Taking taxis around the region, without fail, Kiss Kiss emulated from the speakers, whether the driver was 25 or 55. In the grocery markets, the same. Throughout the hip boutiques of Capri, yep, parallel love for Kiss Kiss.

During my stay, I heard a delectable blend of Nelly Furtado, Michael Buble, Marvin S, Avril Lavigne, Christina Aguilera and Dolores O'Riordan—acts that have been embraced in the United States by specifically niche formats; Mika, Amy Winehouse, Joss Stone, Robbie Williams and Travis—mainstream European repeats acts whose lack of top 40 radio acceptance in the States remains an inexplicable enigma; and a healthy sprinkling of Italian artists like Laura Pausini, Tony Amoldo, Zucchero and Paolo Nutini.

And all this shifting from AC's Buell to top 40's Furtado to adult top 40's O'Riordan to triple-A's Stone to Italian-language could not have sounded more organic... what a pleasure, indeed.

So, do programmers really believe that platinum selling hulb has to be relegated to AC only playlists with his wonderfully upempo, wholly universal "Everything"? Or that Mika's dance ditty "Grace Kelly"—which hit No. 1 in six nations and top 10 in two dozen countries, including Canada—is too far for listeners?

I learned a valuable lesson in Italy without even knowing it needed it. As stationside FM broadcasters battle the temptation of so many pioneering global media competitors available at the click of a mouse, how much longer will the status quo satisfy listeners—particularly as they realize how many talented artists are being neglected and/or branded to a single format by programmers here?

We got it right 20 years ago. Can we turn back the clock before it's too late?

Kamal France
Tee Pee Records

FEEDBACK

FORCED ADS ARE FAILED ADS

I'm not convinced by the ad-supported models that require consumers to sit through an advertisement prior to view a video or downloading a song. Ads aren't effective when consumers expect them. Readers flip through an entire magazine not wanting to miss an article. TV viewers expect commercials but have no idea which suspenseful scene will be cut to show by payoffs.

But when I go online, even before I know what I'm looking for, I immediately open at least three windows: one for e-mail, one maybe for MySpace and another for Google. While one window is loading, I minimize it and maximize another. Those with high-speed connections have even shorter attention spans.

The digital age has brought us almost unlimited ways to entertain ourselves: social networking sites, peer-to-peer, music download stores, MySpace, YouTube, more. Why sit through forced advertising when you can change the channel?

So ads like these can only work if they are custom-made for viewing demographic. For me, the Chevy commercial with Mary J. Blige and T.I. say. Otherwise, I'd rather "change windows"—and come back when the ad is done.

Kamal France
Tee Pee Records

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On Eve Of New Album, Teen Duo Spread Their Brand Across The Product Map

In the grand tradition of the Olsen twins and Disney juggernauts “High School Musical” and “Hannah Montana,” a marketing blitz that pushes branded entertainment to the max is on tap for Aly & AJ’s new Hollywood Records album, “Insomniac,” due July 10.

The teen siblings, whose real names are Alyson Renae and Amanda Joy Michalka, are stretching their music. Aly describes the collection as “experimental,” with a few songs featuring “piano-driven, wall-of-sound, epic productions.” The album marks a “big departure” for the duo. Aly adds, yet retains “flavors” from their debut album, “Into the Rush.”

The rhythmic “Potential Breakup Song” is already a hit at Radio Disney and is on its way to top 40 radio.

“For this audience, the more they see something, the better it sticks,” Radio Disney VP of programming Robin Jones says. “And this age group likes being in the know and likes finding in. So, if your friends have the Aly & AJ bracelet, well, you want one, too.”

Aly & AJ’s new, immediate brand partners include Post Honey-Comb cereal, MTV, Walmart and Samsung. Brands like these are surely responding to the ways Aly & AJ have established strong ties with their audience, as well as to the success of “Into the Rush.”

The 2005 set and its 2006 deluxe edition version have collectively sold 787,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan. The album’s biggest singles, “Rush” and “Chemicals React,” have sold 453,000 and 175,000 downloads, respectively—even though neither climbed higher than No. 50 on The Billboard Hot 100, and both received limited terrestrial radio airplay outside of Radio Disney.

In a short period of time, Aly & AJ have established an emotional connection with fans. Hollywood senior VP of marketing Ken Bunt says: “Once that connection has been made, brands then want to be involved.”

No one better understands how this connection can extend beyond the music than the two teenagers themselves. “We’re involved in all aspects of our business,” Aly says. “Nothing goes over our heads.” From writing their own songs and starring in MTV’s “Super Sweet 16: The Movie” (premiering July 8 on the network; a DVD follows two days later) to signing on the dotted line with their numerous brand partners, Aly & AJ are active participants.

With Post Honey-Comb, Aly & AJ are shown on the front and back of more than 7 million cereal boxes. The recently launched campaign includes a contest to see the duo live at a private concert in Orlando, Fla. For Samsung, Aly & AJ are the 2007 spokespeople for the electronics company’s Hope for Education charity, which provides schools with Samsung technology and Microsoft software.

Wal-Mart, meanwhile, will prominently feature Aly & AJ in a promotion that spotlights “Insomniac” (including an exclusive track) and the “Super Sweet 16” DVD.

“These are great visibility tools for the girls to set up their new album,” Bunt says. They also have the way for the duo’s summer tour, which kicks off July 11 in Phoenix. Sponsored by Sanrio, the trek focuses on amphitheaters and festivals.

Aly & AJ are resonating with today’s youth because they are approachable, Jones says. “At Radio Disney, we notice that kids attach themselves to those they can aspire to—someone who is not out of reach.”

In the months ahead, Aly & AJ-branded products will arrive from Xbox and Nintendo videogames, Trends International (2006 calendar), Huckleberry Toys (dolls), FEVA Merchandising (apparel), Accessory Network (accessories), Bioworld (headwear), IMT (jewelry), Townley Girl (cosmetics) and others.

In each partnership, the girls are heavily involved in product creation, design and marketing, says Gerry Cagle of Crysis Management, who oversees the duo’s career.

Unlike other Disney-certified acts, Aly & AJ do not have a contract with the global titan. “We control all activity with our brand partners,” Cagle says. “That said, we acknowledge that Hollywood is an active partner in searching out opportunities.”

Reach Media’s Michael Pugnotta, who was instrumental in the Olsen’s success, says Aly & AJ are in a great position because they control their name and likeness. Still, he has this advice, “You don’t want to be overexposed. Keep your long-range goals in sight. Kids respond to celebrity-based brands—that is, as long as the brand partnership makes sense.”

And for Aly & AJ, they do. All this activity, including the expansion of their sound, is “helping to push our career and brand forward.” Aly says. In the process, the duo do not want to alienate any fans. “It’s important to not stray from our core,” she says. “There is a fine line between being creative as artists and being respectful of fans. We take that fine line seriously.”
Writing For The Gold

NMFA Awarding Songwriters, Embracing Collaborations

Gold and platinum records aren't just for artists anymore. For the first time since the RIAA began certifying gold record sales in 1958, songwriters will begin receiving their own gold and platinum certificates this fall from the National Music Publishers' Assn. The move is part of the continuing evolution of the trade group since its appointment two years ago of president/CEO David Israelite, who espouses a "one music" philosophy for publishers and labels to work together more closely for the betterment of the industry as a whole.

Israelite and RIAA chairman/CEO Mitch Bainwol announced the new awards program at the NMFA's annual meeting. The publisher's group hammered out a deal with the RIAA so that "every time the labels' group certifies sales of a single record as gold or platinum, the NMFA will award the writers of the song with a certificate. Awards will only be for singles rather than albums or major ringtunes."

The idea had come about, Israelite says, when Bainwol expressed an interest in working with songwriters in new ways. "I remember recognizing the power and the prestige that the program carried for the RIAA, and I began thinking about ways we could similarly recognize the contributions of songwriters," Israelite says. "It made more sense to partner with this program, tying in with its massive success. Recognizing the contributions of creators is something we can agree on."

Bainwol says, "Publishers traveled from the nation's capital to participate in a panel discussion on compulsory license reform, joined by Register of Copyrights Marybeth Peters, Harry Fox Agency president/CEO Gary Churgin and Israelite."

One of the ideas they briefly discussed was a blanket license for reproduction rights in all compositions, similar to a performing rights license, that would be available for all forms of digital and physical products (including physical products with music videos). Under this approach, publishers would individually opt out of the blanket license. Churgin and Porter argued that this would streamline the licensing process while preserving copyright holders' rights.

Names of the newly elected NMFA board members can be found at billboard.biz/publishing.

LATEST NEWS

RECOGNIZING the contributions of creators is something we can agree on.

— DAVID ISRAELITE, NMFA
STREAMED TO YOUR PHONE

Melodyo's Fresh Twist On Accessing Your iTunes
Music fans have been slow to buy music on their mobile phones. So several companies have responded with services that let users access their phones music that is stored on their computers.

It's called placeshifting—a term used for the practice of accessing content stored on one device from another via the Internet (see story, page 12).

The latest entry into this market is Melodyo, which is offering a rather unique take on the trend with its new NuTuie service. Launched as a free beta service this week, NuTuie allows iTunes users to stream their music to any Internet-enabled mobile phone.

Unlike other placeshifting services that access music files on users' computers directly (see sidebar), Melodyo in this case is operating more like an Internet radio station. Users export their iTunes music library information to the NuTuie site online, which then matches it against Melodyo's database of licensed music.

The company then rapidly streams these songs directly from Melodyo's servers, meaning the user's computer need not be on for the service to work. The random playlist is a requirement of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act for such streaming services, which sets rules for how often songs by the same artist can be played in a given time frame and so on.

In doing so, Melodyo will pay royalties on each song streamed via the service, in accordance with webcaster royalty rates.

"If your iTunes library is full of music you copied from friends or you illegally downloaded and nobody got paid for it, this is going to monetize it," says Dave Dedden, Melodyo VP of music content and former head of the band Presidents of the United States of America. "[Artists] get paid for it every time you listen to it."

During the beta phase, the service can be found only via the NuTuie Web site. Melodyo hopes wireless operators will eventually offer it to their subscribers for Melodyo's NuTuie, demonstrated here, has just launched as a free beta service.

PLACESHIFTING PLAYERS
Snatching content from your computer and making it accessible on mobile phones is the hot application du jour for the mobile entertainment set. Melodyo's NuTuie is just the latest. A number of other companies are focusing on letting customers access the content they already own, rather than buying something new.

PHLING
(OXY SYSTEMS)
HOW IT WORKS: A mobile blog that lets users stream photos, music and messages from their home PC to their mobile phones and those of up to six friends. Members can browse and sample the music libraries of others, submit music reviews and rate individual tracks.
AVAILABILITY: Sprint, Cingular and T-Mobile; select phones only.
COST: Free

SLINGMOBILE
(SLINGMEDIA)
HOW IT WORKS: Allows users to watch and control their home TV from a mobile phone. Requires the Slingbox device installed in the home and the SlingPlayer software downloaded to the mobile phone.
AVAILABILITY: Windows Mobile and Palm devices only.
COST: One-time fee of $50, plus $150-$250 for various Slingbox devices.

SLINGPLAYER MOBILE
(SLINGMEDIA)
HOW IT WORKS: Allows users to watch and control their home TV from a mobile phone. Requires the Slingbox device installed in the home and the SlingPlayer software downloaded to the mobile phone.
AVAILABILITY: Windows Mobile and Palm devices only.
COST: One-time fee of $50, plus $150-$250 for various Slingbox devices.

ORB NETWORKS:
MYCASTING
(ORB NETWORKS)
HOW IT WORKS: After downloading the company's software to the home PC, users can access any music, movies or photos stored on that PC and get direct video access from sites like YouTube and Google.
AVAILABILITY: Any Internet-connected mobile phone.
COST: $10 per month. Application is free.

MAESTRO
HOW IT WORKS: Provides on-demand mobile access to the Maestro online social music portal, which allows users to find, manage and play MP3 files stored on their home PC and explore music owned by friends also using the service. Requires the Maestro software running on the PC.
AVAILABILITY: Any Internet-capable phone (third-quarter 2007).
COST: Free

Sundae Driving

Ice Cream And Music Sell Each Other

Ears weary of "Pop Goes the Weasel" and the Mister Softee theme during these hot summer months now have an alternative: Michael Heart's album "Songs for Ice Cream Trucks," due June 12 on Bar None. The Brooklyn-based songwriter set out to change the musical landscape for mobile frozen treat purveyors with new tunes—and ring tones—like "Ice Cream Yol!" and "Where Do Ice Cream Trucks Go in the Winter?" Independent ice cream vendors across the country are already taking notice.

"I had no hard and fast rules as to how to make an ice cream truck song," says Heart, who also plays in indie duo One Ring Zero. "They had just better make people want to buy ice cream!" And Heart's 13 tracks—short, whimsical tunes comprising melodica, organ, theremin, guitar, keyboards and a children's choir—are a do well job just that. "Having something other than a nursery rhyme makes grown-ups not mind approaching the truck as much," says John Thibodeau, owner of single-truck operation Thibby's Ice Cream in Green Bay, Wis. "You can't blast low-end music coming from a horn speaker, so the music has to be a certain tone. Michael nailed these great mid- and high-level sounds. Lots of people ask me about it, and get off on it," says Matt Allen, popularly known as the Ice Cream Man, who gives out free ice cream at major music festivals across the country. Other vendors—

Green Bay, Wis. "You can't blast low-end music coming from a horn speaker, so the music has to have a certain tone. Michael nailed these great mid- and high-level sounds. Lots of people ask me about it, and get off on it," says Matt Allen, popularly known as the Ice Cream Man, who gives out free ice cream at major music festivals across the country. Other vendors—

from a startup in Southern Pines, N.C., to a small fleet in Portland, Ore.—are catching on as well.

Prior to its street date, Heart's album has been available for purchase through his Web site songsforicecreamtrucks.com and iTunes. Heart has no way of monitoring the songs' usage in trucks, however, so he's crossing his fingers for more sync/licensing opportunities. His music is already slated to appear in an upcoming documentary on the origins of the ice cream sundae.

"I don't think the RIAA or ASCAP or whatever really have ice cream truck songs on their royalties radar," he quips.

MARKETING
BY KATIE HASTY

WARRNER JAPAN ENDS ITUNES HOLDOUT
Warner Music Japan's catalog is now available via the iTunes Japan Music Store, leaving Sony Music Entertainment (Japan) as the only major Japanese label not to have licensed its repertoire to iTunes. WMJ's iTunes launch is featuring an exclusive world premiere female vocalist Ayaka's new video for her recently released single "Jewelry Day."

LIVE NATION EXPANDS FILMMORE BRAND TO MIAMI
The 2,700-capacity Jackie Gleason Theater in Miami is the latest venue to join Live Nation's rejuvenated Fillmore brand. Live Nation has finalized a 10-year pact (with a five-year extension) with the Miami Beach City Commission to operate, manage and exclusively book the venue, to be rechristened Fillmore Miami Beach at the Jackie Gleason Theater. Live Nation expects to invest $3.5 million in improvements to the venue.

UNIVERSAL ACQUIRES MASSER CATALOG
Universal Music Publishing Group has acquired the catalog of songwriter Michael Masser, who was inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame June 7. The publisher previously administered the catalog. Masser has written songs for such artists as Diana Ross, Neil Diamond, Barbra Streisand and Aretha Franklin.


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www.americanradiohistory.com
MTV Latin America Gets Local

New Music VP Says Regionalization Will Target Tastes, Save Money

Decentralizing Miami operations at MTV Networks Latin America (MTVNLA) to Mexico, Argentina and Brazil will mean more cost-effective, locally flavored programming—so says Jose Tillan, who will manage newly appointed regional content heads in his new position of senior VP of content and music for MTV/VHI Latin America.

Under the strategy, the network will shift production to regional hubs in Mexico City, Sao Paulo and Buenos Aires, in some cases partnering with local companies (such as Televisa in Mexico and independent houses in Argentina) to develop new series and use “less of the canned international library,” Tillan says.

The channel already tailors its music and imaging to regional tastes, but programming decisions and responsibility for ratings will now fall under executive-level purview closer to where consumers are. Using experienced local editors, graphic designers and production teams offers “great quality, great editorial ... (that’s) very affordable to produce.”

Tillan’s most recent role supervising music and talent for MTVNLA and MTV Tr3s will expand to “connecting the dots”: overseeing the look and feel of the channels, developing more programs with specific advertisers and co-productions with pan-regional appeal. A recent example is the “Rally MTV” road race with Chevrolet that will also air statewide on MTV Tr3s.

MTVNLA has taken small steps toward regionalizing—its Premios MTV Latinamerica Awards Show was held for the first time in Mexico City last year, and it has created separate feeds for Mexico, Argentina, and Central and Northern South America—but the restructuring will make Miami an “idea-generating, dream-out-loud department rather than an operational programming facility with (programming) control.”

The full restructuring is expected to be completed by year’s end. Digital media operations for the network have already moved to Buenos Aires, with 126 positions slated to move there from Miami.

MTV Tr3s was expected to name someone to take over Tillan’s day-to-day responsibilities at the U.S. channel. Tillan will stay in Miami and continue reporting to MTVNLA president Pierluigi Gazzolo. VP of MTV/VHI content for Mexico Vicenta Solis and VHI Brazil content VP Jimmy Leroy will now report to Tillan from their respective territories, as well as to existing country GMs Paula Guerra (Argentina), Alvaro Barros (Brazil) and Carlos Magana (Mexico). A head of content for Argentina had not been named as of press time.

bye

A growing number of major and independent labels are going digital when it comes to sending promotional material to press.

Rather than mail an advance CD, some record companies are instead e-mailing links to download or stream prerelease content.

EMI’s Capitol Music Group began embracing the practice regularly at the start of this year with press promos for acts like Joss Stone, the Stooges and Mims. Depending on the release, CMG is servicing music as either an on-demand stream or a watermarked MP3.

Also going all in on digital servicing as of this year is indie Beggars Group/Matador, which has provided advances from acts like New Pornographers, the Stooges and Mims. Depending on the release, CMG is servicing music as either an on-demand stream or a watermarked MP3.

Meanwhile, other labels are experimenting with the idea. Warner Music Group, Sony BMG and Universal Music Group, as well as Vice Recordings have digitally served select re-releases, including the Grapes, Mark Ronson, the Bravery, and Black Lips, respectively.

This isn’t the first time the music business has experimented with digital promos. Record companies have been digitally serving tracks to radio on a select basis for years. However, label publicity departments are seeing new windows for digital promos with press contacts thanks to the rising penetration of MP3 players, broadband Internet connections and media-friendly computers with large hard drives for storing content.

Driving the move is the opportunity for cost savings.

Labels send upwards of 2,500 promotional CDs to press, radio and retail for an average release in the United States. And when manufacturing, packaging and mailing costs are factored in, they spend $3 per unit in some cases. Spread out across a dozen or so releases for an independent label, that translates to almost $100,000 or more in annual promo costs. For a U.S. major-label imprint that might put out 50 front-line releases a year, that number can approach $500,000 and beyond.

Those numbers can run even higher when watermarking costs are factored in for promos of priority releases. Not only are there the direct costs of the technology, but also mailings have to be sent via FedEx or UPS so labels can keep track of sensitive promo discs and make sure they reach the right person. “The watermarking thing can get out of control,” one major label publicity executive says, noting that reserving music to members of the press who misplace a promo disc or don’t receive a mailing becomes particularly expensive. “Every time we do a one-off watermark it’s $125. It adds up.”

Label publicity executives say that offering digital promos affords a number of advantages, including the option to expand the number of promotional outlets it reaches out to in a pre-release campaign, the ability to distribute material instantaneously and the flexibility to reserve records an unlimited number of times.

Of course, there are risks involved with going all-digital on promos.

“You are basically asking the end recipient to do more work,” says Matt Harmon, VP of sales and marketing for Beggars Group.

What’s more, there are still plenty of luddites who prefer physical product to digital. Labels still distribute CDs to press contacts who request them.

Such issues may not be a factor for critically acclaimed and commercially successful acts. But for baby bands, labels fear that they can get lost in the e-mail shuffle.

And for labels that haven’t yet switched to digital promos, still the vast majority of the industry, there’s the political sensitivities of which acts go first.

Nils Bernstein, head of publicity for Mar- dor, says the label ultimately chose a reuse of Pavement’s “Wowee Zowee” last November as its test case, but says, “We were wary of making any one release the guinea pig.”

One of Billboard’s franchise charts expands north of the border this week with the launch of the Billboard Canadian Hot 100. The new list, which ranks songs’ popularity by blending digital track sales measured by Nielsen SoundScan with radio tracking from Nielsen BDS, bowed June 7 on billboard.com and billboard.biz.

Effective this issue, the top 10 from the new Canadian Hot 100 will appear in the magazine’s Hits of the World section (see page 50). SoundScan’s Canadian Digital Songs chart, which has appeared in the magazine since March 2006, will continue to appear on billboard biz. All 100 titles on the new chart will appear on both Web sites.

The Canadian Hot 100 emulates the formula that drives The Billboard Hot 100, which has mingled sales and radio data since its launch in 1958. Along with SoundScan’s digital sales data, the new chart is driven by BDS’ Canada All-Format Airplay, with a panel of more than 100 radio stations. The comprehensive radio panel includes the country’s leading top 40, rock, country and AC stations.

Rihanna has the honor of the chart’s first No. 1 with “Umbrella,” featuring Jay-Z, the song that is in its second week at No. 1 on the original Hot 100. Canadian acts found in the inaugural chart’s top 20 include Finger Eleven, Nelly Furtado, Michael Buble and Avril Lavigne.

The Billboard Canadian Hot 100 is managed by Paul Tuch, director of Canadian operations for Nielsen BDS, in consultation with Silvio Petrolongo, Billboard’s associate director of charts and manager of The Billboard Hot 100.
ScratchinUp Patent Law
Will Reforms Affect Digital Music?

During the final days of the 109th Congress last year, Senate and House Judiciary subcommittees were heatedly negotiating copyright bills that address music licensing. But since the new Congress convened in January, copyright issues have been sidelined while patent law reform has taken center stage. Though this topic has seemingly been of little interest to music industry groups, patent litigation can indeed affect the use of music.

The latest example of this impact is a patent infringement suit filed May 21 by Amsterdam-based N2IT Holdings. The company invented a product for DJs called Final Scratch. N2IT is asking a federal court in Los Angeles to force Native Instruments to take its new product, Traktor Scratch, off the market.

Kourosh Nasseri in Washington, D.C., has worked with N2IT for several years. Nasseri, a lawyer whose clients include top dance-electronic artists, producers and DJs, says he was excited when he first saw the invention. "This is cutting edge," he says. "It pulled DJ'ing into the 21st century."

Nasseri says that many DJs veered away from using vinyl records in favor of CDs and MP3s so they wouldn't have to carry around suitcases filled with bulky discs that damaged easily. But there was a trade-off: They lost much of their control over turntable spin techniques like slowing down, scratching and matching mixes. The Final Scratch hardware/software combination allows DJs to use a special time-coded vinyl record on a conventional turntable to manually control the playback of digital music tracks in a laptop.

A market is developing for this type of product, with several companies adopting the N2IT approach, Nasseri says. N2IT secured patent rights in the Netherlands and the United States, and has sold more than 15,000 units since its release in 2001, he adds.

According to the lawsuit, the first version of Final Scratch operated on Linux-based computer systems. N2IT contracted with Stanton Magnetics to manufacture and distribute the products as well as help develop a version that would work with Windows and Mac systems. Stanton subcontracted that development to Berlin-based Native Instruments Software Synthesis. Nasseri says that in anticipation of working together, N2IT provided confidential information about its technology to Native Instruments subject to a confidentiality agreement and sent personnel to Berlin to train Native's employees on how the system worked.

Last month, Native Instruments North America released Traktor Scratch, which the lawsuit claims "is strikingly similar to Final Scratch and uses the technology" of N2IT's patent. Native Instruments did not respond to a request for comment, so it's unclear whether the company will challenge the validity of the patent or argue that the later product simply doesn't infringe N2IT's patent. Meanwhile, both companies will likely spend major bucks to litigate.

Questions about the validity of patents and the risks of litigation are two of the reasons there is an outcry for patent law reform on Capitol Hill. Critics of the current law claim, among other things, that U.S. Patent Office examiners grant patent applications that never should have been granted. Patents are supposed to protect only processes, machines, manufactured articles and compositions of matter (e.g., chemicals) when they are truly new and innovative. If they ever existed before, as proved by evidence called "prior art," then the application for a patent must be rejected.

Current procedures to challenge the validity of a patent are not optimal: filing a request for a re-examination of the patent application or filing a lawsuit in federal court. The former essentially asks government examiners to admit to making a mistake. Critics point out that lawsuits often result in a defendant, who could win the suit, settling by paying, for example, $3 million to license patent rights from a plaintiff rather than spending $5 million to go to trial.

The Patent Reform Act of 2007 is an attempt to resolve these and other issues. Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., introduced the Senate version (S. 1145), and Rep. Howard Berman, D-Calif., introduced the House version (H.R. 1908). While it doesn't focus on the examination process (which experts say would be difficult to define in legislation), it creates a "post-grant" process to challenge a patent.

Hearings on the bills are still ongoing, so there's time for digitally minded music executives to check out proposed reforms.

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Buy Once, Play Anywhere

Wireless Carriers Want To Spread Your Content Across All Your Screens

Content providers sitting down to make distribution deals with wireless operators are noticing something a bit different about the suits on the other side of the negotiating table. Increasingly, their conversation is no longer limited to just wireless experiences. The top executives in charge of striking content deals at such carriers as AT&T (formerly Cingular) and Verizon are now responsible for driving the content strategies across their organization's other channels—including Internet and digital TV.

While their motivation may be to leverage their wireless assets to better compete for home services with cable rivals Comcast and Time Warner, the ultimate consequences of this effort are profound. At stake is the very future of how consumers access and pay for entertainment content across multiple platforms.

Today, content and service providers benefit from a model that is designed to sell consumers the same content in different formats. Buy or subscribe to something online or via cable, and you'll have to pay for it again to access it on your mobile phone.

For instance, Rhapsody subscribers who already pay a monthly fee to access the music service online have to pay an additional $7 per month to get the same Rhapsody radio stations on their mobile phones via Sprint.

But the growing number of companies offering content placeholders—services which allow users to access content stored on the device from another service (page 9)—is causing content providers and network operators to rethink the nature of how content is delivered and monetized across multiple channels.

"Eventually, the buy-once/play-anywhere model will be the value proposition you must meet as a content distributor," says Mark Desaul- tels, VP of wireless Internet development for CTIA-The Wireless Assn. "Wireless will just become the natural extension of the need to provide a consumer with access to content ubiquitously and on any device—TV, PC, or mobile phone."

The industry is already seeing early stabs at this. In March, AT&T began offering a free year of the Napster subscription music service to any customer signing up for its Internet and wireless service.

Verizon Communications is doing much the same thing. In January, it promoted Verizon Wireless head Denny Strigl to president/COO of the entire company, giving him control over the wireless and wireline divisions. He subsequently authorized key members of his wireless team to strike content deals that spanned all Verizon platforms.

The motivation is fairly obvious. AT&T and Verizon are trying to compete with cable operators for TV access with fiber optic IPTV services—AT&T's u-Verse service and Verizon's FiOS attract about 26,000 and 350,000 subscribers, respectively.

Meanwhile, Comcast alone commands some 13 million digital cable TV subscribers, and therefore gets the best deals on video and other packages when negotiating with content providers. However, AT&T and Verizon have significant wireless subscriber bases—47 million and 42 million, respectively. With mobile becoming the all-important third screen, they can now leverage their wireless prowess to get better deals for their other platforms.

Meanwhile, cable companies aren't exactly resting on their laurels. Comcast, Cox and Time Warner all offer wireless services through a reselling relationship with Sprint, and they now own enough wireless spectrum to individually launch their own nationwide wireless networks in the future. They also offer landline voice services as well.

Today, the primary benefit is to offer bundled services all on one $70/month bill. Tomorrow, it will be about offering access to entertainment content across these various platforms for one price.

"As networks and devices get smarter, consumers will demand access all the time," Music Choice CEO David Del Beccaro says. "If you don't give it to them, they'll just go get it elsewhere."

Apparently some content owners haven't gotten the memo yet. Late last month, Major League Baseball renewed its attack on Sling Media, accusing the service of illegally "misusing" content by allowing users to view their cable feeds on their computers while traveling.

MLB would prefer that base- ball fans pay it directly to stream games from its online portal. But this argument likely won't take place in five years. When MLB or any other content provider is negotiating its TV distribution deals, the person across the table will also be demanding that same content for their Internet and wireless subscribers.

"Placing technology is why these access and content providers are only going to be able to charge for content one time," Desaul-tels says. "That is where consumers are pushing the business model toward. In the short term, that means leaving money on the table."

PHOENIX RISING

Time to toss out your old clock radio. The Com One Phoenix radio features a Wi-Fi wireless internet connection that lets users play not only AM/FM stations, but also stream virtually any Internet radio station in the world. Of course, users still need to have a broadband Internet connection and a Wi-Fi router already in their home for it to work. Past that, the Phoenix lets the user bookmark favorite radio stations, view track and artist info, and even play MP3s, WMA and Real Audio digital files. And with an optional Bluetooth adapter, it will stream all the same to an existing home entertainment system.

The Phoenix is expected to be available this summer for $250. —Antony Bruno

PHOTOS: BILLBOARD

HOT RINGTONES

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MUSIQ

BITS & BRIEFS

GET UP, STICK IT UP

Bob Marley's "Exodus" is celebrating its 30th anniversary with an exclusive new, limited-edition version of the album released on a USB memory stick. Fans can acquire the memory stick only from the late artist's official Web site, bobmarley.com. Only 4,000 devices are available. They contain the original 10 songs, as well as three video tracks of live performances at London's Rainbow Theater from June 1977, and other audio and video content.

AN INDEX FOR MOS

Ministry of Sound has tapped video search engine Blinkx to transcribe and index its online music video library on Ministry of Sound TV. The site has more than 500 music videos, exclusive dance music DJ interviews and footage from a permanent film crew sending video dispatches from Ibiza. In addition to formatting the content for easy video search, Blinkx will also add MOS video in the results of its video search portal.

AMP'D MOBILE FILES CHAPTER 11

Startup wireless operator Amp'd Mobile has filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy, unable to meet payments due on almost $100 million of debt. The company had raised some $360 million in funds. Investors include MTV Networks and Universal Music Group. To date, it has acquired slightly less than 200,000 subscribers, almost half of which signed up in the last eight months. The company says it will continue to offer service and expects to emerge from bankruptcy "soon."
Dream Weavers

Shushybye Turns Toddlers’ Nap Time Into A Viable Brand

Three lessons in brand building that the 2-year-old Shushybye brand teaches us: One, find an untapped niche, two, build a strong foundation; three, take your time.

Given all that, Shushybye may not be on your radar screen—at least not yet. But this is about to change—thanks to a few recently inked partnerships that span the worlds of music, toys, publishing and clothing.

By focusing exclusively on “sleepytime,” Shushybye founder Steve Syatt—who was instrumental in the launches of Pokemon, Bob the Builder and other brands via his SSA public relations firm—has tapped into an untapped area of the babies and toddlers market. And brand partners are taking note.

Global toy manufacturer Jakks Pacific has signed on as Shushybye’s master toy licensee, while Adorable Kids is the brand’s sleepwear licensee. The former will begin rolling out Shushybye toys in 2008. Later this year, Shushybye sleepwear will hit stores throughout North America—at about the same time the Syatt-penned “Shushybye: Close Your Eyes” book arrives via St. Martin’s Press.

On the music front, the Shushybye brand now has something in common with Green Day and Goo Goo Dolls. Pat Magnarella and Chris Allen, of Pat’s Management Co., are managing the Shushybye Dream Band. Creative Artists Agency handles all bookings.

According to Allen, who discovered Shushybye by way of his children who are fans of the brand, the Shushybye Dream Band will initially tour as a supporting act, possibly opening for the Wiggles, another act booked by CAA. “We’re looking for a built-in audience base,” Allen says.

“At this point, the Wiggles are Green Day and the Shushybye Dream Band is Plain White T’s,” he continued. “We hope to take Shushybye to the Green Day level.”

To be sure, Syatt knows a thing or two about building a brand from scratch. When Shushybye was simply an idea in his mind, Syatt says he fully understood the importance of creating a “real concept” before approaching potential licensees. In other words, create a foundation.

To get the Shushybye ball rolling in 2005, Syatt self-funded and manufactured the Shushybye Dream Box, which included a self-published book, a five-song CD and a 6-inch plush doll. Syatt manufactured 3,000 Dream Boxes and sold them on consignment at Borders Books & Music locations in California. Each Dream Box retailed for $18.95. To help raise awareness of his brand and sell product, Syatt participated in more than 100 in-store events at Borders. According to Syatt, under the terms of his arrangement with Borders, the retailer kept 40% of Dream Box sales.

While the Dream Boxes sold out, Syatt made no money from the deal, but that was fine by him. He saw the business arrangement as pure brand building and a way to create buzz.

This paved the way to a deal with WGBH Boston Video, which released “The Shushybye Dream Band: Live on Tour” DVD at the end of 2005. The following year, Koch issued the debut Shushybye branded album, “Shushybye & Goodnight.” The CD earned an iParenting Award. It was sold exclusively online.

Veronica Villarreal, director of marketing and business development at Koch, says this decision was based on the realities of the marketplace. “Property-based children’s music traditionally does not go into brick-and-mortar retailers without other drivers, like


Toys, videos and other branded-products already in place,” Villarreal says. “At the time, the Shushybye brand was new and just getting its feet wet.”

Villarreal expects the second Shushybye album—featuring 11 songs, all penned by Syatt, and due next year from Koch—to be sold in physical retail stores, as well as online. She credits this to the power of brand building.

One year ago, “The Shushybye Show” launched on XM Satellite Radio’s XM Kids channel. Earlier this year, “Shushybye Baby” debuted on the year-old, round-the-clock cable channel BabyFirst TV.

“TV exposure is so important for children’s brands,” Villarreal says. “And once a brand hits that channel, it’s in play.”

For the course of this activity, Syatt came to the conclusion that you can’t build a brand too slowly. “But you can kill a brand by rushing it into national retail before it’s ready,” he says.

With ample activity surrounding Shushybye, Syatt now has his eyes firmly set on lining up a half-hour show for national TV and international distribution. “Music and books are the foundations of the brand, but you must also have other products and TV,” he says.

“I’m doing everything backwards,” Syatt says with a laugh. “I didn’t start with TV, but my way seems to be working for me.”
A Philosophical Approach

Sexton Is The Master Of His Own Domain Onstage

When 2007 winds down, huge-grossing tours like the Police, Tim McGraw / Faith Hill, Kenny Chesney, Genesis and others will generate the headlines, top the year-end lists and deservedly receive much focus. People have a natural inclination to want to know who’s biggest, who’s tops and who makes the most money.

That’s fine. But there is a whole other touring world out there made up of artists under the radar who may never see six zeroes attached to their names, but will still reach thousands of music lovers before they leave the road. They ring up millions of miles and trillions of notes, and they rock the house night after night.

It’s unlikely singer/songwriter and bona fide soul man Martin Sexton will end up anywhere amid the top boxscore charts at the end of the year. But he nevertheless is making beautiful music and receiving his reward. On the Road caught up with Sexton prior to his recent show at Nashville’s mainstay Exit/In, where he shared his worldview on making music.

A question, or some variation thereof, I tend to ask a lot of musicians is how they rank the relative rewards from the career triumvirate of recording, songwriting and playing live. The answer is always intriguing, but Sexton, touring in support of his new record, “Seeds,” was particularly philosophical.

“I definitely prefer live performance over the rest,” Sexton says. “I’ve always loved instant gratification, and it always got me in trouble as a kid.

But Sexton says there is more to his love of live than the ‘selfish applause thing.’ It’s more of a transcendental experience, if you will.

“It does feed my soul, for lack of a better phrase, to have that connection and human communion with other people and to do what I think I was put here on Earth to do from my higher power,” Sexton says. “To express joy and to be an example that there is good in the world.”

Conversely, writing songs can be a bit of a grind for Sexton. “Songwriting is like my homework. That’s sitting down at the dining room table with an English composition in seventh grade,” he says. “That’s the past I’m not crazy about. I love the beginning of the song and the ending of a song, but the middle is a ball-buster.”

Sexton says he can “make up songs in my sleep,” but not full songs, just ideas. “Like, ‘I’m sitting here on the bus and I know that I just must/finish this interview and drink my coffee with you,’ Sex sings, finishing with a be-bop flourish. ‘I can think of melodies and words, but to come up with an actual cohesive song, that’s the hard part.’

Recording, on the other hand, is like an extension of the live show for Sexton. “Late I’ve been taking to recording at my cottage up in the Adirondack Mountains,” he says. “I’m getting spoiled. We smoke brisket and pulled pork, lay down tracks, and the smoke comes through the cabin windows. If we get a little fired up, we just go out and jump in the lake, throw a line in the water.”

Indeed, Sexton’s latest, on his own Kitchen Table Records, does have a loose, organic, cool way we say ‘smokey’ feel to it. ‘That’s the beautiful part about being independent,” Sexton says. “There’s no A&R guy with a cigar saying, ‘I can’t hear the hit.’ No pressure, but it’s a double-edged sword, being your own boss and A&R guy, which I’m not.”

Sexton says he’s very much enjoying independence. “In a world where everything seems to be corporately—if that’s a word—dominated, it feels good to be self-sufficient,” he says. “I am beholden to no one. I don’t need to fix anything to fit a certain format. Yet I can be comfortable wherever I am. I’m not showing up in my three-cylinder Suzuki with dust all over it driving through Texas to get to the coffeehouse.”

Which brings us back to the subject of the live performance mojo. “I believe we are all channels of what I call God’s peace,” Sexton says. “My favorite prayer is the prayer of St. Francis: ‘Let me channel through peace.’ I get stuck, I get in my own way, and I’ve got to flush it out of myself out of my own way. That’s why I love live performance, because on a good night, I can feel myself being just in the right place and doing what I’m supposed to be doing.”

Dang, and all this time we thought people joined rock bands to get rich or, as Keith Richards supposedly once said, “to meet birds.” Amen, brother Martin.
FRESH ARIAS

Classical Music In Germany Takes To The Great Outdoors

BERLIN—Germany’s recent boom in classical music is moving outdoors.

As the first stirrings of summer ripple across Europe’s largest country, market squares, public parks and castle courtyards are scenes of frenzied activity. Construction is beginning on stages and seating for an unprecedented number of outdoor live classical music events.

“We’re experiencing an open-air boom,” says veteran Berlin-based concert promoter Peter Schwenkow, who estimates Germany will stage more than 800 open-air classical concerts this summer, with total audiences exceeding 2 million people. Promoters reckon these shows will generate in excess of €150 million ($202 million) in ticket sales.

Schwenkow is CEO of DEAG, one of Germany’s largest promoters, which set up a dedicated classical concert unit in 2004.

The number of classical music festivals has increased steadily during the past two decades. Local authorities have worked with promoters to organize such events, which are seen as important tourist attractions. According to the government’s German Music Information Center in Berlin, there were 94 classical music festivals in Germany in 1986—by 2006, that had risen to more than 300. (June 30-31). “For a number of years,” he says, “Germany has been enjoying fantastic summers thanks to climate change. So people can experience the flair of Italian summer nights (at outdoor shows) here.”

The surroundings and weather may help attract paying customers, but high ticket prices are the main draw for promoters. DEAG, for example, is offering a €360 ($484) “Golden Circle Ticket” for a June 16 Cologne open-air show by Chinese pianist Lang Lang, guaranteeing prime seats and access to a post-concert champagne reception attended by the artist.

Promoters say ticket prices for classical concerts can generate profit margins two or three times greater than the 3%-5% generated by most pop events, where top prices average €75 ($101). That’s despite the high cost of staging, which, one source says, can exceed €800,000 for a major open-air classical show.

Schwenkow predicts further European-wide growth. In 2006, he plans to stage outdoor shows in Scandinavia, Italy and Spain.

He says, “We are at the beginning of a major international boom in open-air classical music concerts.”
**UPFRONT**

**6 QUESTIONS**
with **CHRIS SMITH**

by **LARRY LeBLANC**

Artist manager Chris Smith grew up in Jamaica before moving to Canada at age 12. Headquartered in Toronto with offices in New York and Kingston, Jamaica, his Chris Smith Management handles Canadian pop artist Nelly Furtado and such urban-styled Canadian acts as Jacksoul, Fefe Dobson, Jarvis Church, Saukrates, Tamia and Kree'asha Turner.

Smith also owns Toronto-based/Universal Music Canada-distributed label Blacksmith Entertainment, with a roster of Divine Brown, Saukrates and Tamia, and the Kingston-based independent label Piwi Music, with a roster including Jamaican reggae artists Courtney John and Ai-Beeno.

Smith says Furtado's Miami-recorded third album, "Loose," has sold some 5 million copies worldwide. In the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan, sales are at 1.75 million, easily outstripping the 419,000 of its 2003 predecessor, "Folklore," but some ways off the 2.47 million for her 2000 debut, "Whoo Nelly!" Furtado kicked off her Get Loose tour in February with 23 European shows. The 17-date U.S. leg began May 30 in Hollywood, Fla.

What are the differences in managing artists today from when you started?

A decade ago, all I had to think about was what was right for my artists and how I could marry my artists to an established and successful system. Because of job insecurity and job instability with major-label staff today, I have to now manage my artists and both create and manage the system. Record companies are doing setups for singles. I'm doing career setups. You can't expect labels to bring things to the table. You have to tell them what can be on the table, and how they can best get out and get it for your artists.

How can the major labels improve that situation?

Labels are chasing market shares and chart positions. They should stop spending stu- pid money on bullshit. They should stop doing favors for their friends by signing their crappy bands. They should stop spending money for ego reasons. These are exciting times if the industry corrects itself. I don't care what the new face of the industry is. I just want to stare it in the eye and say, "Look, I'm in business."

Why tour the States now when "Loose" was released worldwide in June 2006?

The label wanted Nelly to tour the U.S. in the fall, but I felt the marketplace was saturated for her. We're now touring at the riskiest point [in the album's cycle], but four singles later we are still engaged in the marketplace, and fans really need that impression.

How did you plan the release of "Loose"?

I prioritized places that would give her a career build, particularly Europe. I knew that the U.S. would take longer. Still, I knew the U.S. market would have to stay engaged with her. I had her going into the U.S. [for promotion] every quarter. And you fight for [support]. The record company asks, "Why spend $300,000 when Nelly is recouped?" But I'm positioning her.

What challenges did you face with this album?

After "Folklore," we were able to exhale. Nelly had proven everything—musically and emotionally—she needed to on her first two albums. With the third album, the challenge was whether we could have a consistent message that would be viewed by consumers as credible.

Were you worried "Loose" might fail after "Folklore" slumped?

It could have. Nelly and I knew this. But Nelly said to me, "I am giving you my life for one year. Tell me where I should be and I will be there." I literally then packed a bag and left Toronto for the road. I shook every hand and kissed every baby out there. I knew this was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. I now know I contributed to the album's success by keeping everybody engaged and focused.

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**GLOBAL BY MARK SUTHERLAND**

**Brussels Sprouts**

Copyright Conference Emphasizes Digital Issues

BRUSSELS—The CISAC Copyright Summit is set to become a regular event as the confederation of authors' societies seeks to keep copyright at the top of the biz agenda in the digital era.

At the inaugural edition, held recently in Brussels, speakers with the most impact were those who forced the delegates to confront digital issues. British Telecom chief executive Ben Verwoyken, for one, issued a stark warning to rights owners that their century-old business model was on the brink of collapse.

Attendance totaled 582 delegates, from 53 countries. "This massive turnout validates both the concept and the format," said CISAC director general Eric Baptiste, whose Paris-based organization represents 217 authors' societies across the world. "We'll do the analysis in the coming days, but I'd be surprised not to see a second edition of the Copyright Summit sooner rather than later."

Baptiste favors a biennial event, but has not ruled out holding the summit each year. The location will vary with each edition, with Brussels chosen this time due to the crucial role the European Commission, based in the Belgian capital, plays in forthcoming legislation, including copyright term extension. Several prominent EC figures spoke at the summit, including commissioner Jan Figel, member of the EC for education, training, culture and youth.

Most delegates polled by Billboard highly rated the summit's ability to bring together all sides of the copyright debate, although some felt the panel discussions were too large and unwieldy. Meanwhile, the rank and

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**GLOBAL BY AYMERIC RICHEVIN**

**The Right Stuff**

French Biz Expects Sarkozy To Deliver

PARIS—France's May 6 election of Nicolas Sarkozy as president has raised hopes of a new relationship with government for the country's record industry.

"The left-of-center politics generally displayed by the record business might make the right-wing Sarkozy seem an unlikely ally, but the politician's familiarity with its main operators and their concerns is giving the French industry grounds for optimism."

"This is the first French president who actually knows the key players in the music industry," says Hervé Rony, director general of labels body SNEP.

Sarkozy's arrival in the Elysée Palace was marked with a victory party featuring a performance by French rock-'n'-roll legend Johnny Hallyday. At 52, the conservative politician is the country's first leader to have been born in the rock era, some 25 years after his predecessor Jacques Chirac.

"Our first impressions are favorable," Rony says. "Sarkozy has made strong and courageous commitments."

Industry insiders note that in July 2004, as minister of economy and finance, Sarkozy was involved in negotiations that led to French copyright holders and Internet service providers signing a charter aimed at regulating online music services. And in December 2005, as the leader of the conservative UMP party, he successfully took a stance against the proposed introduction of a "global" blanket license that could have enabled end-users to freely download unlimited copyrighted works for a fixed monthly fee. In France, 85% of music and video files are traded freely, according to a February study by consultancy IDATE.

Sarkozy has stated that government has a responsibility to support the music business in troubled times, just as it had previously backed manufacturing industries. Record industry execs say they anticipate initial policies to emerge this fall. While they are confident of Sarkozy's support, sources admit they expect his cabinet to prepare for consumer-pleasing concessions, such as abandoning digital rights management or committing to lowering prices, in return.

Although Sarkozy's office did not respond to a request for comment, Billboard has learned that his representatives have already contacted music business players to prepare a "road map" for the industry. His cabinet expects proposals from the industry "within two to three weeks," says Marc Guez, director general of performing right collecting society SCPP. He praises Sarkozy for "daring to
Beyond Music

Can Trans World Transform Its Business On Time?

Trans World Entertainment is fighting with all its might to evolve from the last large, traditional record-store chain to a full-blown, multimedia entertainment retailer. In the meantime, some are wondering if the rapidly declining music category will drag the company down before it can successfully compete in its transformation.

In its fiscal first quarter ended May 5, Trans World lost $9.2 million, or 29 cents per share, on sales of $286.3 million.

‘From our perspective, we have got to become more important in the videogame category.’

—BOB HIGGINS, TRANS WORLD

lion (billboard.biz, May 24).

During first quarter this year, the Albany, N.Y.-based company experienced a 10% comparable-store decrease, which was fueled by quick dissolving CD sales. On a comp-store basis, music sales were down 21%, Trans World president Jim Litwak reported during a May 24 conference call with Wall Street analysts. Music represented 44% of the chain’s business for the quarter, down from 52% last year.

While Trans World is trying to reduce its exposure to music, the category is falling on its own faster than expected. But that means other higher margin categories can grow. For instance, movie DVD sales, which now comprise 38% of the chain’s business, posted a 6% comp-store gain, Litwak reported; and electronics, accessories and boutique products produced an 11% same-store gain, and now make up 11% of the chain’s overall business.

However, the videogame category, which accounts for only 7% of Trans World’s business, dropped 12% on a comparable-store basis in the first quarter. With marketplace supplies of Nintendo’s Wii still not plentiful, Trans World’s small market share meant a small allotment and lousy replenishment. “From our perspective, we have got to become more important in this category,” chairman/CEO Bob Higgins says. “This is a problem we will fix.”

Meanwhile, the chain continues to evolve. At the end of this quarter, the company plans to test a new prototype store in 25 outlets. “It will be a full entertainment store with an expanded offering in all [nonmusic] categories,” Litwak says. “In addition, the program to reduce its exposure to inventory runs in the 40%-45% range, historical balance sheets show, but at the end of the first quarter, that ratio was 34.5%. Trans World plans to fix that by stepping up returns of slow-moving product.

Trans World is completely healthy on paper—it has plenty of liquidity and a strong balance sheet, with $390 million in shareholders equity. But even so, if the outstanding balance continues to steadily rise and if CD sales keep falling at the same 20% pace throughout this year and into next, Trans World’s bank might not remain comfortable with its revolver commitment.

But here again, Trans World has yet another ace in the hole—even if CD sales fall faster than they already are. At the end of 2007 an astounding 39% of the chain’s store leases expire. So, if things start heading south too quickly, Trans World could still have a chance to stay ahead of the curve by shuttering unprofitable stores.
Banda And Beyond

Veteran Band Refocuses Sound, Tops Chart

When Rogelio Torres first heard a demo of "Mil Heridas," the lead singer of Cuisillos wasn’t sure the band should record the song. Unlike the cumbias and ballads that have been the group’s mainstay for 20 albums, this was an up-tempo ranchera with a big-band feel. “I thought it was a strange song," Torres says with a chuckle. But "‘Mil Heridas’ surprised us and everyone else.”

The song became the group’s first No. 1 on Billboard’s regional Mexican airplane chart in the June 2 issue. This week, "Mil Heridas” is No. 9 on Billboard’s Hot Latin Songs chart, propelling the album of the same name to No 20 on Top Latin Albums.

"Mil Heridas” was composed by Espinosa Paz, a writer with Cuisillos who had never worked but who contributed five tracks to the album. While the Latin Grammy Award-winning band has been a steady seller—its best-selling release, 2003’s "Las Romanticas de Cuisillos,” has sold more than 250,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan—"It was just a matter of time for them to get the single that would take them to the next level in their career,” Balboa Records VP of operations/promotions director Frank White says.

White says the hit has refocused the group’s banda sound, which had leaned more contemporary in recent years. It’s also a jump-start for the label, whose sales have diminished because of piracy, the duanguense craze and the departure of multi-#1 pop star Pepe Aguilar.

In a more coordinated approach this time around, Balboa and its Mexican label Musart released the single simultaneously in both countries. In the United States, White worked it to PDs nationally instead of regionally, asking them well in advance if they thought the song would stick. “Our emphasis was, ‘Whichever single we cut, it is imperative that we cut a hit.’” White says. “We went deeper in researching what is a hit song.”

The promotional single was also put out as a DualDisc with the “Mil Heridas” video, a retro cartoon that White says has received 50,000 hits on the Balboa Records Web site. Entravision’s La Tricolor network PD Napo Sanchez says the song’s less stridently brassy “banda lite” is striking a chord with listeners, as well as the lyrics. "Me, Perez Sanchez observes, “Who hasn’t been wounded once?” —Ayala Ben-Yehuda

SCHOOL FIELD TRIP

A series of six concerts in Mexico concluded the “High School Musical” tour’s first international outing. The trek, presented by CIE with local promoters, hit five countries—Argentina, Chile, Brazil, Venezuela and Mexico—and featured original cast members, including Vanessa Ann Hudgens, Corbin Bleu and Ashley Tisdale. "High School Musical” aired in Latin America on the Disney Channel and became one of the most-anticipated programs in the channel’s history. The album, distributed by Universal, has sold close to 730,000 copies throughout the region. —LC

WHERE RECORDINGS COME FROM

Argentine’s Chamber of Record and Music producers is seeking to curb piracy via a broad educational campaign targeting students. The Todo Empieza con una Canción (It All Starts With a Song) campaign shows high school and university students all stages in the production of a song, from composition to recording. The campaign, which kicked off its 2007 cycle with events in the province of Rosario, brings producers, engineers, label executives and artists to schools. Supported by Argentina’s ministry of education, it is slated to visit other Argentine provinces during the year.

—Leila Cobo

Unknown To Many, Duranguense Group Tops Chart With New Album

Duranguense music continues to be a driving force in regional Mexican music, four years after it exploded on Billboard’s charts.

The bouncy beat, a mix of traditional banda with electronic instruments—originally from Durango, Mexico, but popularized in Chicago—has boosted a handful of acts toward statewide success. The most recent entry is "Ahora y Siempre,” the newest studio album by Alacranes Musical, which debuted at No. 1 on Billboard’s Top Latin Albums chart last week.

On its own, that No. 1 position is not especially surprising. Alacranes’ momentum has been rising steadily. Its last studio album, 2006’s “A Pau to Firm,” debuted at No. 3 on the same chart, while 2005’s “100% Origen” came in at No. 5 and 2004’s “A Cambio de Qué?” at No. 7.

What’s most notable about Alacranes’ accomplishment is the number of units moved—more than 13,000 the first week, according to Nielsen SoundScan. That makes "Ahora y Siempre” the fourth top-selling Latin debut of the year so far, behind Jennifer Lopez, Crescendo and Marco Antonio Solís, and ahead of Juan Luis Guerra and Calle 13.

Granted, Alacranes’ numbers are nowhere near those of Lopez or even Solís. But these are house names in the Latin realm, while for many, Alacranes is an unknown. That’s because the group’s story is not one of flashy media outings, but rather of patient, even plodding work, both in radio and in promotion. "This group has been expanding its awareness with each album," Univision Records marketing VP Gerardo Vergara says. "And they’ve known how to coordinate their promotion with their tours.”

Like most successful regional Mexican acts, Alacranes tours endlessly throughout the year, playing dances virtually every weekend in the United States and in Mexico. A phone call to the group the week after its album’s release found Alacranes playing a gig in Kansas, with another show the following day in Louisville, Ky. The U.S. gigs are usually between 3,000 and 8,000 people. Mexican gigs are usually for crowds of 10,000 plus. While in the past Alacranes scheduled album signings in its home base of Chicago, this time every tour stop is accompanied by record signings with local distributors.

This is in addition to two formal, massive in-store promotions put together by label Univision Records. The visits to the distribution centers in smaller cities are a bonus, highlighting Alacranes’ close connection to mom and pops served by such companies. "They are a band that is willing to do anything that is required of them,” Univision senior VP of A&R and national promotions Manolo Gonzalez says.

The new album’s release was supported by a strong TV campaign on the Univision and Galavision networks, but also by multiple radio festivals, many coinciding with Cinco de Mayo celebrations. The biggest push, perhaps, was that the album’s first single, “Por Amarte Asi,” gained heavy airplay in Los Angeles, an area where Alacranes had never been strong before.

“We all thought the duranguense movement was a regional movement, but truth be told, we were wrong,” says Juan Carlos Hidalgo, PD for regional Mexican station KLAX (97.9 FM) Los Angeles, marveling at the genre’s continued success. In fact, Hidalgo says, KLAX had played Alacranes’ tracks before, but had stuck to acoustic versions. “Por Amarte Asi,” a cover of a ballad originally recorded by Christian Castro, was picked up by Los Angeles’ three regional Mexican stations in its original duanguense beat.

That, Hidalgo speculates, may have pushed people to the stores. After all, he says, “most strong Latin musical movements come from music you can dance to.”

For 24/7 Latin news and analysis, see billboard.biz/latin.

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A Summit

file loudly condemned a debate appearance by Creative Commons founder Prof Lawrence Lessig—who espoused his organization’s copyright licenses, which allow creators to offer their work for free over the Internet.

“You never make peace with your friends,” Baptist said. “I’m not saying that we had any enemies in the room, but we had people who see things differently. It’s only through dialogue that things can advance, even if it’s a rough initial.”

Philippe Kern, Impala founder and head of the key consultancy that advises entertainment companies on European Union affairs, called for future summits to include workshops to hammer out common positions on issues.

“Everyone admits there is a need to change, but the music publishing side [and] authors’ societies are lagging behind,” he said.

Indeed, many label execs might have been surprised at the lack of digital know-how exhibited at times, suggesting the sector is still coming to terms with Web 2.0. A show-of-hands response to a question from Nikesh Arora—Google president for Europe, the Middle East and Africa—suggested that few delegates ever watch music videos online, despite CNDAC’s recent call for YouTube and Myspace to reach conclusions on content licensing and remuneration for copyright owners (billboard.biz, March 2).

Nonetheless, Arora told Billboard that he found the May 30-31 summit useful. “It helps us make sure people understand our point of view,” he said. “The copyright business has gone through change before when radio, TV and video recorders came about, now another rethink is required.”

The summit’s motto was “Creators First,” with songwriters prominent on many panels. Bee Gee Robin Gibb was elected new CISAC president. One panelist, veteran British singer/songwriter Billy Bragg, told Billboard that artists need to lead the search for digital solutions.

“The way that we’ve collected money in the past is under threat,” he said. “And we need to find ways that young people coming into the industry can make a living. But we have to resolve the paradigm that the Arctic Monkeys can have the fastest-selling debut album of all time [in the United Kingdom] after giving all those songs away on the Internet.”

Additional reporting by Leo Cendrowicz

GLOBAL NEWSLINE

EC EXTENDS ITUNES DEADLINE

The European Commission announced June 5 it had extended until June 20 its deadline for Apple and major record companies to respond to anti-trust concerns over iTunes pricing. In April, the EC—the European Union’s antitrust authority—had accused Apple and Sony BMG, Universal Music, Warner Music and EMI Group of possible violation of competition rules through the operation of the iTunes Music Store. The original June deadline was extended at the request of Apple and the labels, an EC spokesman said. The EC has already sent a Statement of Objections to Apple and the four majors listing initial concerns about potential market abuses against alleged territorial restrictions in online music sales.

WELLER IS SILVER CLEFT HONOREE

Paul Weller will be honored during the U.K. music industry’s O2 Silver Cleft Luncheon June 29 in London. The songwriter/guitarist, who formed ’70s and ’80s hitmakers The Jam and the Style Council before becoming a solo artist, will receive the Silver Cleft lifetime achievement award. Seven other awards will be presented during the annual event. Sponsored by O2 for the past six years, the lunchtime gala raises funds for the Nordoff-Robins Music Therapy charity, which uses music to heal and improve the quality of life of impaired adults and children. Last year’s awards raised more than £465,000 ($920,000). The awards are decided by an industry panel.

BABINET QUITS MEF BOARD

Paris-based mobile entertainment entrepreneur Gilles Babinet, founder of mobile music service provider Musiwave, is stepping down from the board of directors of global trade organization Mobile Entertainment Forum. Babinet says rapid growth at his current three mobile ventures—DigiCompanion, Eyeka and MXP4—means he is unable to devote sufficient time to the MEF board. He has now resigned from the board, which he joined three years ago, although he remains a MEF member.

MTV RUSSIA SOLD

MTV’s Russian business has changed hands for $360 million. Wayfarer Media Limited, the holding company of the MTV Russia and VHI Russia TV networks, has been acquired by Estermina, a company acting on behalf of Russian diversified media company Prof-Media. Wayfarer had been 53% owned by Viacom’s MTV Networks International, 42% owned by private equity firm Russia Partners, with the remaining 5% owned by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. MTVNI says it will continue to grant an exclusive license to Wayfarer Media Limited for its MTV and VH1 programming in Russia and their respective online presence. Russia Partners launched MTV Russia in September 1998 through a license agreement with MTVNI. The following year, MTVNI bought a major stake in MTV Russia, which claims its feed is available to 94 million viewers in the Russian Federation and other former Soviet Republics.

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JUNE 16, 2007
Burnout Behind The Counter

Two L.A. Retail Institutions Closing Their Doors

The past few years have been bittersweet for music retail in Los Angeles. The opening of Amoeba Records in 2001 gave the city one of the stronger music outlets in America, but was followed soon by the closings of Arou’s Records and Rhino Records.

Yet indie music fans not wanting to brave the Hollywood traffic to hit Amoeba had an outpost outside downtown in Sea Level Records, run by Silversun Pickups merch manager Todd Clifford. The store arrived as the city’s Echo Park neighborhood was undergoing a revitalization, and stocked a heavily curated catalog (top sellers this month include Silversun Pickups, adventurous guitar rock act Electrolane and avant-folk duo CocoRosie). Yet come the end of this month, the 32-year-old Clifford will close up shop for good.

And that’s not all. Across town in Santa Monica, Calif., Philip Smith will shut the doors of his collectors-focused House of Records, which bills itself as the oldest record store in the city. Smith has run the store since 1991, when he purchased it from owner Jane Hill, who opened the retailer in 1952 as a seller of 78s. She soon added 45s, with a portion of the store’s sales generated by supplying music to customers of Hill’s husband, who owned a jukebox rental company.

Yet it’s neither the advent of downloading—nor the arrival of an indie superstore in Amoeba—that Clifford and Smith cite as the reason for their closing. Clifford’s store, in fact, is having a better sales year last year, when sales were up over those of 2005. In reality, both owners are simply exhausted.

“Obviously, if I would have had tons more sales, I would have had employees and not have to be here all the time and wouldn’t be burned out,” Clifford says. “I wanted to close this a while ago, but I was torn because it should be here. And it should be here, but that doesn’t mean I have to do it.”

Clifford recently spent two months on the road with Silversun Pickups. He says he expected to come back feeling refreshed. Instead, within 15 minutes of walking back into his store, he says he “hated being here.”

Clifford says that when he opened up shop in 2001 he used to love customers. “Now when customers come in, I’m like, ‘just buy it and leave,’ he says. “This isn’t a job where I should wake up and say, ‘I don’t want to go to work.’” Clifford has two friends who are looking to open a new shop in the Sea Level model, but it will likely have to be in a different part of town.

He’s been told his $2,900-per-month rent will be raised to nearly $5,000 once he vacates the premises. “That’s quite a lot of CDs to sell,” Clifford says.

Smith, who didn’t stock new product—unless it was in the form of used advances—admits sales are down in 2007. On top of that, he

Some staff:

Keith Richards could nab $5 million for a tell-all. But what would he call it?

“A Pirate’s Life?”

“Gunslinger?”

“You Don’t Really Expect Me to Remember Any of That Do You?”

Martin Scorsese’s Rolling Stones flick will be called “Shine a Light” and he out Sept. 21. He filmed two nights at New York’s Beacon Theater with a bunch of award-winning cinematographers, so the live stuff will be amazing. Don’t know how much other stuff—interviews or whatever—will be included. I was hoping Scorsese would interview Andrew Oldham—the Stones’ original manager/producer/publicist, who’s got about a thousand great stories—but it hasn’t happened yet.

It will be great no matter what.

As will the remake of “Barbarella,” because the newest coolest director in the world, Robert Rodriguez, will be directing it. He just released the most amazing B-movie, like, ever—“Planet Terror” (even King B Roger Corman would agree), as part of the very cool “Grindhouse,” which he did with Quentin Tarantino. And he should have won something for “Sin City,” but the clowns running OUR Planet Terror are TOO BORING!

Alan McGee, the man of exceptional ears who brought us Jesus and Mary Chain, Oasis and the Libertines (and still manages Dirty Pretty Things and the Charlatans) is walking away from his current record label Popguns, according to the BBC. He also started Creation Records, by the way. But now he says it’s no longer realistically feasible for record labels to profit from new bands.

We say: DON’T DO IT, ALAN! Just as the great bands are not being replaced, the old-school music biz cats will not be replaced just because their old jobs are occupied by mindless talentless bean counters.

We need you to stick around, Alan. Just make the records cheaper and keep fighting the good fight, and suffer for the cause like the rest of us. Or else we’re going to end up with a bunch of robot downloading machines scoring the best chicks at the next Love-In. See you on the radio.
Tony Wilson is difficult to pigeonhole. The veteran British music man is a raconteur, an A&R exec, a scene-builder, a businessman and a celebrity.

"Inspirational, utterly unique, he almost defines the spirit of independent music—a maverick to the point of, well, he’s off the scale," Creation Records founder Alan McGee says of Wilson.

Wilson can now add "fighter" to his list. The Factory Records founder, whose unconventional career was the subject of 2002 feature film "24 Hour Party People," is battling cancer. But the illness hasn’t curbed his zest for music and his commitment to bringing new artists to the fore.

Wilson is bringing his long-running Manchester, England, music conference in the City to New York June 15-16. In signature fashion, Wilson promises hot artist showcases by night and equally hot panel discussions by day. The Happy Mondays, originally signed to Factory, the post-punk label that is now synonymous with the rise of Manchester as a creative hotbed, are confirmed to perform.

"Tony is one of the reasons why Creation became really big and had the biggest group in the world at some point (Oasis)," McGee says. "Tony sat with me when I was a little nobody in 1985. He spent two hours talking about independent music. I probably owe him a check."

On the eve of the City of New York, Billboard sat down with Wilson, who, after all these years and recent health hardships, remains one incredibly colorful music industry vet.

First, I’m sorry. You’ve been ill. How have you been responding to the treatment?

I’m on new medication, and I’m not going to know for sure for another three or four weeks, but I think it’s doing well. Certainly, I’m well compared to what I was on before, which was terrifying. I went through a few weeks in February when I came out of the hospital and thought: "Well, that’s it." It was fucking awful. But I’m not lying in bed. I’m not shaking like an idiot, and I’m not vomiting all the time. So I’m all right. I’ve been groggy every day, but I get through most of my day’s work.

Why did you feel the need to take the City to New York?

Originally, it was [AEG Live senior VP] Bob Hallett’s idea. About two years ago, we ran into each other at Coachella and we talked about the declining special relationship between British music and the U.S., which occasionally has bips and bops like it has in the last two months. He said, ‘Why don’t you A&R a British Invasion-type event? Why don’t we construct something?’ We’ve always thought a lot of money in the British industry is wasted on taking two dozen bands to South by Southwest and watching them get lost, by and large, in a sea of 1,500 bands. It seemed to be an interesting idea to have a focused new British talent event. I thought it would be nice to do it in New York and return to our spiritual home.

Do you believe the time is ripe for the next wave of British talent?

Yes. I do. I think there’s some very good stuff around at the moment. The band I am most excited about bringing to New York—because they’re my favorite band in the world—is Enter Shikari. I think there’s a real chance for British music to reinvent and establish itself. It just needs one or two major acts to come through.

There were plans for an In the City in Perth, Australia. Will that ever happen?

We still want to do Perth, because we think it is a wonderful opportunity. But in a way, that’s been delayed by my illness. We think people have tried to do Pacific Rim conferences before in Singapore and Hong Kong. But, in a way, they didn’t work, because neither is a music city.

What will be the hot button issues at the City of New York?

We presumed that the debate about [digital rights management] will reach another level. If ever there was a time to talk about things like DRM and the way the industry is changing so rapidly, this is one of those times.

Where do you weigh in on the DRM debate?

I personally would like to see it go. I think many senior executives would like to see it go, too.

Whatever happened to the fourth incarnation of Factory, F4? Are you still running it?

Nope. Basically, I took £30,000 ($59,000) of two backers’ money. Very sweet people who believed in me, and I put my money where my heart was. I absolutely believed in grime [music]. I absolutely believed in [signing] Raw-T. But in the end, for 100 reasons, it didn’t work.

Is the record business still a good place to be?

Yes, if you find a great band. The reason myself and my mates coped with our ridiculous way of behaving for 15 years was because we began and ended with two great bands. If you have a great band, it’s fine.

You’ve been involved in the Joy Division film, “Control,” as a co-producer. What did you think of the final product?

I know it was hysterically received in Cannes, but I’ve been so ill that I’ve not seen it.

What did you make of Steve Coogan’s performance of yourself in “24 Hour Party People”?

Oh, I loved it. Basically, I’m a complete twat, but he played me as an affable fool, which is very sweet. I’m not really an affable fool, but I’m very happy to be portrayed as such. Whenever movie people touch my business of rock’n’roll, they tend to fuck it up. They make a terrible mess of it in one way or another. But I am so proud of “24 Hour Party People” because it is very funny. I am now a celebrity in America because of that film, which is bizarre.

Factory Records featured Joy Division, which morphed into dance-oriented New Order, which has apparently split for good. Can you see New Order ever reuniting?

Possibly—that is, if [bassist Peter Hook] Hunky shuts his mouth for long enough. They were recently asked to do a gig; they all said yes, except Hunky who said, “I will only do it if we call it New Order’s farewell concert.” At which point, [drummer] Steve [Morris] said, “For fuck’s sake, forget this.” I would listen to Steve.

What is vexing you at the moment?

When I see great back catalog albums selling for £4 ($7.90). That really, really pisses me off. I also hate cheap packaging. I hate that the industry has forgotten how to make a product memorable. You worry why you’re not selling CDs. It’s because you fucked it, you idiots. The sheer foolhardiness of people.

You’ve been called many things over the years. What would you call yourself?

An enthusiast.
WITH HIS NEW SINGLE DANCING UP THE CHARTS,
CHRIS BROWN SHRUGS OFF THE NOTION OF A SOPHOMORE SLUMP

BY GAIL MITCHELL
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JENNIFER TZAR

JUNE 18, 2007
He’s always bouncing, singing, dancing, just moving in one way or another—this is well-known to anyone who’s spent more than a few minutes in his presence. Recently, the young singer channeled that energy in Atlanta with songwriter/producer Sean Garrett. The two were at work recording a track for Brown’s follow-up to his self-titled debut album.

As Brown played with Diamond, his pitbull puppy, the two tossed around ideas for tracks. Twenty minutes later, Garrett had written a hook that popped into his head, and the two were well on their way to finishing the song “Wall to Wall.”

Then it was Brown’s label Jive’s turn to be fidgety (the album will be released on Jive/Zomba). In early May, a few weeks after the recording session—nearly four full months before the Aug. 28 street date of Brown’s next album, “Exclusive”—“Wall to Wall” leaked to New York’s WQHT (Hot 97).

“I didn’t know we were going to surprise [Jive] like that,” Garrett says of “Wall,” which unexpectedly became the “Exclusive” first single. “But it’s giving us a great kickoff. Chris was ready to go. He’s antsy.”

So was radio—to start playing the single. The song has climbed for five straight weeks on Billboard’s Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart, placing at No. 22 this issue.

Acknowledging that the Jive team wasn’t exactly thrilled by the leak, manager Tina Davis says, “My thought was to get my artist in here and go. It’s not like Chris was on the same date as [labelmates] R. Kelly or T-Pain. But if we had waited three to four weeks longer, he would have been on top of another release. Look at all the male artists out now. It’s more about the record than having a big launch.”

When Brown’s first album was released, the label had a pretty clear playing field on which to develop the new artist. Justin Timberlake was still working on sophomore set “FutureSex/LoveSounds” as was Ciara with “Promise,” both of which were released last year. Besides Brown, Jive boasts an enviable hot plate between Kelly (May 29) and T-Pain (June 5) followed by rising rap newcomer Lil’ Mama—not to mention fourth-quarter projects by Usher and Britney Spears.

In a music industry climate where the term “career artist” is becoming a rare commodity, Brown and Davis are fervently committed to bucking that notion by way of a methodical game plan, geared to propel him from teen singer to songwriter/producer to all-around adult entertainer.

The early signs, thanks to “Wall to Wall,” are good—little surprise to those who watched Brown burst on the scene in November 2005 with the runaway R&B/pop crossover hit “Run It!”. Six weeks after its debut, his self-titled solo album struck platinum, and the album went on to yield four top 10 hits (see sidebar, page 25).

On one hand, Jive is pleased with the early success. “We were at a point where we would have had to put out a single within the next several weeks,” Jive VP of urban marketing Lisa Cambrige says. “This definitely put us on an accelerated timeline. But opposed to his starting out two years ago, Chris is now playing the anchor to a lot of things that have already been set up.”

Of course, things weren’t totally copacetic with the label. Jive had to push the recording deadline up a few weeks, to June 29.

“It helps and at the same time it puts more pressure on us to get everything else done,” says Mark Pitts, president of urban music for Zomba Label Group. “Instead of six weeks we’ve got three weeks to get the final record.”

“We’re at the mercy of the big producers’ schedules now,” Davis says of completing songs with Pharrell, Kelly, Justin Timberlake and Timbaland. “But we’ll figure it out.”

SITTING STILL ISN’T ON Chris Brown’s to-do list.

At one point early on a February night, he and a friend are playing a football videogame on the wall-mounted TV screen adorning a side room in Los Angeles’ Chalice Recording Studio; manager Davis’ miniature pinchers, Yoshi and Yoko, scamper in and out. The next moment, Brown is busy trying on custom-designed hoodies by a local entrepreneur named Smoek who also happens to cut hair and will later tend to Brown’s mini-Mohawk.

With the arrival of songwriter/producer Bryan Michael Cox, an ensemble of 10-12 folks—including Davis and Cox’s frequent collaborator—Adonis Shropshire—saunter into the recording studio. Brown, who’s on vocal rest, is previewing for Billboard several tracks being considered for “Exclusive.”

If first-time nominee Brown is disappointed about not winning a Grammy Award a few days before, it doesn’t show. Once the rock-edged bass of the Cox-produced submission “Fallen Angel” fills the studio, Brown morphs into a dancing machine. Stationed at the far end of the studio, his tall, lanky frame gyrates and swirls in a smooth sequence of slides, twists and turns as he mouths the song’s lyrics.

Grabbing someone’s felt hat off a table, the urban-styled Fred Astarie in low-slung jeans slickly incorporates it into his impromptu routine, alternately donning and tossing it up without missing a beat. Once the run-through of about 10 songs ends, a still wound-up Brown bounces back into the hallway and flips into a series of handstands.

If infectious romp “Wall to Wall” and the other incubating tracks are any indication, Brown will skip over the dreaded sophomore jinx.

Brown himself dismisses the notion of such pressure. “I’m doing this to the best of my ability, just having fun. It’s like a family reunion.”

That’s because early into the process, Davis and Pitts decided to reteam Brown with many of the same producers from the first album before stretching out a little more to the left.

“The first thing we discussed was regardless of the first album’s success, Chris is still a new artist,” says Pitts, who A&R’d the first project. “‘We didn’t want to go too far left or too right for his nutrient.’

Back onboard, in addition to Cox and Garrett, are Dre & Vidal, Scott Storch and the Underdogs. Coming in as part of the expansion team are Will.i.am, T-Pain, Stargate, Timberlake and Timbaland, Kelly and Pharrell.

Containing elements of rock and go-go—the latter a nod to Brown’s Virginia/Washington, D.C., roots—the previewed tracks definitely display Brown’s juggling act between edgy/more mature while still satisfying the radio programmers and fans.
behind his success. The mix of uptempo and ballads is in keeping with Brown's energetic fusion of R&B, hip-hop and pop.

The final decision as to which tracks will make the cut won't be made until after the label's recording deadline. But aside from "Fallen Angel" (co-written by Brown and Shipurette), several songs elicited praise from the studio gallery that L.A. night. One was another Cox-produced joint. "Diagnosed With Love," a midtempo number whose piano intro segues into spirited bass and hand-clap accompaniment. Calling the Underdogs-produced (and Brown co-penned) midtempo cut "Dak You Down" his "grown record," Brown then jumps back into dance mode on the frenetic, syncopated drum, bass and horns that comprise William's production of "Picture Perfect," which Brown co-wrote with Tank and Will.i.am.

Brown also played a rough cut of a gospel-oriented message song, "Save Me," co-produced by David Banner and Warren Campbell. Co-writer Brown envisions adding Mary Mary and a gospel choir on the song, which he says "made me cry" after he finished penning it.

Whatever songs make the cut, Brown—signed to Universal Music Publishing Group—says he's not trying to be too grown (he turned 18 on May 5 with a celeb-dotted party at the 40-40 Club in New York). "I'm trying to be a little more mature in my songs, talking about sexuality and other subjects. But I'm not going overboard."

Indeed, Brown exudes heartthrob sex appeal that is raw enough to keep young female fans screaming yet safe enough to win over their parents. Factor in his eye-catching footwork and the result is a total package that early on drew comparisons to Michael Jackson and Usher.

"He was a real 15-year-old when I signed him," Pitts says. "He wasn't trying to be 21 or older. He represented something that was refreshing."

It was Brown's real-deal essence that caught the attention of Davis. When she met the 15-year-old Tappahannock, Va., native, she was working as senior VP of A&R at Def Jam. "The first thing that hit me was his unique voice," Davis recalls. "There was nothing like that on the radio. And he was a handsome young man who could dance his butt off. I thought, 'This kid is a star.'"

After nailing an audition for Island Def Jam chairman Antonio "L.A." Reid, Brown was set to sign with the label when a staff restructuring left Davis without a gig. When Brown asked her to be his manager, Davis began shopping him to other labels, including Warner Bros. and Atlantic. Jive, thanks to a proven promotional track record with teen acts (Spear's, 'N Sync, Backstreet Boys) and a provision for Brown's schooling, sealed the deal.

Pairing Brown with savvy songwriter/producers was the next step in Davis' game plan. Drawing on relationships cultivated during her 10-year tenure at Def Jam, she enlisted Storch, the Underdogs, Cool and Dre and Dre & Vidal as well as Cox and Garrett to capture—but not stratjacket—Brown's charismatic energy.

"Run It!" produced by Storch, who co-wrote the dance ditty with Garrett, became a Billboard Hot 100 multiple-week chart-topper. It led off a parade of hits singles from Brown's first album: "Yo (Excuse Me Miss)," "Gimmie That" and the ballad "Say Goodbye" (later featured on the "Step Up" movie soundtrack).

Though "Gimmie That" was a favorite of Brown and Davis—she says they went with "Run It!"—because they felt it had more crossover potential, "Gimmie That" was more hip-hop but "Run' was the bigger record. And we chose Juelz Santana, one of Chris' favorite rappers, over a higher-profile rapper because we didn't want Chris to be overshadowed as 'that new kid' with the big-name artist."

That was the next step in cementing Brown's foundation. For a young artist, he has spent an inordinate amount of time on the road honing his live stage presence—an art that's largely become lost in R&B/hip-hop. Talking last year about being on the road (Billboard, June 24, 2006), Brown said, "I love it. I can't even complain; that's the main thing I love to do."

Repped by Dennis Ashley at ICM, he quickly graduated to co-headliner status last year for the national Up Close & Personal tour, a 32-date package also featuring Lil' Wayne, Ne-Yo, Dem Franchise Boyz and Juelz Santana. It went on to become one of the most successful urban tours in 2006.

Between May 1 and Sept. 30, 2006, 25 Brown shows netted $7.3 million and attracted 219,905. The next closest act after that during the same time period was the Black Eyed Peas with 23 shows earning $5.8 million and attracting 194,927 attendees.

The result is an artist who, in a short time, comes off as a seasoned vet and knows how to entertain his audiences.

"There was a commitment early on to build Chris as a live act," Jive's Cambridge says. "He's been doing an hour to 90 minutes a night, a first album."

Davis adds, "If he's breathing heavy and tired, he's still going to give it to you natural and raw. He wants to sing so it sounds like the record."

"When we pitched the album, he didn't want Chris to put on a clean-cut image. He wanted to go with a message in terms of his artistry. It wasn't about Chris, it was an artist."

"He wants Chris to be the best he can be," Davis notes. "That's the direction he's moving in. He's not comfortable being too clean-cut."

Davis presented the focus of this model to her label boss. "We pitched a tour, an album and the music. We talked about how to get ahead. We talked about what the fans wanted to hear."

"He's a 21-year-old kid who was just thrown into the spotlight," Davis says.

"It was a unique model," Davis notes. "We thought, 'Let's go to Billboard, get the song up there, let's do the performance, let's get it on TV and let's talk about it.'"

"We went to a radio station and said, 'Hey, we have this song that needs to go out.' We went to a concert and promoted it."

"I've never had a situation where you can make one decision and the next decision is the same," Davis says. "You kind of go with the flow."

Still, Davis says the plan was to "build that live side of Chris" while retaining Chris' "authenticity and the rawness."

"We did a lot of sessions with producers and writers to make sure they understood what Chris was about."

"I'm a more perfectionist, but how do you do that in a live setting? "I'm going to throw in a little bit of this, a little bit of that. It's a different dynamic."

"We tried to make sure that Chris was really comfortable with what he was doing."

"I'm just trying to be as quiet as possible and not talk right now," he whispers. But that relentless energy still filters through as he talks about the sophomore bar he and labelmate T-Pain are trying to raise. "My last album was rockin'. I just want to keep moving and building. T-Pain and I are the underdogs who have something to prove. We're the dynamic duo coming hard."

"As for what else the future holds for Brown, Cox says the young talent has kicked the door wide open.

"I haven't seen someone as enthused and energetic about work since Beyoncé. It's a superstar producer," says Chris Brown at 25 is going to be . . . I'll be scared to see him."
Any world music industry? It may be hard to fathom, but just 20 years ago that was the case.

True, there were international artists, ranging from the Indian classical sitar maestro Ravi Shankar to Zimbabwean rock-'n-rollers the Bhumbo Boys, who were enjoying commercial success. But there was no designated world music sector of the business.

Today the genre boasts an infrastructure that includes a global network of labels and distributors and its own specialist publications and festivals. Since 1990, it has boosted its own Billboard chart (Top World Albums); since 1991, it has been recognized with its own Grammy Award category; and since 2001, by the BBC Radio 3 Awards for world music (now rebranded as the Planets). The genre also sustains an annual trade fair, WOMEX, now in its 14th year, attended by more than 2,000 world music industry professionals. And perhaps most impressively, there’s no single worldwide accounting for world music sales: it appears that the sector is weathering the current music industry storm rather well.

World music is probably in the healthiest state it’s ever been in, says Paul Vallantis, genres specialist for the e-commerce division of HMV, the United Kingdom’s market-leading retailer. HMV sold slightly less than half a million world music-related titles in the financial year 2004-2005—their highest mark since 2000-2001, when they sold more than a million.

Meanwhile, online content manager for music with rival retailer Virgin, confirms that world music now outsells almost all other specialist genres in the United Kingdom, including folk, blues, and even country. “Although there are no official stats, world music probably now accounts for about 2% of the entire market,” he says. In world music’s other leading European markets such as France, Germany and Holland, a broadly similar pattern applies.

Statistics according to Nielsen SoundScan data and comparing figures from 2002 and 2006, world music sales declined by 13.07%. In percentage terms, it held up better than jazz (-30.57%), new age (-52.25%) and the overall market (-13.65%).

Because of its niche status, with sales often coming through nonmainstream specialist retailers or on import, accurate figures for world music’s market share are not widely available. Emphasizing that fact, London-based world music magazine Roots editor Ian Anderson says, “When I was managing Tarika from Madagascar in the 1990s and they toured a lot in the U.S., the rule of thumb was that SoundScan only showed about a third of sales—and that was pre-Net explosion.”

Yet in industry terms, geographical boundaries have come to mean little in world music. “World music labels have changed the way records are sold internationally,” renowned U.K. broadcaster Charlie Gillett says. “Instead of being left to local territories to make a decision on release, there’s now a global infrastructure of specialist distributors so labels such as Holland’s World Connection and Belgium’s Crammed can be automatically available worldwide.”

Anderson suggests the world music market is “gently cyclic and undulating” with the occasional Buena Vista Social Club-style peak—the veteran Cuban act’s self-titled 1997 album, released on World Circuit, has sold roughly 7 million copies worldwide, according to the label. Anderson draws a comparison with the blues scene in the United Kingdom from the ’60s onward. “Initially, blues albums were only found in a handful of import shops,” he says. “Then there was a small blues boom circa 1964 and a big one 1968-1969, and blues was everywhere. After that it fell back, but the trough was much higher than the starting point, and most retailers by then had a blues section.”

Indeed, an ever-expanding roll call of world music acts, from the South African choir Ladysmith Black Mambazo to the blind Malian duo Amadou & Mariam and Senegalese superstar Youssou N’Dour, have also crossed over to enjoy mainstream chart success (see sidebar, page 28).

Not that chart placings in the pop marketplace are the true measure of world music’s achievement, according to Gillett. “World music was never about creating a new bunch of global pop stars,” he says. “The most significant accomplishment has been to establish a genre that can stand alongside such specialist genres as jazz and classical. Some people feared world music...
would become a ghetto. It hasn’t. It has opened things up.”

Musically, after a long period of Cuban dominance of the re-release schedules following the phenomenal success of Buena Vista, much current interest is focused on gypsy styles from Eastern Europe and the Balkans, regions that due to the Cold War were virtually closed to the international music industry 20 years ago. First to emerge were Romania’s Taraf de Hadiaouks on the Grammed label in the mid-’90s, but they have been followed by a vast array of further gypsy bands, such as Fanfare Ciocarla and Mahala Rai Banda.

Yet it is Africa—and Mali and Senegal in particular—that has consistently produced much of the genre’s success. Last year’s successes included Ali Farka Touré’s Grammy-winning “Savane” (World Circuit/Nonesuch) and “Dimanche a Bamako” (Because) by Amadou & Mariam. Produced by Manu Chao, the latter reached No. 2 in France, was nominated for a Grammy and, according to Jenny Adlington, U.K. label manager of Paris-based Because Music, has to date sold 200,000 copies internationally. “The record is still moving,” she says. “They’ve been asked by the Scissor Sisters to support them on tour in July, which will give the album a fresh impetus.”

Next up from Because is the long-awaited new studio album from the maverick Chao, whose 1998 set “Claustrofito” (Virgin) sold 3 million internationally, according to the label. The album, title still unconfirmed, is due in late August.

However, according to HMV’s Valiants, the biggest album of 2007 to date has been Saharan political guitar group Tinariwen’s “Aman Iman (Water Is Life),” a first venture into world music for U.K. indie rock label Independiente, whose roster includes Travis, Gomez and Embrace. “All their albums have been successful, but this one has come over,” Valiants says. “People like Damon Albarn and Radiohead’s Thom Yorke have been name-checking it, the label did a tremendous job on it, and there was a brilliant press campaign. But, crucially, it’s an absolutely fantastic record.”

To date the album, produced by Robert Plant’s guitarist Justin Adams, has sold 48,000, mostly in the United Kingdom, according to manager Andy Morgan. Outside the United Kingdom, the campaign has yet to gather

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We Accidentally Created A Genre

The Birth Of World Music Revisited

Twenty years ago this month, a group of industry professionals representing a handful of specialist independent labels met in a small nondescript room above a run-down London pub to discuss how to promote, market and sell music from outside the Anglo-American pop axis to a western audience.

Over warm English beer and a few desultory-looking plates of sandwiches, they spent a night coming up with the blueprint for a campaign that was to dramatically transform the way such records were retalied—and a new term to describe them. That term was “world music.”

Twenty years later, the pub is an upscale fish restaurant and world music as a genre has grown to generate such multimillion-selling acts as the Buena Vista Social Club, Cesaria Evora, Ladysmith Black Mambazo and Manu Chao. Yet it was not always so.

“What we now call ‘world music’ has always existed,” says Charlie Gillett, founder of the ongoing Oval Records, and a renowned author, music historian and broadcaster. “But in 1987 there wasn’t an identifiable section to browse through in record stores. Before the term was created, people simply didn’t know where to look for these records.”

Oval Records was one of nine labels represented at that historic meeting on June 29, 1987, at the Empress of Russia pub in London’s St. John Street. Also present were Globestyle, Crammed, Hannibal, Rogue, Sterns, Triple Earth, WOMAD and World Circuit. A number of other labels including Earthworks, Discs ‘Afrique, Cooking Vinyl and Topic Records were unable to attend but pledged support.

The meeting was convened by Roger Armstrong, the affable Irish-born director of London-based Ace Records, where he still resides in 2007. A highly respected record company man who had tasted mainstream success in the 1970s when his Ch-swick Records label enjoyed hits with acts like the Damned and Sniff ‘n the Tears, he had moved into what was about to become known as world music when he co-founded Globestyle as a specialist subsidiary of Ace in 1985. “Some of us were in awe of Roger because he was one of the few people present who had actually sold records in serious quantities,” recalls Amanda Jones, then editor of the fledgling WOMAD Records and now label manager at Real World.

Armstrong’s mailed invitation described the gathering as an “international pop label meeting” and set out an agenda including “identifying the target audience,” “how to deal with retail” and—most importantly—“adoption of a campaign/media title.”

Shortly after 7 p.m. on that warm Thursday evening, Armstrong opened the meeting with a fluent account of the importance of creating a generic name for music by international acts, in order to give it a focus and identity at the point of sale. There was little, if any, disagreement. “Everybody thought it was a good idea because it was clear that there was something happening if we could just get the door open,” recalls Joe Boyd, founder of Hannibal Records, now an author and broadcaster.

According to Armstrong, other names under consideration included “world beat,” “tropical,” “ethnic,” “roots” and “international pop.” After an hour, he called for a show of hands, when “world music” garnered more votes than the rival suggestions combined.

According to Iain Scott, then director of Triple Earth Records and now a label manager with compilation specialist Union Square, the initial aim was not to create anything as grand as a new genre. “The objective was simply to target more efficiently those who might buy music from outside their own culture, whether from Africa, South Asia or Latin America,” he says.

Thomas Brooman, director of the WOMAD festival for the last 25 years but who worked with Armstrong on that campaign, says the label sold a similar recollection. “We knew there was a grass-roots audiences for our music but the road block was distribution,” he says. “What we needed was a banner to rally behind. But in a brand-donousious world, we accidentally created a genre.”

Oddly, nobody present remembers who formally proposed the term “world music.” According to Ian Anderson, editor of monthly specialist magazine fRoots, who at the time was running Rogue Records, it was one of several terms that had been floating around for a number of years. So why was it adopted over the other names? “It seemed to include the most and omit the least,” he says.

Ben Mandelson, co-founder of Globestyle Records, who minuted the meeting and is now a producer and musician, agrees. “World music was the most vague and inexpensive term on offer.”

Mandelson and many others recall a strong spirit of cooperation. Anderson’s persuasive advocacy of teamwork resulted in all of the labels involved agreeing to pool resources to fund a combined marketing push around the newly adopted term.

A few days after the meeting, a joint press release announced: “It was agreed that the term ‘world music’ would be used by all labels present to offer a new and unifying category for shopracking, press releases, publicity handouts and ‘file under’ suggestions. This means that you no longer have to worry about where to put those new Yemenite pop, Bulgarian choir, Zairian soukous or Gambian kora records.”

The campaign mobilized its early critics. “There was a lot of negative responses flying around,” Boyd says.

Two weeks after the initial meeting, a second gathering was held to consider reaction.

“There was opposition from some quarters,” Gillett says. “The Bhuodu Boys, who were on Cooking Vinyl and selling a lot of records, were getting kicked in the mainstream pop/rock section and definitely didn’t want to be in a world music box. But fears that we were creating a ghetto were pretty swiftly dispelled.”

Indeed, such resentments were ultimately doused by the campaign’s success, although its initial aims were modest in the extreme. “Le Mystere des Voix Bulgares and Ladysmith Black Mambazo had maybe sold 100,000 by then,” Boyd says. “But mostly we were trying to get sales up from the hundreds into the thousands. To go from that to World Circuit selling 7 million copies of Buena Vista Social Club was something nobody foresaw.”

Set against the sophisticated marketing techniques of today, the 1987 campaign perhaps appears naive. As Jones puts it: “We created a name and made a browser card which we physically sent out to record shops. It wasn’t rocket science.”

Yet arguably it was the campaign’s very simplicity that made it so effective. “It generated a climate of interest so that by 1989 Peter Gabriel could take the idea of a world music label to Virgin Records for a distribution deal,” Jones adds. “They could see the potential of the artists we had like Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. In fact, it was Virgin who suggested naming the label Real World.”

Simon Coe, who in 1987 was product manager for the Virgin Retail chain and is now online content manager for music at the company, also attests to the campaign’s success. “All credit to that group because they got the name just right,” he says. “Twenty years on a lot of the labels are still going and are featured heavily in our stores and online, which says a lot about the passion and motives of the people involved.”

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momentum but Morgan has adopted a strategy of cherry-picking different distribution partners in each territory, including World Village in the United States, where Tinariwen will tour in September. He couldn't imagine how a project like this could sit happily in a major label worldwide. They just wouldn't know what to do with it," he says. World Circuit remains the sector's leading independent (although released via Nonesuch in the States). In addition to Buena Vista Social Club, Missy Mauve's roster includes such African acts as the late Ali Farka Touré, Oumou Sangare, Orchestra Baobab and Toumani Diabaté (whom Björk flew to Mali to collaborate with on her current album, "Vetapu").

Other labeling deals include Real World, started by Peter Gabriel in 1989, and Honest Jon's, set up by Blur/Gorillaz singer Damon Albarn. The role of pop star converts to the world music cause has been significant, and both Gabriel and Albarn used their leverage as high-earning, long-running EMIs to get the company to bankroll their respective labels.

"Albarn really likes the world music," Albarn says. "Whenever it comes up, it's all just music isn't it? Hopefully that's what Honest Jon's is about—to open a few doors to what's out there." The label has to date put out Albarn's own African-recorded album "Mali Music" as well as a range of other West African releases.

For forthcoming releases from Real World Records include new albums by Uzbek singer Suvazar Nazarkhan and Toumani, a group of Tuareg tribesmen from the Sahara desert (see sidebar, below). "Prospects for world music record sales may be diminishing as they are everywhere else, but I really do feel the label is going through some sort of rhythm at the moment," Gabriel says. "I actually feel very lucky because I stick to the childlike belief that if the music is good, it will eventually find an audience."

Despite the tie-up with EMI of such labels as Real World and Honest Jon's, world music remains a genre dominated by independents, many of which act as feeders for the majors in large part. Among the most successful names discovered by independents and subsequently snapped up by majors have been Cape Verdean diva Cesaria Evora, who moved from Luanda to BMG, Yousou N'Dour, who has his own label based in Senegal, but who at different times has been signed to Virgin, Colombia and currently Nonesuch, and Portuguese fado star Mariza, discovered by the Dutch-based World Connection label but now working with EMI in the U.K.

All these acts are fueling a robust live experience. According to WOMB director Thomas Brooman, in 1987 the festival MANU CHAO will release his next album later this summer.

val was a single U.K.-based event that attracted 4,000 fans. In 2007, WOMAD festivals are staged in seven countries, and the U.K. event alone has sold 25,000 tickets.

The audience has also dramatically broadened its profile. Gillett describes the initial world music constituency as "older music buyers who were "refugees from pop music."

"If you look at a WOMAD audience today, it's now completely multi-generational," Brooman says. "A lot of people who will be at WOMAD this year weren't born when we started."

Valianta attributes much of this to increased radio and TV exposure, citing the high profile of the Planet and "Later... With Jools Holland." The BBC's flagship music TV show that features a world music act on almost every program.

As in every other sector, the Internet has had a profound impact on the way world music is promoted and delivered. "We've now got lords from the Sahara desert with their own MySpace sites," Maniak says.

Digital music distributor the Orchard says world music accounts for more than 10% of the company's sales and is growing quickly as a category.

The Internet's elimination of manufacturing and logistics issues is making non-Western artists that have never had distribution available for the first time. For example, Indian classical Santoor player Shiv Kumar Sharma's "Elements-Water" is in iTunes' World Music top 10 for several months last year, but never released physically in the US States save for 17 copies initially at specialty retail.

Even for world titles released in the States digital sales can be high. Digital sales of Nu-Med's "Balkan Beat Box" (fj Dula Records) topped 40%.

"What has traditionally been known as world music will enjoy exponential growth as digital continues to evolve," the Orchard CEO Greg Scholl says.

However, Scholl maintains that world music will be less of a branded category in the digital space, as niche retailers grow and create increasingly granular experiences for fans of different genres.

"Before too long music will be offered according to its core genre names and not by world music," he says. "That is going to be fueled by capital in investments and increased sophistication from a marketing perspective."

Additional reporting by Brian Garrie.
Interpol has always been a band with a dark—some might even say twisted—sensibility. "There's No I in Threesome," a track from the band's new album "Our Love to Admire," due July 10, is a particularly fine reminder of this, turning on perfectly deadpan lines like, "Babe, it's time we give something new a try/There's no I in threesome and I'm all for it."

But lead vocalist/guitarist Paul Banks isn't the only one with team spirit. "One thing about us that's been consistent is that it's not just one guy making decisions, it's always four people," founder/lead guitarist Daniel Kessler says. "That's the only way we can exist.

That unified, self-contained stance helped guide the quartet, which includes bassist/keyboardist Carlos "D" Dengler and drummer Sam Fogarino, in its decision to leap from independent label Matador to Capitol in the summer of 2006.

"Like any decision we make, it was based around the fact that nothing is going to change between these four people. All of our decisions come down to us making them together," Kessler says, "and we weren't going to alter the way we do things."

Major labels had been in hot pursuit of Interpol for years. Capitol reportedly first approached the band before it had signed with Matador, in 2001, but interest escalated after the band's second full-length 2004's "Antics," matched the success of its predecessor, 2002's "Turn on the Bright Light, Its."

To date, both records have shifted around 440,000 copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Capitol's VP of marketing Sharon Larder says she personally was involved in talks with the band that started more than two years ago. "We continued to meet with them regularly. It was a labor of love, to be honest.

"Interpol had a lot to consider when its Matador contract expired. Besides having a decent following, the group's sound practically helped define the second coming of indie rock."

But in the time since "Antics," Interpol has seen several of its peers, including such New York contemporaries as TV on the Radio and Yeah Yeah Yeahs, make the major label move without any near-inflatable backing, and Capitol itself has already secured hip-hop acts like Port and Omni's Decem, artists and the United Kingdom's Lily Allen.

The real deciding factors for choosing Capitol were the size and quality of the roster, says Interpol manager Dave Holmes, who came onboard about 18 months ago. "With Radiohead especially, Holmes says, "they were impressed with how Capitol in the U.S. had handled them."

Kessler says Interpol made "the exact same record we would have made on Matador. We made it in the same studios we would have, with the same people, and it has the same sound and look."

Although "Our Love" finds Interpol making greater use of keyboards on expansive, expressive tracks like "Pioneer to the Falls" and "The Lighthouse," the album is mostly true to form, with characteristic melodic bass, reverberant guitar, straight-ahead drumming and moody vocals dominating.

So why not just stick with Matador? Holmes says the band "wanted to have a greater push globally. Matador was only their label in North America and they had to work with different partners overseas. They wanted to have one global entity pushing them with equal strength around the world.

In the States, first single "The Heinrich Maneuver" is already No. 19 on Billboard's Modern Rock chart and is also being worked to triple-A radio, a first for the group. A deluxe version of the CD, featuring a hard-back, 24-page book expanding on the provocative animal-dioramas photography done for the album, is due out the same day as the standard edition. Additionally, a gatefold vinyl release is on the slate, and, in a twist, will come bundled with the CD.

Lord says Capitol is making a seven-inch single "specifically to take care of the indie accounts," which will include "Heinrich" and a B-side. Lastly, a still-to-launch pre-order campaign from iTunes will include bonus track "Mind Over Time."

Now in the midst of a European run, Interpol returns to the States in mid-July and again in Sept. 10, with overseas dates in between.

A "Late Show With David Letterman" appearance is slated for street date. Lord says, and TV spots, a "big" online advertising campaign incorporating viral video and special fans-only events are also in the works.

But even with all the activity Capitol has swirling for "Our Love," Kessler says the band is staying unified and focused. "We sort of have the attitude that whatever comes, comes. We'll just keep doing what feels right to us."
Rap Without Rhyme

Beastie Boys Throw Fans A Curveball With All-Instrumental Album

Long known for their relatively epic waits between studio releases, the Beastie Boys surprised fans this spring with the announcement that their new record would arrive a scant three years after 2004’s “To the 5 Boroughs.” But the Beastie Boys are also long-known for sudden stylistic left turns, and shortly thereafter, they revealed the album would be comprised solely of instrumentals.

“As promised, ‘The Mix-Up,’ due June 26 via Capitol, goes heavy on the groove, especially the splashing, crashing meio-ferns inked funk the band has been consistently serving up since 1992’s ‘Check Your Head.’ But there’s not a rhyme to be found.

“If we were trying to maximize our demographic or whatever, I’m not sure we’d come with an instrumental record right now,” says Michael “Mike D” Diamond, whose bad self runs things on the drum kit throughout the album. “But I think we have to give people who’ve been listening to us some credit. They’ve gone to different places with us already, in terms of the influences we bring to the music we make, so hopefully they’ll be able to hang with this curveball as well.”

The curveball began taking shape about a year or so after “To the 5 Boroughs” was released. "With 5 Boroughs, we were each working on beats, sitting in front of our laptops and samplers,” Diamond says. “This time, we thought, let’s do a 180 from that, and sit down and play some instrumental and see what happens that way. We just didn’t really stop until we finished.”

The 12 tracks on “The Mix-Up” are all new and were never seriously considered to contain verses, although Diamond concedes the band is mulling highly tentative plans to release a second version of the record with guest vocalists. “The more we kept working on these songs, the happier with them we became, and the more confused in terms of where there was room to put vocals on them,” he says.

The Beasties are now turning their attention to getting the word out on what many people will see as a different kind of project. To that end, Capitol Music Group VP of marketing Dan Cohen says some revising of the band’s demographic mathematics was in order. “The last instrumental record they did [1996 compilation “The In Sound From Way Out!] came out at kind of a different time in the industry. The band was younger, the fan base was younger. And one of the things we’re excited about with this record is that we’re able to approach an older demographic.”

In the past, Cohen says, the label has focused on the band's college-age fan base and thereafter. “And while we still think this record will appeal to that audience, there’s people like myself who bought the first Beastie Boys record and are pretty excited about this one too.”

In perhaps the most telling sign that the Beasties are making another shift, “The Mix-Up” will be on sale at Starbucks. “I can only imagine what that conversation was like at first,” Cohen says with a laugh. “Hey, we have a new Beastie Boys record, you wanna carry it? But they’re really excited about the record.”

Cohen won’t be ignoring the skate parks and skate shops of the world, but is also looking at promotions with hotels and other means to “raise awareness in a kind of lounge confines.”

All of which, Cohen says, is much less dramatic than it might sound. The record “is a lot less drastic than going from ‘Licensed to Ill’ to ‘Paul’s Boutique.’” he says. “Honestly, if they did a record that sounded like that last one, that’d be a bigger challenge. Every time they put out something new, it keeps audiences on their toes.”

Tour plans are still in the works—including some U.S. dates that haven’t been announced yet. Some shows will be instrument-only and some will be more “traditional,” but that will be determined on a market-by-market basis, Cohen says. "(Prior to their recent two-night stand at the Sasquatch Festival in George, Wash., the Beasties played a surprise show for several hundred fans at Seattle’s Crocodile Cafe.) ‘We’ve got plenty more work ahead of us,” Diamond says. “We kind of have a pretty broad list of songs to pick and choose from.”

NO VOCALS NECESSARY

“Instrumental rock” often conjures up images of frenetic guitar men like Yngwie Malmsteen and Joe Satriani or experimental outfits like Tortoise and Mogwai, but the subgenre has seen its share of more mainstream contributors during the past few years. An incomplete list of recent instrumental albums by acts whose releases more often feature vocals.

“Fingerprints,” Peter Frampton (has sold 50,000, according to Nielsen SoundScan; peaked at No. 129 on The Billboard 200): The talkbox’s most effective ambassador released his first instrumental record in 2006; a Grammy Award–nominated affair with a guest list that included Charlie Watts and Bill Wyman (“Cornerstones”) and Pearl Jam’s Matt Cameron and Mike McCready (on a cover of Soundgarden’s “Black Hole Sun”).

“Symphony No. 1,” Joe Jackson (has sold 8,000 copies, did not chart): The popster won a Grammy Award for this 1999 release, a four-movement piece closer to prog-rock than the symphonic sound hinted at in the title (and its release on Sony Classical). The record featured Jackson on copious keyboard, Terence Blanchard on trumpet and, satisfyingly, Steve Vai on electric guitar.

“Belladonna,” Daniel Lanois (has sold 16,000; did not chart): Long-known as a guy who could conjure up a musical soundscape or two, Lanois in 2005 released this well-received, if unsurprisingly quiet and subtle record, which included turns from pianist Brad Mehldau and drummer Brian Blade.

“Night and Day,” Willie Nelson (has sold 30,000, did not chart): In 1999, the Red-Headed Stranger and a group of likeminded musicians revolved a full 10 tracks around his gut-string guitar, and the result was a more relaxed-than-usual country-jazz ramble through tracks like “Night and Day,” “Sweet Georgia Brown” and “Honeysuckle Rose.”

“N.E.W.S.,” Prince (has sold 30,000, did not chart): All but the most devoted Prince fan can be forgiven for missing this 2003 jazz detour, which contains four tracks, each clocking in at exactly 14 minutes, titled “North,” “East,” “West” and “South.” It was recorded at Paisley Park Studios in a single day, featured members of Prince’s side jazz-fusion outfit Madhouse and initially released online via the artist’s NPG Music Club.

>>>MORE ‘BLACK’

After a year-and-a-half hiatus to allow its members to pursue other music projects, indie pop group Rilo Kiley has recently launched a new album, “Under the Blacklight,” due Aug. 21. It will be the band’s first set for Warner Bros. The album was produced by the band with Mike Elzondo and Jason Lader. Thematics, it revolves around the darker side of Rilo Kiley’s Los Angeles.

>>>Z-TRIPPIN’

A DJ Z-Trip–produced soundtrack with all original tracks, remixes and mash-ups highlights the new Take-Two/2K Sports “All-Pro Football 2K8” videogame due in July for Xbox 360 and Playstation 3. The soundtrack features Dead Prez rapping over the Doftones’ “Try Summer” (Sho Nuff It), Rakim and Chevelle on “Let the Rhythm Hit ‘Em 2007,” Slug from Atmosphere with Lateef for “On My Side” and Z-Trip’s remix of Rush’s “Tom Sawyer.”

—Steve Trueman

Beastie Boys

TOBY

LATOY

PRINCE

LANOIS
**CROWDED HOUSE**

Lifehouse Looks To Extend Hot Streak With New Album

Lifehouse's career has been a bit of a roller coaster. Its 2000 debut, "No Name Face," has shifted nearly 2.6 million copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan. But its 2002 follow-up, "Stanley Climball," plummeted to 398,000 amid the disintegration of DreamWorks, and in the ensuing two years, the band endured several personnel changes.

Things began looking up again on a 2005 self-titled effort. The album has moved nearly 900,000 units and spawned the single "You and Me," which spent more than 60 weeks on The Billboard Hot 100. Now, Lifehouse is hoping to keep its hot streak alive with "Who We Are," due June 19 via Geffen.

"I feel that this is the best chemistry that we've had as a group since I started the band eight years ago," frontman Jason Wade says of the partnership with drummer Rick Woolstenhulme and bassist Bryce Soderberg on the band's fourth record. "We went through a tough couple of years where we had some band members grow apart and move on, but Bryce has been with us for about two-and-a-half years now. He really added a great chemistry musically, and we just developed a great friendship with him."

That chemistry permeates "Who We Are," which shines with the thoughtful lyrics and memorable melodies that fans have come to expect from Lifehouse. The songs range from the Brit rock-influenced "Make Me Over" to "The Joke," an edgy number inspired by the suicide of a student who had been bullied by his classmates.

The initial single, "First Time," is No. 11 on Billboard's Adult Top 40 chart. The second single will likely be "Broken," a poignant ballad that Wade wrote while visiting a friend in Nashville awaiting a kidney transplant. "It was one of those rare moments where a song basically writes itself," Wade says. "I was in my hotel room in Nashville at three in the morning, and I just got overwhelmed with emotion and the urge to write this song. It basically happened within half an hour. Then the next day we went into the studio, recorded it and just captured this magic."

Wade says the writing and recording of "Who We Are" was much more spontaneous than the band's previous efforts. "Almost all the songs were written the same day they were recorded, which is kind of different for us," he says. "We'd wake up in the morning and go to the studio, and we basically had no idea what we were going to be recording that day."

"When I listen to this record, it has an urgency and electricity to it," he continues. "If we had known the songs before and went through the whole demo process, we would have had a lot of time to overthink it."

Lifehouse will open for the Goo Goo Dolls this summer, and Geffen executive VP of marketing and publicity Paul Kremen says the label will aggressively work the tour markets to promote the album via TV, retail and radio campaigns.

Geffen is also looking to expose the band via nontraditional TV outlets. It got a prime opportunity when Lifehouse performed at an event in Los Angeles to create awareness for global warming. Clips from the performance are airing on the Sundance Channel as part of the Sundance Project Green Campaign.

Label chairman Ron Fair credits the band for cultivating such an enthusiastic fan base during a relatively short period of time. "It's primarily females who like emotional songs," he says. "It plays to a hot AC audience and crosses over to top 40. It's the crowd that watches 'Grey's Anatomy' and 'Men in Trees' and those female-oriented television shows. You put a handsome guy in front like Jason, who is a great songwriter with an incredible voice, and it works. There's no gimmick to it."

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**Global Pulse**

**LIBERATION 'THEOLOGY'**

Sinead O'Connor Returns With Two Discs And A Tour

Irish singer/songwriter Sinead O'Connor is returning to recording and touring with her ninth album "Theology," self-described as a personal response to the state of the world post-Sept. 11, 2001.

The two-CD set features eight original self-published compositions plus O'Connor's take on Curtis Mayfield's "We People Who Are Darker Than Blue," Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice's "I Don't Know How to Love Him" and the traditional "By the Rivers of Babylon." One disc contains full band versions of the songs, the other sparse acoustic takes.

"Theology" drops internationally June 22-26. It is licensed globally from O'Connor's own That's Why There's Chocolate & Vanilla imprint. In Ireland and the United Kingdom it appears on independent label Rubyworks and in North America through Koch. The singer's last album was 2005 covers set "Throw Down Your Arms," also on her own label.

O'Connor, who has rarely performed live since announcin her "retirement" in 2003, played a high-profile, hometown open-air gig May 6 at Dublin Castle. "After Dublin Castle," O'Connor's New York-based manager Bruce Garfield says, "she turned to me and said, 'It was as if I had spent the past five years in my kitchen and then walked out the door to find myself onstage before 4,500 fans.'"

O'Connor returns to touring with European shows booked through Heltor Skelter in July/August, followed by North American shows through Little Big Man in September/October.

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O'CONNOR

**FAB FOUR:** Leading German hip-hop act Die Fantastischen Vier has extended its lengthy run of homeland success with seventh studio set "Fornika" (Four Music/Sony BMG).

The album was released April 18 in Germany, hitting No. 1 on the Media Control chart the following week, and remains in the top 10. Sony BMG Germany says domestic sales have just passed 100,000 units, while the act's career sales in Germany, Switzerland and Austria exceed 6 million albums.

"The drive for the Fantastischen Vier is a wish to always re-create ourselves," band vocalist Michael Beck says. "I think we achieved that musically and with our lyrics on 'Fornika.'"

The Stuttgart band was the first act to take German-language rap onto the domestic charts with its 1992 single "Die da?" The band claims to have played 650 live shows during the past 30 months, and in late May/early June appeared in Paris, Krakow, Poland; Minsk, Belarus; and London. The band made its U.K. debut May 23 at the Forum in London before a largely expatriate crowd of 2,000; no date for U.K. release of the album has been set.

**FANTASTIC VOI-AGE:** Best-known for launching Scottish singer/songwriter KT Tunstall, U.K. roots septet Oi Va Voi has put a troubled couple of years behind it to re-emerge with a new vocalist and a new label.

The band drew acclaim in world music and dance circles for fusing traditional Jewish klezmer and gypsy styles with contemporary beats on 2003 debut "Laughter Without Tears" (Outcaste), featuring guest vocalist Tunstall. After touring with the band, Tunstall struck out in 2004 for a solo career.

Then founding member and violinist Sophie Solomon exited, main songwriter Lemez Lovas moved to Israel—and the band finally fell out with U.K. indie Outcaste.

Fast-forward to 2007, and a re-energized Oi Va Voi, signed globally to V2, is promoting sophomore album "Radio Gagarin." Lovas and four other founders remain in the band, joined by the replacements for Tunstall and Solomon, Alice McLoughlin (vocals) and Hayley Ecker (viola)."The last two years were brutal," drummer Josh Breslau says. "But the fallout created the personality of this record—and we're getting great reactions everywhere we play."

The album, produced by Mike Spencer (Jamiroquai, Kylie Minogue), rolled out across Europe in April. U.K. release is July 9. U.S. release is July/August, followed by Canadian release. Oi Va Voi is booked by Gold Artist Agency in London. Its current European tour, through July 17, includes a June 22 Glastonbury Festival appearance.

Lovas is self-published.

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A Helping Hand

Corporate Sponsors Aid Charity Mission Of Jazz Foundation

For the past six years, the New York-based Jazz Foundation of America has presented its A Great Night in Harlem benefit concert at New York’s Apollo Theater. Each affair attracts a range of musical stars and features high-water surprises, such as spunky Chicago blues singer Johnnie Mae Dunson Smith, who last year ripped into a short set from her wheelchair. However, the shows have often seemed disjunctive and hastily thrown together.

Not so this year. On May 17 the FJA fund-raiser offered a well-choreographed and largely successful attempt to provide an overview of the last 200-plus years of popular music. The roots-bent show opened with African traditional music, continued through the blues and then focused on different eras of jazz, from early New Orleans music to swing to bebop to today’s young upstarts.

Highlights included Dr. John and Henry Butler together; delivering samplings of early jazz piano, pianist Arturo O’Farrill collaborating with conguero Candido on a Latin jazz romp, and drummer Roy Haynes blasting off solo. Plus, once again, the feisty, wheelchair-bound Dunson Smith returned for the blues jam finale that also featured FJA executive director Wendy Oxenhorn on spitfire harmonica.

The concert and preshow dinner raised more than $1.5 million for the organization that has been aiding elderly jazz and blues musicians with rent, medical care and social services for the past 18 years. FJA experienced a post-Hurricane Katrina spike in service, assisting more than 2,500 musicians with emergency housing, mortgage payments, medical instruments and a $1 million employment program.

Before the show on the red carpet outside the Apollo, actor Danny Glover, one of the concert’s hosts, said, “When I was young, we had all kinds of music in our house, particularly jazz. Now it’s time to honor these classic musicians who were out there, day in and day out, night in and night out.”

Paul Shaffer, the “Late Show With David Letterman” bandleader, who also played keys at the event, added, “Jazz is a great art form created by musicians who are now older and need help.”

Beers, Beats And Big Rewards

Heineken Endears Dance Music Community With Thirst Competition

“We really like your track,” says Josh Gabriel, peering over his road-weary laptop, freshly jacked into the Studio at the Palms’ main board. “It makes me think of ‘Knight of the Jaguar,’ ” his partner Dave Dresden pipes in while puffing on a clove cigarette.

“I think there are ways to improve it though,” Gabriel says. “More has to happen, it needs a climax. We already worked on some ideas. Can we play them for you?”

The three fledgling producers from Romania could only manage glazed stares and stammering affirmatives, looking very much in need of a collective pinch. Were they really here, in Las Vegas, at the multimillion-dollar studio where the Killers recorded “Sam’s Town,” having Billboard-chart-topping producers Gabriel & Dresden submerge into their little track? Was this the beginning of the careers they always wanted? This inspirational moment in dance music was brought to you by Heineken, a brand that has distinguished itself as one of the foremost corporate supporters of DJs and electronic musicians, not with songs of marketing hubris, but by passive-aggressively sharing equity.

The company’s multina-
Key financial supporters of JFA’s mission and executive producers of the benefit were Dr. Agnes Varis, founder/president of Aegis Pharmaceuticals, and R. Jarrett Lillien, president/COO of E’T’Trade Financial.

When asked why E’T’Trade has played such an integral role in JFA’s expansion, Lillien, who also serves as the nonprofit’s president, says, “A lot of companies don’t get involved in jazz because there is not a physical or emotional connection to the people or to the music. If there is no physical connection, and if it’s just about numbers and demographics, the music and the people lose.”

Lillien explains that E’T’Trade got involved because he made a personal connection to the people and wanted to help.

Most of Bad Boy’s 2007 roster was on hand at a recent label showcase with Sean “Diddy” Combs at New York’s Sony Studios. And most of them, Bad Boy marketing executive Jason Wiley says, will also be releasing new product by mid-fall. “Keep that money coming,” Combs comically thanked Atlantic Records, which distributes the Bad Boy roster. “That’s what support is all about.”

Two standout tracks unveiled at the event were Gorilla Zoe’s “Hood Figjas,” featuring Young Jeezy, and Asa’s “I’m Am.” Zoe is the newest member of Boyz N Da Hood and is also featured on Yung Joc’s newest single, “Coffee Shop.” But what really caught my attention were Asa’s sincerely well-put-together rhymes.

Combs also aired a trailer for “Making the Band 4,” which includes bixing, bloody noses and a cranky choreographer who Combs dramatically dismisses after an argument. Long story short, I’m watching it. And I haven’t watched “Making the Band” since the original cast had to pick up that infamous cheesecake slice from Brooklyn’s famed Junior’s restaurant.

Cheri Dennis’ album, which was delayed in 2006, is coming this summer, Combs says, and Joc is dropping his album “Hustlemonics” in July. Zoe’s project comes in September, and Boyz N Da Hood’s CD is slated for August. Meanwhile, Mario Winans is “coming soon,” as is an album from blonde pop singer Jordan McCoy—a “Blondey type,” as Combs described her, who he discovered while tooling around Illinois.

Cassie, Elephant Man and B-5 round out Bad Boy’s 2007 plans. Combs also declared that a remixed version of his 2006 solo album, “Press Play,” is coming. And so is another installment of the Bad Boy compilation series “We Invented the Remix”—the initial 2002 edition of which featured, in my favorite joint “Special Delivery,” seemingly everyone in hip-hop.

“Tie the ego out of control,” Combs said. Laughingly. “We’re just going to keep pumping money into that project.”

Don’t End Up Apologizing: When I got the e-mail recently to download Kanye West’s new mixtape, “Can’t Tell Me Nothing,” I was excited. Aside from his random egotistical outbursts (like bum-rushing the European MTV Awards stage and demanding the video of the year award, award Pam Anderson’s appearance in “Touch the Sky” as grounds for a recount), he’s one of the few MCs keeping hip-hop interesting lately. And fortunately, West didn’t let me down. A super trio featuring West, Lupe Fiasco and Pharell—which, according to Def Jam, may not last—sampled Thong Yore’s melancholy “The Eraser” for their track “Us Placers.”

Then West chopped and screwed “Harder, Better, Faster, Stronger,” one of my favorite Daft Punk songs, into his own track called “Stronger.” Everyone from producer 88 Keys (who’s got his own album called “Death of Adam” dropping this year) to M.C. Common, GLC, Talib Kweli, FonzoWorth Bentley, Sa-Ra, Real Doe and Consequence have a spot on the tape, which showcases the entire G.O.O.D. Music roster.

My favorite song has to be “Young Folks,” where West raps over Peter Bjorn and John’s whistle-driven beat. But my favorite trends are West’s long explanations and miraculous ability to create new words. On “Young Folks,” he rhymes, “Did the interview with Rolling Stone, read the interview and the whole shit wrong.” He explains for three minutes why he has issues with media interviews, saying that his jokes are often twisted up and he ends up sounding crazy.

Later, on his newest single “Can’t Tell Me Nothing,” co-produced by DJ Toomp, West raps, “Don’t ever fix your lips like collagen to say something where you might end up apologizing.” And on “Stronger,” West raps, “I know I got to be right now, cause I can get much wronger.” I love it. I’m going to start making up words, too.

G.O.O.D. And Bad Boy

Diddy, Kanye Unveil 2007 Plans And Show Off Their Label Rosters

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This summer looks like a busy one for Poison’s Bret Michaels. EMI America Records/Capitol just released “Poison,” which finds Michaels and original bandmates C.C. DeVille, Rikki Rockett and Bobby Dall serving up such classic-rock covers as Alice Cooper’s “I Never Cry,” the Rolling Stones’ “Dead Flowers” and the Marshall Tucker Band’s “Can’t You See.” Poison is supporting the album on a 55-date summer tour, kicking off June 13 in Greenville, S.C.

His reality dating show, “Rock of Love With Bret Michaels,” premieres July 15 on VH1.

Michaels will introduce music from his new solo album, due this fall on VH1 Records. The first single, “Go That Far,” is the show’s theme, and Michaels plans a country single as well. Though other rockers are pursuing country radio, Michaels was ahead of the curve when he released the single “All I Ever Needed” in 2004, then further endeared himself to country audiences as a judge on “Nashville Star.” In addition to his solo set, Michaels is working on a movie, and plans a solo tour in October.

Why did you do a reality show, and what can viewers expect?

There were a couple of things that I asked for: I had to be able to play my solo music in the show and I had to do everything unscripted. I did not want to be told who I was. And I told them the show could not be shot in my house. It’s extremely over the top. A couple of the girls get in actual fights. There’s motorcycle racing and motorcycle weeks. There’s full-contact lingerie mud football. It’s crazy.

How did you incorporate your music? [Viewers will] hear new solo music as well as solo music from the past. They’ll hear some of Poison’s hits. It was fun doing the show, but it was also a great chance to really expose my music. If this show wasn’t music-driven, I don’t think I would have done it.

Your last solo record, “Freedom of Sound,” had the country single “All I Ever Needed.” Do you plan to tap into country again?

My first single ever to country (nearly) got in to the top 40, which is very tough, and wait until you hear what we did with the song on this show. It’s going to be a big smash. It will be released as a single again and have another shot. I did the best I could the first time out, but when you’re doing an independent country record, it’s extremely tough.

Why did Poison do a covers album?

I always want to do an original record. The covers record would not have been my first choice, but since me and Bobby [Dall] had a little tertoration onstage in Atlanta, we figured it might be fun just to do some cover songs and be creative in the studio. We had a lot of fun making the record, and we got to work with Don Was. He’s done Garth Brooks, the Stones, Bob Dylan, Bonnie Raitt. He’s a real music-driven guy.

You and C.C. DeVille had a famous altercation at the MTV Music Video Awards in 1991 that resulted in him leaving the band. How is everyone getting along now?

We are brothers through thick and thin. I don’t know any band who has been together for 20 years and hasn’t had a few knock-down drag-outs. We beat each other up, and the next day we are having a beer and discussing life.

What’s next for Sheen/Michaels Entertainment, your film company with Charlie Sheen?

The tentative title is “Between a Rose and a Thorn.” I’ll work on it all summer long as far as scripting it and then go into production. It will basically be my life story, not only in the music business but what happened as a child. If I could take the humor of “Spinal Tap” and the emotion of a movie like “Ray” and combine it, I would make a dramedy.

Onward And Upward

Victory’s Silverstein Aims To Keep Climbing With New Album

When his hard rock band Silverstein was still in its infancy, singer Shane Told had a chance to take the easy way out. Just after the turn of the century, the suburban Toronto musician had offered a gig to play bass in Avril Lavigne’s backing band.

Silverstein lacked a label, and hadn’t even recorded an album, but Told turned down the job. He instead recommended his friend, Charles Moniz, who had played drums in hard-core band Grade, which had been signed to Chicago independent label Victory Records.

“I said they should give him a call,” Told says. “He has touring experience, and he looks punk rock, if that’s what they were going for. So he started playing bass with Avril, and then he called Victory for us and got them to listen to our demo.”

Told has no regrets on the decision, and it’s easy to see why. To date, the band’s 2005 effort for Victory, “Discovering the Waterfront,” has sold 232,000 units in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan, which bested the 179,000 units sold by the band’s 2003 debut, “When Broken Is Easily Fixed.” Victory will release the act’s third album, “Arrivals and Departures,” July 5. Victory founder Tony Brummel says it “could be the biggest record we’ve ever released.”

“They’re on an upward trajectory, whereas a lot of bands are on a downward trajectory,” Brummel says. “We’re going to do everything possible to make this the biggest record on the label because that’s what we think it’s worth.”

“Arrivals and Departures,” which was produced by former Drive Like Jehu member Mark Trombino, sees Silverstein toying with some new guitar sounds (see the almost dancey notes of single “If You Could See Into My Soul,” or the spacey sounds of “My Disaster”), while sharpening its pop-punk riffs. “It’s almost hypnotic,” Brummel says of the band’s new guitar flourishes.

Silverstein, which was without a manager until hiring David Lefkowitz (Primus) in 2005, will benefit from some of Victory’s innovative marketing strategies. Those who pre-order the album in one of more than 200 indie retailers will receive a limited edition vinyl 7-inch of the single, which also features an etching of the CD’s cover art. The band will also see promotion on the label’s media player, VictoriaStream, which fans can place on their Web site or blog, and which allows fans to print a $2-off coupon for Victory CDs at Best Buy. Brummel says approximately 50,000 fans are hosting VictoriaStream.

“It’s hard to say if that’s a good or bad number,” Brummel says. “I don’t know what to compare it against. That’s 50,000 people who said, ‘I’m going to put this thing for this company up on my page, and they have lots of different sounding bands.’ If I look at it like that, I feel good about the number. ... We’re trying to do different proprietary things that hopefully make us stand out from the other labels.”

Silverstein will tour this summer with Rise Against and Comeback Kid.

“It’s been a slow build for me over the last seven years with this band,” Told says. “It’s been baby steps the whole way. I woke up today and realized we’ve sold a half a million records. That’s crazy to me. We’ve never had a big song. There’s not one big thing that pushed us, like a video or anything. We’ve always just had short-term goals that we set and met.”
ALBUMS

R&B

**EDDIE LEVERT SR. & GERALD LEVERT**  
*Something to Talk About*  
Producers: Eddie Levert Sr., Gerald Levert  
Atlantic  
Release Date: June 12

Separately, Eddie Sr. and the late Gerald Levert are R&B icons in their own right. But something special happens when these two join forces. The duo’s combustible mix was first introduced in 1995 on “Father & Son,” which yielded the love and encouragement anthem “Wind Beneath My Wings.” Already in the works before Gerald’s untimely death in November 2006, this project once again underscores the uncanny resemblance of their singing voices. It’s frequently difficult to figure out who is singing what verse. But there’s no denying how well they complement each other, especially on the ballad “That’s What I Do” and the uptempo numbers “Close & Personal” and “A Situation.” Two pop covers round out the selections: the title track, made famous by Bonnie Raitt and Bred’s “Make It With You.” Throughout, it’s just two guys having fun singing. It’s also a reminder that Gerald left us way too soon.—GM

**TOBY KEITH**  
*Big Dog Daddy*  
Producers: Toby Keith  
Show Dog Nashville  
Release Date: June 12

Anyone looking for a dose of Keith’s famous attitude won’t be disappointed on his new release. The thumping title cut finds him channeling Jerry Lee Lewis and Chuck Berry on a song that one could easily imagine pumping across the border from a Mexican AM station back in the day. “Hit It” is a rocking number about taking advantage of opportunities and first single “High Maintenance Woman,” which recently peaked at No. 3 on Billboard’s Hot Country Songs chart, is a working man’s take on the sexy genre. But since Sears, there’s a softer side to Keith, who produced the album and wrote or co-wrote nine of its 11 cuts. “I Know She Hung the Moon” is a tribute to the singer’s love interest and “Burnin’ Moon Light” reflects on a late-night rendezvous that turns into a long-term relationship.—KT

**PAULA COLE**  
*Courage*  
Producers: Bobby Coblumy  
Decos/Universal  
Release Date: June 12

“I think my life and I am free,”Cole sings on her first album after a seven-year self-imposed exile. The words are trite on paper, but lifted by her straining, breathy voice over sparse acoustic guitar and strings they flower open and become uniquely poignant. The entire 11-song collection is ripe and simple, particularly for Cole, who has a penchant for overly developed historical metaphors and impromptu beatboxing. Here, she resembles Linda Ronstadt, interpreting melodies ranging from positively Gershwinian ("Soleytown"); a dead ringer for "Someone to Watch Over Me") to country-inflected (first single "14") to reggae-lite ("Safe on Your Arms"). "Courage" refocuses attention on what makes Cole superb—her voice—and courses with a genuineness sometimes lacking in her previous work. A welcome return.—KM

**TIFFANY**  
*Just Me*  
Producers: Gregory Butler, Robert Tanaro, Tim Feehan  
10 Spot  
Release Date: June 5

It was 10 years ago that Tiffany stormed the Billboard Hot 100 with two No. 1 singles. Despite fading from the limelight within three years, she has flirted with various returns through the years, fanning critical if not overt commercial success. Her seventh album, "Just Me," shows off the 35-year-old as a grounded, introspective writer with the emotive fortitude of a major talent. The heart-wrenching ballad "Winter’s Over" is the pinnacle performance, devastatingly beautiful and simplistic, while the single "Feels Like Love" and title track are finger-snapping midtempo melodic archetypes. Tiff also rocks down in her lower register on "Be Alright" and flips with twang in "Mindy Candy." A satisfying ride wholly void of the camp a retro return.—CT

**RICHARD SMALLWOOD**  
*Journey! Live in New York*  
Producers: various  
Jerity/Zomba Gospel  
Release Date: June 5

Smallwood marks his 25th year as a major-label recording artist with an aptly momentous two-disc set. Time has clearly only honed Smallwood’s singular gifts as a singer, composer, arranger and producer. He and his choir, Vitamin, along with a host of prominent guest artists, shine like precious metal on this set of largely new Smallwood originals. Stellar videos enhance the title track (featuring an incendiary Kim Burrell) and "I Trust You," while the album’s title track finds the ever-soulful Smallwood in thrilling voice. Kelly Price ("Morning’s Breaking"), Chaka Khan ("Precious Is Your Name") and the Hawkins Famil ("We’ve Come Too Far") are nothing less than commanding, and a two-song reunion of the original Smallwood Singers only adds to the riches on this career high-water mark.—GE

**TORD GUSTAVSEN TRIO**  
*Bending There*  
Producer: Manfred Eicher  
ECM  
Release Date: June 5

Pianist/composer Tord Gustavsen and his collaborators, Harald Johnsen (double-bass) and Jarle continued on p.56

POP

**VARIOUS ARTISTS**  
Instant Karma: The Campaign to Save Darfur

Producers: various  
Warnor Bros.  
Release Date: June 12

This two-CD set, whose proceeds will support Amnesty International’s work in Sudan and elsewhere serves up 23 takes on the post-Beatles work of John Lennon. Although household names like U2, Aerosmith and Avril Lavigne make appearances on disc one, it’s disc two that really delivers. Green Day offers a passionate and profound reading of “Working Class Hero,” while Jack Johnson’s sparse, tender interpretation of “Imagine” easily outweighs Lavigne’s slicker effort. The Black Eyed Peas also convince with a fresh, uplifting rendering of “Power to the People,” and Regina Spektor dazzles with an almost classical-style rendering of “Real Love.” Disc one has its moments, too, especially Connine Bailey Rae’s soulful “I’m Losing You.” But disc two’s more “alternative” vibe ultimately suits these marv-erick songs better.—SV

**MANN, Jill Sobule and Kath- 
leen Edwards**  
*Wilderness*  
—GG

**DADDY YANKEE**  
*El Caratél: The Big Boss*  
Producers: various  
El Caratél/Interscope  
Release Date: June 5

There’s a lot riding on Daddy Yankee’s first full studio set under his new deal with Interscope. Perhaps that explains why this disc is a robust 20 tracks long, plus a remix of the single “impacto,” featuring Fergie. Daddy Yankee goes from middle-of-the-road, feel-good reggaeton to reggaeton with mainstream top 40 appeal (“Impacto,” “Who’s Your Daddy”) to more straightforward fare on tracks like “Corazón Divino,” instead of simply patching rhythms together, as many reggaeton acts do. Daddy Yankee’s mix of styles here is far more thought-out, as on “A Lo Clásico,” which features Latin Jazz improvisations. The singing is mostly in Spanish, albeit often with English choruses. As such, the feel is Latin, but imbued with that island sensibility that has already served Daddy Yankee so well on the charts. Above all, this is simply a better-crafted album, at both a songwriting and a production level, than prior efforts.—LC

JUNE 16, 2007 | www.billboard.biz | 35

www.americanradiohistory.com
Vesperstad (drums), have crafted a dozen contempla-
tive wonders on “Being There.” Opener “At Home” is a
quiet, impressionistic piece. It has a subtle melodic
quality, performed with a great deal of patience, yet it
has an intriguing cinematic feel. Also note “Blessed Feet,”
where an infectious opening phrase glides into a
mixture of dance, beautifully played by Gustavsen,
that’s nearly rambunctious. Elsewhere, “Still There” is
one of several mesmerizing interludes between abstraction
and ambient roots.—PY

THE BILLBOARD
REVIEWS

from >>p35

THE BILLBOARD
REVIEWS

VITAL REISSUES
SONIC YOUTH
Daydream Nation—Deluxe Edition
Producers: Sonic Youth
Nick Sansovino
Geffen/UMe
Release Date: June 12
The canonization of “classic” indie rock albums continues with
this double-disc edition of Sonic Youth’s 1988 belther, “Daydream Nation.” Re-
leased just before hundreds of bands like, well, Sonic Youth, were snapped up by
major labels in an attempt to commodify the sounds of the
college rock underground, the original double album
remains a vital crossroad of avant-garde noise, exper-
mental textures, and hallucinatory melodies. “Teen Age Riot” is the
group’s definitive “we’re in step by being out of step”
anthem (“It takes a teen age riot to get me out of bed,”
Thurston Moore sings), while epics like “The Sp奥林匹”的 “Cross the Breeze” proved
profoundly influential for shoegazers,stoners and
adventurous punk kids alike.

SINGLEs

POP
GOO GOO DOLLS
Before It’s Too Late (Sam and Mikaela’s Theme) (3:06)
Producers: Richard and the Young
Writer: J. Reznik
Publishers: Corner of Clark and Ken/EMI Virgin, ASCAP
Warr Bros.
Adult Top 40’s most re-
liable brand, the Goo Goo Dolls, take a side step from current
CD “Let Love in” with track from “Transformers,” the
live action Steven Spielberg film due July 4, based on the
long-lived toy franchise. “Before It’s Too Late” is the
love ballad/Love affair/human character Shia LaBeouf (Sam) and
Megan Fox (Mikaela) and competently delivers a signature
midtempo ballad, with a ma-
Jagi
scopic image from head
John Riccardo and with
damental (“I live like you
mean it, love it, feel it”). It
worthy in a hot second, about
a typical format blue plate—
conventional suanse, sans
filling tangent.—CT

R&B
SEAN KINGSTON
Beautiful Girls (3:31)
Producer: J. Rotem
Writers: J. Rotem
Publishers: various
Belsa Heights/Koetz/Epic
As poster boy for su-
perstar producer JR
Rotem’s new label, Beluga
Heights, rookie R&B sensation Sean Kingston does not fail
lofty expectations. As follow-
up to the ice-T remake of “Colors,” “Beautiful Girls” adds Jamaican flavor to
Benni E. King standard “Stand by Me” and cooks up a hot sum-
tune, the smoldering, barely
years old, Kingston taps into
his old soul, harmonizing about
a woman whose beauty cannot compensate for the
hurt she fosters. Kingston, whose uncles are
reggae icons Buju Banton and
famed Bob Marley & the
Wailers producer Jack Ruby,
teams with Rotem to make “Beautiful Girls” a track
to make all involved ready to
stand by him.—CP

DANCE
DARREN HAYES
Step Into the Light (4:07)
Producers: Darren Hayes, Justin Shave
Writers: D. Hayes, R. Conley
Publishers: various
Remixers: Dave Pezza, Tony Moran, Moto Blanco
Powdered Sugar
Hayes’ project joyously tranc-
scends all genres—and an AC release with the enduring
triumph of “Truly Madly Deeply” is imminent—but as a reminder
of Hayes’ versatile melodic
footprint, “Light” is a hell of a celebratory beacon.—CT

TRIPLE F-A
KIM RICHEY
Jack and Jill (3:07)
Producer: Giles Martin
Writers: K. Richey, K. Herrig
Publishers: Red+Lick, BMI
Katie Herrig, ASCAP
Vanguard
Endearing singer/song-
writer Kim Richey has been
AWOL for the greater part of a decade, and while she
remains best-known as a song-
writer of hits by Rodney Fos-
ter, Dixie Chicks, Trisha Year-
wood and Patty Loveless, her vocal stamp remains apprecia-
tible to anyone who recalls her
breath-taking 1999 album “Gimmer” and accompanying
single “If You Don’t Mind” “Jack and Jill” is a triple-A gift, with
midtempo, bumbastic tone,
relaxed vocal and ironic lyric about “how time slipped away”
between the title characters.
An easy add for the format
from an underappreciated tal-
ent. From the upcoming “Chi-
inese Boxes,” discover more at
myspace.com/kirichey.—CT

LEGENDARY CREDITS
EDITED BY JONATHAN COHEN (ALBUMS) AND CHUCK TAYLOR (SINGLES)
CONTRIBUTORS: Lila Cobo, Jonathan Cohen, Gordon Ely, Brian Gott, Gary Gaff, Kari
Masgen, Jill Menze, Gail Mitchell, Charles Perez, Chuck Taylor, Kari
Tucker, Phillip Van Velde, Susan Wiskowitz

PICK A: A new release predicted to hit the top two of the chart in
the corresponding format.
CRITIC’S CHOICE ♦: A new release, regardless of commercial potential, highly
recommended for musical merit.

All albums commercially available in the United States are eligible. Send
album review copies to: Jonathan
Cohen and singles review copies to:
Chuck Taylor (both at Billboard, 770
Broadway, Sixth Floor, New
York, NY 10033) or to the writers
in the appropriate bureaus.

Savage Garden main man
Darren Hayes’ new solo album, “This Delicate Thing: We’ve
Made,” was previewed in the preceding issue of the book;
“Glimmer” and accompanying
single “I Miss You” was a lim-
ited one-off release, the
collector’s item of the year.
Savage Garden finally
returns with a new release
on Def Jam, as CT notes.

PINK
Who Knew (3:28)
Producers: Luke Gottwald, Max Martin
Writers: L. Gottwald, M. Martin, Pink
Publisher: not listed
Jive
With her U.S. career fully resurrected thanks to Jive’s
tireless efforts to push P!nk’s'06 single “Trouble” on
the pop playlists, the label steps back in time with
the release of what was originally the July
2006 previous single from CD “I’m Not Dead.” Who
Knew” is another cool, smart, plenty passionate
melodic jewel about the death of a friend and/or
friendship, with an instantly identifiable, quick-to-the-
point, singalong track—maintaining P!nk’s stance as
the smartest female millennium-era singer/song-
writer, dazzling in star quality as alterna-pop’s pre-
emiess. Hopefully, “Knew” will further P!nk’s status
as an inimitable, ever-beautiful pop icon.—CT
Over the Counter

GEOFF MAYFIELD gmayfield@billboard.com

Big No. 1s, Fat June 5 Slate Feel Like 4th Quarter

Well, at least the top of The Billboard 200 lookshealthy.

While all unit sales still lag 2006 volume by more than 16%, this week's third week in a row that the #1 album surpasses 380,000, the kind of run that's normally confined to the fourth quarter.

from the same frame of last year, the exception being last week, when Maroon 5's started the 2006 opener of 'The Voice' Grammy Award winner "Taking the Long Way" by 18% (526,000)

It's the first time since December that the No. 1 title stood north of 300,000 in three straight weeks, when Maroon 5's "The Evolution" (338,000 units) handed off to Young Jeezy's "The Inspiration" (352,000) and Nas' "Hip Hop Is Dead" (355,000).

The fourth quarter of 2005 was the last time the No. 1 album weighed 350,000 or more in three consecutive weeks. Streaming up that run: "Now 20" (378,000), Kenny Chesney's "The Road and the Radio" (469,000) and Madonna's "Confessions on a Dance Floor" (590,000).

Don't look for a fourth week in that range next issue. Chains' first-day sales indicate that McCartney might enjoy his first No. 1 album since 1982, but with a total more in the neighborhood of 182,000. An artist a bit younger, 19-year-old Rihanna, also contemplates for the top of that page.

FAMINE TO FEAST: I think your message has been received, retailers. The drum heat began at NARM's August 2006 convention on as Hastings Entertainment president John Mar模udeko led merchants' pleas for a release schedule "easing" tilted toward a year's four last months.

When the three-group gathered again in May in Chicago, the list's collective response was along the lines of "We hear and obey," proved in spades not only by the recent oomph on No. 1, but by the heavy June 5 release schedule that includes Paul McCartney and Rihanna.

In fact, the June 5 slate was so packed, I almost wonder if a few of those should have been split cued into different weeks. With T-Pain, Daddy Yankee, Big & Rich and Marilyn Manson joining that slate, chart watchers think that as many as six of this week's new entries will start at 100,000 or more, with T-Pain's "Clocking closer to 170,000.

A new Police anthology and a new album from Chris Cornell, of Soundgarden and Audioslave fame, will also start near the top of the next Billboard 200.

So great are the embarrassment of riches, I can't decide whether the June 5 slate should be described with an old MTV slogan once owned by Sting, "Too much is never enough," or a song title from McCartney's most famous band, "It's All Too Much."

RED HOT: "Sure, RED is happy to hold a monograph on the first three slots of this issue's Top Independent Albums roll, but the party doesn't stop there.

As Jason Aldean claims No. 4 on The Billboard 200, this marks the first year in EED history that the distributor plants two different bows in the top 10. "American Idol" finalist Elliott Yamin became the first of that pair 11 weeks ago when he bowed at No. 3.

Aldean's "Restless" becomes the first independently distributed set to reach No. 1 on Top Country Albums since 1976, when Red Sovine's "Tibby Bear" led the list for the StarDust.

SEEING DOUBLES: Why does India Arie's "Testimony: Vol. 1. Life & Relationships" appear twice on Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums? The one at No. 1, which also re-enters The Billboard 200 at No. 144, includes a hidden track that was on the album's original release. The R&B entry at No. 66 is an interim version that does not include the bonus.

For accounting reasons, Universal Marwood Music Group has not merged tracking on the two editions.

Market Watch A Weekly National Music Sales Report

Year-To-Date

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<th>Week</th>
<th>ALBUMS</th>
<th>Digital Albums</th>
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<tr>
<td>This Week</td>
<td>8,316,000</td>
<td>859,000</td>
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<td>Last Week</td>
<td>8,316,000</td>
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<td>The Week Last Year</td>
<td>9,291,000</td>
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<td>-11.6%</td>
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Weekly Album Sales (Million Units)

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<th>Week</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
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<tr>
<td>This Week</td>
<td>213,677,000</td>
<td>193,772,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last Week</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>427,354,000</td>
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<td>Change</td>
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ALBUMS

| OVERALL UNIT SALES | 2006 | 2007 | CHART
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<tr>
<td>Albums</td>
<td>213,677,000</td>
<td>193,772,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Digital Tracks</td>
<td>232,206,000</td>
<td>193,772,000</td>
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<td>Share Singles</td>
<td>410,000</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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SALES BY ALBUM FORMAT

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<tr>
<td>CD</td>
<td>216,270,000</td>
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<td>Digital</td>
<td>12,399,000</td>
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<td>Cassette</td>
<td>606,000</td>
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<td>Other</td>
<td>400,000</td>
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For this week ending June 2, 2007, sales are based on new sales reported to Nielsen SoundScan from retail entertainment outlets, excluding sales to special outlets such as sales to the military, schools, and rental. 

www.americanradiohistory.com
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<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Distributing Label (Price)</th>
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<tr>
<td>ALAN JACKSON</td>
<td>AMBER PACIFIC</td>
<td>THE ALBUM OF THE YEAR (19.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUCKY COVINGTON</td>
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<td>Buck Covington</td>
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<td>LILY ALLEN</td>
<td></td>
<td>Continuum</td>
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<td>JOHN MAYER</td>
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<td>B Sides (10.98)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SUGARLAND</td>
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<td>Enjoy The Ride</td>
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<td>FEIST</td>
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<td>THE BEACH BOYS</td>
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<td>THE WARMEST SUN AT THE BEACH (10.98)</td>
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<td>United Abominations</td>
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<td>BLAKE SHELTON</td>
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<td>PURE BS</td>
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<td>NORA JONES</td>
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<td>NOT TOO LATE</td>
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<td>PLAIN WHITE T'S</td>
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<td>EVERY SECOND COUNTS</td>
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<tr>
<td>DARYL HANNAH</td>
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<td>SNAKES &amp; ARROWS</td>
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<td>THE RED JUMPSUIT APPARATUS</td>
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<td>DON'T YOU FAKE IT</td>
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<td>JESSE FJORDE</td>
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<td>YOUR MAN</td>
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<td>GLADYS KNIGHT &amp; THE PIPS</td>
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<td>GREGG ALLMAN</td>
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<td>IT'S A LONG WAY FROM NOW (14.98)</td>
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### HOT 100 AIRPLAY

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### ADULT TOP 40

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### HOT DIGITAL SONGS

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### MODERN ROCK

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### POP 100

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### POP 100 AIRPLAY

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### HOT SINGLES SALES

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### HITPREDICTOR

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Data for week of JUNE 16, 2007 | CHARTS LEGEND on Page 52
### Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums

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**BETWEEN THE BULLETS**

R. Kelly is crowned with his 11th No. 1 in Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums, breaking the tie with Jay-Z for the most chart-toppers in the R&B/Hip-Hop Music era.

Meanwhile, Kelly's "Remix City Volume 1" re-enters at No. 29, thanks to a promotion tied to the purchase of "Double Up" at Circuit City.

U.S.A. slides to No. 2 with a 50% drop, the smallest crotiestores dip by any album that bowed at No. 1 this year. Since the start of 2007, albums bowing at the summit averaged a drop of 64% the following week.

Elsewhere, Joss Stone tops the best increase since her album's release (27-22, up 29%) and Tyler Perry's soundtrack to "Daddy's Little Girls" takes the Facesetter honor (74-49, up 78%). The actor/director's TV series premiered June 6 on TBS. —Raphael George
### R&B/HIP-HOP Playlists

#### Hot

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<td>DMX</td>
<td>Warner Bros. (RCA)</td>
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#### Adult R&B

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### R&B/HIP-HOP Singles Sales

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### HitPredictor Chart

See chart legend for rules and explanations. Yellow indicates recently tested hits, while red indicates new releases.

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### Chart Rankings

- **R&B/HIP-HOP Playlists**
- **Adult R&B**
- **R&B/HIP-HOP Singles Sales**
- **Rhythm and Blue Playlists**

**Data for week of June 16, 2007.**

Go to [www.billboard.biz](http://www.billboard.biz) for complete chart data.
HOT COUNTRY SONGS

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HOT LATIN SONGS: A chart of the top 50 Latin songs electronically monitored on 46 radio stations at 7 a.m. & 7 p.m. on weekends. © 2007 Nielsen Business Media, Inc. and Nielsen SoundScan, Inc. All rights reserved.
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| "KID DE DAVID" | "KID DE DAVID" | "M. SAN ANTONIO"
| "GRACE KELLY" | "10,000 NIGHTS OF THUNDER" | "MAFALDA VEIGA"
| "SAY IT RIGHT" | "DET DU KAN" | "AVO CANTIGAS"
| "SAY IT RIGHT" | "FILL 'ER HON" | "FLORIBELLA"
| "ELTON JOHN" | "KID DE DAVID" | "MARQUIN"
| "AL FINAL DE LA PALMA" | "AL FINAL DE LA PALMA" | "IRMAS VERDADES"

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**EURO DIGITAL TRACKS**

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**HITS OF THE WORLD**

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**CHARTS LEGEND**

- "TOP 40": Billboard Hot 100
- "TOP 50": Billboard Canadian Hot 100
- "TOP 20": Billboard Latin US
- "TOP 20": Billboard Pop Digital Tracks
- "TOP 20": Billboard Pop 100
- "TOP 20": Billboard Pop Albums
- "TOP 20": Billboard Pop Airplay
- "TOP 20": Billboard Pop Songs
- "TOP 20": Billboard Rap Digital Tracks
- "TOP 20": Billboard Rap Hot 100
- "TOP 20": Billboard Rap Songs
- "TOP 20": Billboard Rap Albums
- "TOP 20": Billboard R&B Digital Tracks
- "TOP 20": Billboard R&B Hot 100
- "TOP 20": Billboard R&B Songs
- "TOP 20": Billboard R&B Albums
- "TOP 20": Billboard Rock Digital Tracks
- "TOP 20": Billboard Rock Hot 100
- "TOP 20": Billboard Rock Songs
- "TOP 20": Billboard Rock Albums
- "TOP 20": Billboard Soul Digital Tracks
- "TOP 20": Billboard Soul Hot 100
- "TOP 20": Billboard Soul Songs
- "TOP 20": Billboard Soul Albums
- "TOP 20": Billboard Urban Digital Tracks
- "TOP 20": Billboard Urban Hot 100
- "TOP 20": Billboard Urban Songs
- "TOP 20": Billboard Urban Albums

**NAMES FROM THE CANON 3 IN**

- "KAZUAKI KATSUMATA"
- "TOKIO HOTEL"
PART 1 - \n
**MUSIC VIDEO**

**TOP MUSIC VIDEOS**

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**GREAT HITS**

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**GET READY: THE DEFINITIVE PERFORMANCES 1965-1972**

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**CRYSTAL VISIONS... THE VERY BEST OF STEVIE NICKS**

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**ELVIS LIVES: THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY CONCERT**

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**A NEW JOURNEY: LIVE AT SLANE CASTLE, IRELAND**

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**THE BEST OF PASTEUR: FAR BEYOND THE GREAT SOUTHERN COWBOYS VULGAR HITS**

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**PAST. PRESENT & FUTURE**

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**VIDEOKULT: THE ULTIMATE DVD COLLECTION**

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**HOT VIDEO CLIPS**

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**WHAT I'VE DONE**

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**BUY A DRINK (SHAWTY SNAPPIN')**

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**PICTURE ME**

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**BIG GIRLS DON'T CRY**

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**AMUSEMENT PARK**

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**LONELY OWL**

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**MTV NEWS**

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**MUCH MUSIC CANADA**

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**BIG THINGS POPPIN' (DT) 1**

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**GOLDEN SKANS**

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**PUSH IT BABY**

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**THE GREAT ESCAPE**

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**RIHANNA FEAT. JAY-Z**

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**RIHANNA FEAT. JAY-Z**

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RECORD COMPANIES: Columbia Records taps Mark DiDio to oversee daily operations of the label. He was executive VP/GM at Capitol Records.

Sony BMG Music Entertainment’s Commercial Music Group names Michael Block executive VP of sales. He held the same title at Sony Music Label Group.

Warner Music International beefs up its digital marketing endeavors with the creation of a new role covering Europe, Middle East and Africa regions. Pierre Philo has been named digital marketing director of EMEA. He was group account director at Agency.com.

Provident Label Group names Troy Vest VP of marketing for the Essential and Flicker labels. He was VP of marketing and artist development at Flicker.

Warner Music Latin in Miami names Kary An Diaz TV and press coordinator. She was an executive coordinator for management company Latin World Entertainment. Diaz replaces Marcie Stefan, who has been appointed label manager for Warner Music Latina.

Universal Music Classical in New York appoints Melanie Mueller senior VP. She was co-founder/managing director at Avie Records in London.

MANAGEMENT: Veteran manager Tim Bennett establishes Deep Blue Arts, a Los Angeles-based company devoted to artist management, film music supervision and consultation. He was a management partner at Fitzgerald-Hartley.

PUBLISHING: Universal Music Publishing Group appoints Michael Sammis CFO/executive VP of operations worldwide. He was CFO/executive VP.

EMI Music Publishing promotes Lynette Calow to director of marketing services. She was coordinator for the company’s creative services/new-media department.

DIGITAL: Yahoo Music promotes Billy Johnson Jr to senior music director. He was music director.

Joost names Mike Voigt CEO. He was senior VP/GM at Cisco Systems’ Routing and Service Provider Technology Group.

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GOOD WORKS

KEEP HOPE ALIVE

Samsung’s sixth annual Four Seasons of Hope gala will feature a special performance by Grammy Award winner Alicia Keys. The June 18 event, held at Cipriani Wall Street in New York, raises funds for the Keep A Child Alive Foundation and other charities. “Live With Regis and Kelly” co-host Regis Philbin will host the fundraiser, which honors sports legends Dan Marino, Joe Torre, Earvin “Magic” Johnson and others for their philanthropic efforts.

DROWNING POOL DELIVERS ‘SOLDIERS’ TO SOLDIERS

Rock band Drowning Pool is doing its part to support the USO. In addition to donating $1 from each ticket sold from its current U.S. tour to the private, nonprofit organization, Drowning Pool has made a new track, “Soldiers,” available as a free download via the USO’s MySpace page: “Soldiers”—featured on the band’s third album “Full Circle” (due July 24 from Alternative Distribution Alliance-distributed Eleven Seven Music)—was written after the band’s overseas USO tour, which included stops in Iraq and Kuwait.

BACKBEAT

Backbeat Music Publishing Group celebrated the selection of the publishing catalog of Frank Cullotta, Grammy Award-winning songwriter (Billie Jean King) Fame/Imus and Michael Masser. Pictures of the signing at UMG world office headquarters are from left: UMG chairman/CEO David Rienzi, Masser and Frank/Cullotta executive VP of acquisitions and strategic projects Linda Newman. Photograph courtesy of Universal Music Publishing Group.

INSIDE TRACK

MARIO LOOKS TO STEP UP WITH GO, GO, GO ATTITUDE

“Go” appears to be the operative word in Mario’s vocabulary these days. The singer’s third album, “G.O,” hits stores July 31. In the meantime, he’s pushing the go button on the songwriting and acting aspects of his career.

Under his Nghtriders production banner, he has placed songs with Chris Brown, Usher, Jennifer Lopez and Raven-Symone. But what many probably don’t know is that he’s also sending out submissions for soundtrack consideration.

While on the road promoting “Go,” he’s also taking acting as an active role so he can continue to “brush up on my skills” as he reviews various scripts. “I don’t know yet what my next [film] project will be,” Mario tells Tell. “But I’m looking to begin working on something by the end of the year. It’s hard to do both music and acting at the same time. However, acting is definitely something I’ll continue to pursue.” Mario’s film credits include “Step Up” and “Freeform Directors,” which recently became available on DVD.

WHITE NOT A FAN OF LEAKS

Jack White wants the White Stripes’ music heard, but apparently not leaked.

Unleashing that modern rock WXOX Chicago—in particular midcity host Electro—leaked the band’s new album, “Icky Thump,” a not-too-please White pho the station from Spain, where the band was on tour. On a recent: blog entry, Electra called the album uncelevitably brilliant and awesome” and simply wanted to “share it with fellow fans.”
INSIDE TRACK

SOUND + VISION = BOWIE

The 11th annual Webby Awards were held June 5 in New York. Presented by the International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences, the award ceremony honors the best and brightest on the Internet. The Beastie Boys picked up the Webby for artist of the year, while David Bowie took home a lifetime achievement award. The 550-member academy apparently appreciates Bowie’s online platforms: BowNet, UltraStar and BowieArt.

Those who have attended the Webbys in the past know that the ceremony is legendary for its five-word acceptance speeches. No more, no less. Bowie being Bowie, however, he gave us 15: “So, only got five words. Shit, that was five. Four right there. Three there. Two.”

Facebook was awarded a Webby in the social networking category. In accepting its award, the Facebook crew uttered five simple words: “I'm just here for Bowie.” Ditto for the Billboard crew. (That would be five words.)

SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER ALL WEEK LONG

New artist Kathy Diamond is creating a stir with tastemakers in the club scene with her debut album, “Miss Diamond to You.” Produced by DJ/producer Maurice Fulton, the full-length is available via Munich-based indie label Permanent Vacation. With this album, Diamond and Fulton have crafted a wicked ode to days gone by. It’s as if the Andree True Connection from the ’70s suddenly woke up from a deep, deep sleep, only to discover that the world had moved 30 years forward. In other words, “Miss Diamond” recalls the positively groovy vibes of the disco era, but like an Amy Winehouse, Diamond revives the old and something new for a generation that has no clue—or do they necessarily care—about the music that came before their birth dates. Track considers it’s duty to bring “Miss Diamond to You.” You can thank us later.

SONY BMG expect very positive response for Beyonce for her enduring popularity in Europe. The superstar, who has backstage at one of her recent shows in London, was presented with an emblematic plaque for her long history of success in Europe. The plaque was presented to her by Sony BMG’s executive vice president for Republic Records, Sarah Geffen, at a recent concert in London. The show, which was part of the European leg of her “The Dangerously In Love Tour,” was held at London’s O2 Arena. The plaque was presented to her as a token of appreciation for her contribution to the music industry in Europe. The plaque is engraved with her name and the words “Thank You for Your Support.”

A selection of Atlanta’s music industry elite along with rising urban star Lloyd made the last day of school for students at Benjamin S. Carson Prep School even sweeter. Performing rights organization BMI and Teach for America partnered to throw the kids an all-star pop rally rewarding them for their hard work, good grades and steady attendance. From left are sixth-graders Latrease Pointer, DC Mixta, Anele M Chattanooga Records artist Missy, center, celebrates a walk-up album (June 2 at Sony’s Forum) with Universal Music Australia executives. The date was part of an Asia Pacific promotional strategy in support of current album Topic: Life in Cartoon Wimpers. This year’s album, Platinum in France, the United Kingdom, Russia and Ireland and acclaimed worldwide, topping sales on 3 million. Earlier Record of Music Australia GM of marketing Tim Kelly, left, and managing director George Ash.

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06.16 Las Vegas, NV  Pearl Theatre at Palms Casino
06.17 Los Angeles, CA  Greek Theatre
06.19 Los Angeles, CA  Greek Theatre
06.22 Berkeley, CA  Greek Theatre
06.23 Alpine, CA  Viejitas Concerts in the Park
06.25 Santa Barbara, CA  Santa Barbara Bowl
06.27 Denver, CO  Red Rocks Amphitheatre
06.29 Muskegon, MI  Heritage Park
06.30 Milwaukee, WI  Summerfest Oasis Stage
07.02 Kansas City, MO  Starlight Amphitheater
07.03 St Louis, MO  Fair Saint Louis
07.07 Naas, Ireland  Oxegen Festival
07.08 Balado by Kinross, UK  T in the Park Festival
07.10 Sheffield, UK  City Hall
07.11 Manchester, UK  Apollo
07.15 Raleigh, NC  Walnut Creek Amphitheatre
07.16 Baltimore, MD  The Pier
07.18 Bushkill, PA  Mountain Laurel Center
07.20 Holmdel, NJ  PNC Bank Arts Center
07.21 Wantagh, NY  Jones Beach
07.22 Boston, MA  Tweeter Center
07.24 Saratoga, NY  SPAC
07.25 Hartford, CT  Mohegan Sun
07.27 Atlantic City, NJ  Borgata Events Center
07.28 Buffalo, NY  Darien Lake Performing Arts Center
07.29 Pittsburg, PA  AJ Palumbo Center
07.31 Atlanta, GA  Chastain Park Amphitheater
08.01 Pensacola, FL  Pensacola Civic Center
08.03 West Palm Beach, FL  Sound Advice Amphitheater
08.04 Tampa, FL  Ford Amphitheatre
08.11 Tokyo, Japan  Summer Sonic
08.12 Osaka, Japan  Summer Sonic
08.16 London, UK  Hammersmith Apollo
08.18 Staffordshire, UK  V Festival
08.19 Chelmsford, UK  V Festival
08.23 Chicago, IL  Charter One Pavilion
08.24 St Paul, MN  Minnesota State Fair
08.26 Sterling Heights, MI  Freedom Hill Hall
08.28 Cleveland, OH  Tower City Amphitheater
08.29 Columbus, OH  Lifestyle Community Pavilion
08.31 Dallas, TX  Smirnoff Music Centre
09.01 Austin, TX  The Backyard
09.02 Woodlands, TX  Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion

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NEW ALBUM
5TH GEAR
IN STORES JUNE 19
BRADPAISLEY.COM
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### EVENTS

**TOURING**
Billboard's Touring Conference & Awards will feature panels, networking opportunities and an awards reception targeting promoters, agents, venues, managers, sponsors and production professionals. See billboardevents.com.

**REGIONAL MEXICAN**

**Contest**
**MOBILE BEAT**
Billboard has teamed with LG Mobile to create the first mobile blogging contest. Contestants will critique concerts in their area and upload mobile photos and reviews to a customized Billboard blog. See billboard.com/mobilebeat.

**Blogging**
**THE JADED INSIDER**
Another season of "American Idol" is now in the books. Want the real scoop on what went down with the winner and the also-rans alike? Visit Billboard's Jaded Insider blog at jadedinsider.com.
Secondhand Seige

By Rob Perkins

Having operated record stores for more than 25 years, I have had my share of regulatory headaches. A few years ago, I had to sort out whether a Louisiana law restricted used CD sales. I thought that was an isolated misunderstanding, but during the past few months a dozen states have either enacted or considered laws that would require anyone trying to turn a used CD into a down payment on a new one to give up sensitive identifying information to be stored in a retailer's files. If this were to become the rule, then we might as well start sticker ing new CDs: "Warning: If you decide to sell it back, you will be required to disclose your name, address, birth date, phone number. Social Security number and thumbprint." Retailers would also have to wait several days before reselling the CD. The profits on a used CD sales in comparison to the burden of such regulations.

Fundamentally, selling used CDs without having to disclose who you are to the shopkeeper for the police or other prying eyes is a basic freedom that we should all cherish. The governor has no right to know what books we borrow from the library. The law protects our privacy in what videos we rent. Taste in music is part of our personal identity, and we should be able to keep it to ourselves as well.

I have seen no evidence that anyone is setting out to deliberately suppress the sale of used CDs. Instead, I believe we simply have caught up inignon efforts to trace stolen goods. Laws

let me increase the floor space and diverse selection of music I make available to my customers. Our industry supports used CD sales for another reason—pirates hate them. The cost of a new CD, even if discounted, remains a barrier to the average consumer who has two, and only two, ways of buying cheaper CDs—infringing or used. Without the second option, pirates capture that market. Aren't we all better off if the price-sensitive consumer is encouraged to pay for a legiti

mate copy and have one more reason to visit a store?

Secondhand sales benefit local economies. The regulatory suppression of used CD sales means fewer sales taxes collected and fees of my store sales associates processing used CD transactions. In a day when new CD sales have plummeted, used CDs will help keep my stores and others open for business.

Rob Perkins is president/CEO of the 200-store Value Music Concepts chain and is on the NARM board of directors.

Feedback

Rack Nasty Responds

I'm a producer/artist that hangs out five or six songs per week—this has been my regimen since even before recording my platinum song "Da Dip." Coming from New Orleans and the ATL after leaving Cash Money Records, I've been grinding and hustlin' across the country. I've never had the backing of a lot of artists get from a major, but I was still able to get nominated for an MTV Award, sell millions of records and hold a place in the market.

Now I feel a bogus controversy brewing, putting my "Rockstar" song against the Shop Boyz version. But of all the songs titled "Party Like a Rockstar" from different artists on iTunes, why single out mine? I wrote my song in 2005—they just happened to get radio play first. If the Shop Boyz radio play is helping me sell downloads, as claimed in a recent article (Billboard, May 26), it should help the other artists. A song with similar titles sells downloads as well.

I expect any artist that's signed to a major to do far better than any independent artist. Unlike the Shop Boyz, I don't have a video. I also don't have any radio play or marketing. They do. My song sounds totally different from theirs, and our names are distinctly different. So how can consumers be confused?

I have much love and respect for the Shop Boyz, and I would never do anything to block their shine. I'm the most humble cat in this game, and everyone that knows me would speak highly of me and my work ethic. I have a catalog of more than 300 songs that's growing every day, of all genres of music. Just imagine the success that could follow if I partnered with a major.

Eric Timmons, aka Rack Nasty
POLICE SHUT DOWN ALLOMP3 VOUCHER SITE

U.K. police have raided and shut down an online voucher system allegedly used by Russian Web site allomp3.com. The system was an apparent attempt by the operators of the site to set up a way to charge consumers for music downloads after online payment companies such as PayPal refused to support the service. Major credit card companies withdrew their U.K. and European payment options from the site last year.

NZ CHARTS TO INCORPORATE DOWNLOADS

The New Zealand music charts are getting a digital makeover, with the singles and album top 40 lists to incorporate downloads, as well as over-the-counter sales and airplay. The first of the new-look charts from the Recording Industry Assn. of New Zealand will appear May 29.

SUIT QUESTIONS ROYALTIES FOR DOWNLOADS

FTB Productions and 2m2M have sued Interscope Records and other Universal labels over a share of royalties for Eminem recordings. The suit claims that the labels should be paying half of the net receipts from downloads and master ringtones rather than the lesser artist royalty, which is based on sales. The suit, filed May 21 in the U.S. District Court in Los Angeles, seeks more than $560,000 in allegedly underpaid royalties from 2002 to 2005.

UPFRONT

Music is integral to CBS' "Viva Laughlin," which will feature characters lip-synching to classic hit songs.

TELEVISION

BY LEILA COBO and MICHAEL PAGELLA

PRIME TIME TUNES

New Network TV Series That May Need Your Music This Fall

It's no secret: more and more, prime time series such as "Grey's Anatomy," "Las Vegas" and "Cold Case" are successfully exposing new and old music to TV viewers. Their success is not lost on prospective advertisers and music supervisors, who are now focused on the upcoming fall TV season.

In recent weeks, the networks staged their "upfronts" in New York, presenting new programs and schedules to potential advertisers and media. Most of the shows are still in pilot mode, with music supervisors yet to be assigned. Keeping that in mind, Billboard queried networks, producers and supervisors on what shows were likely to prominently feature music. What follows is an alphabetical guide to series that will likely be looking for your music in the fall, and what sort of tunes they'll want.

GOSSIP GIRL (THE CW)

Based on the series of books by the same name, the executive producers of "Gossip" are Josh Schwartz and Stephanie Savage of "The OC," a major music platform. In "Gossip," rich teenagers in Manhattan engage in nasty little confrontations, to a soundtrack of alternative music and indie rock.

"Our demo is 18-34 so we're smack in the middle of the record-buying audience," CW music VP Leonard Richardson says. "We have a very strong focus on music, not only on our shows, but the whole network in terms of marketing, promotion and any type of branding we do."

Ad cards at the end of each "Gossip Girl" episode will tell viewers what they heard and display album covers. Music can be purchased directly on the CW Web site. Platinum-selling acts will benefit from the "platinum" ad card program, which will also feature music video snippets.

IDOLOS DE JUVENTUD (TELEMUNDO)

Although the setting for this series based on the music industry is still up for grabs between Miami and Mexico, the premise is set: A music producer who has launched multiple careers—including his wife's—looks for the next new thing in a music reality show. Telemundo is looking for a mixture of covers and new material, particularly for the love stories that take place as part of the plot. "We typically end up with 'couple's themes' for the romantic couples," Telemundo VP of music affairs Margaret Guerra Rogers says.

JOURNEYMAN (NBC)

This epic fantasy drama about a journalist who travels back within his lifetime to help people fix past errors will feature appropriate music from the '70s, '80s and '90s.

K-VILLE (FOX)

This drama about police buddies is set and shot in post-Katrina New Orleans, with the heroes at odds as to how to navigate their torn town. Music is slated to be an integral part of the show, with plans for a score and main title theme that incorporate the city's music. The pilot alone featured several local hands on-camera, and similar showcases will likely continue through the season.

LAS BRUJAS DE SOUTHBAY (TELEMUNDO)

Four women living in South Beach were, in a past life, sisters in 12th-century Spain. Now, they must overcome their differences to vanquish evil. The series will be "loaded" with music, Telemundo's Guerra Rogers says. Romantic music is being looked for to enhance each character, but in addition, different styles are needed to enhance the setting. Befitting South Beach, the search is on for dance, salsa and Latin fare.

MISS GUIDED (ABC)

Upon returning to her former high school, a guidance counselor finds her old nemesis, the cheerleader, is the new English teacher who is glad to remind her of her unpopular past. Abundant flashbacks will be filled with music from the '80s.

REAPER (THE CW)

A slacker wakes up on his 21st birthday to find that his parents sold his soul to the devil, and now he must work for Satan as a bounty hunter. Dramatic but humorous, "Reaper" will underscore its light-hearted side with alternative and pop music. Like "Gossip Girl," it will also feature ad cards at the end of each episode. Ad cards are available for three acts per show.

VIVA LAUGHLIN (CBS)

Executive-produced by Tony and Emmy Award winner Hugh Jackman ("X-Men"), "Viva Laughlin" is the closest thing to a musical in the new lineup. Based on the hit BBC show "Viva Blackpool," the mystery drama chronicles a free-wheeling businessman. Ripley Holden, who wants to run a casino in Laughlin, Nev., but gets tripped up by issues like a murder investigation, financing problems and family strife. Music is integral, with lead characters lip-synching to iconic hits. Tracks in the pilot include the Rolling Stones' "Sympathy for the Devil," Blondie's "One Way or Another" and Elvis Presley's "Viva Las Vegas.

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**UPFRONT**

**GLOBAL**

BY LARS BRANDE

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EMI FACES ITS FUTURE

Can WMG Trump Private Equity With New Bid?

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**GLOBAL**

BY LEO CENDORWICZ AND SUSAN BUTLER

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An Approval’s Aftereffects

Biz Considers Implications Of Universal/BMG Deal

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Smooth transition. A WMG/EMI union would have to undergo long, expensive competition clearance. Significantly, EMI chairman John Gilder-sleeve highlighted Terra Firma’s royalty of cash now, without regulatory uncertainty. Sources close to the deal suggest a WMG bid would have to reach at least 285 pence-290 pence ($2.85-$2.90) per share before the delay and risk would be worth it.

Cash. Terra Firma has money and knows what to do with it. Informed sources say the company has made commitments to keep EMI Music Publishing intact and perhaps even inject more capital. Since many believe Universal Music Publishing Group will become the largest publisher following Euro-

pean Commission approval of its BMG Publishing acquisition, that money will be needed to put EMI back on top.

Additional reporting by Susan Butler.
CARRIE UNDERWOOD
Top Female Vocalist
Album of the Year
Video of the Year

LITTLE BIG TOWN
Top New Duo or Vocal Group

MIRANDA LAMBERT
Top New Female Vocalist

RODNEY ATKINS
Top Male Vocalist

BROOKS & DUNN
Top Vocal Duo
Vocal Event of the Year
Home Depot Humanitarian Award

RASCAL FLATTS
Top Vocal Group

SONG OF THE YEAR
"GIVE IT AWAY"
BILL ANDERSON & JAMEY JOHNSON
Sony/ATV Tree Publishing
Mr. Bubba Music
EMI Blackwood Music

VINCE GILL
Vocal Event of the Year

SHERYL CROW
Vocal Event of the Year

TONY BROWN
Single Record of the Year
Vocal Event of the Year

INTERNATIONAL AWARD
BUCK OWENS

PIONEER AWARD
HARLAN HOWARD

PIONEER AWARD
DOLLY PARTON

PIONEER AWARD
WAYLON JENNINGS

STUART DUNCAN
Specialty Instrument Player of the Year

AUBREY HAYNE
Fiddle Player of the Year

JOHN HOBBS
Piano/Keyboard Player of the Year

MIKE JOHNSON
Steel Guitar Player of the Year

BRENT MASON
Guitar Player of the Year

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Sanz U.S. Trek Postponed

Alejandro Sanz’s El Tren de los Momentos U.S. tour has been postponed until November, a spokeswoman for Sanz tells Billboard. Ten dates have been rescheduled; additional shows will be announced shortly. The spokeswoman says the tour was postponed until Sanz returns from doctors in Spain that the singer, who has been touring in Latin America, takes “absolute rest” before embarking on the U.S. leg of his tour.

Sparks is Sixth American Idol

Jordin Sparks has been crowned the sixth season winner of “American Idol.” Competing against 25-year-old Blake Lewis for the crown, the 17-year-old Glendale, Ariz., native brought in the most of 74 million votes after the final performance show, broadcast from the Kodak Theatre in Hollywood on Fox. Sparks scored a recording contract with RCA Music Group as her prize.

Prince Reaches Perfume Line

Revelations Perfume and Cosmetics will develop and market 3121, a fragrance collection for global superstar Prince. The women’s perfume debuts July 7 with a 24-hour online charity event at 3121perume.com. The collection will be sold online and at select Macy’s stores. The fragrance line, encompassing perfume and body crème, ranges in price from $31.21 to $70.

BlackBerry Juiced

Unprecedented Sponsorship Of John Mayer Tour Will Help Launch Curve Phone

In a first for both sponsor and sponsor, BlackBerry will present John Mayer’s upcoming 2007 North American tour, Billboard has learned. Portable communication device BlackBerry will use the Mayer tour to help launch its upcoming BlackBerry-carried mobile phone, Curve. The 40-date BlackBerry Presents John Mayer in Concert tour begins June 1 in Ridgefield, Wash., with Ben Folds supporting. Live Nation is promoting the majority of dates on the tour and reports that sales are strong in the early going.

Paul Kalbfleisch, senior director of corporate marketing for BlackBerry parent Research in Motion (RIM), says recent additions to the BlackBerry product line such as Pearl and the new Curve make live music a viable avenue to reach consumers in search of devices with plenty of capabilities. “John Mayer’s concert tour gives us that venue and that context to talk about BlackBerry to a group of people that may have we haven’t talked to before, and to make them think about how BlackBerry fits into their whole life, not just their work life,” Kalbfleisch says.

Mayer’s demo fits the BlackBerry target, Kalbfleisch adds. “We’re able to reach out to a new audience, maybe a slightly younger audience in their 20s, without at alienating the existing BlackBerry audience,” he says.

In activating the campaign, BlackBerry will launch a site highlighting the tour and the company’s relationship with Mayer. Marketing in traditional and new media are part of the promotion, as is an on-site presence at concert venues. Consumer-interactive contests are being finalized, and BlackBerry will host VIP parties and backstage meet-and-greets at shows.

“One site during every concert we’ll have the ability to showcase and demonstrate BlackBerry Curve, alongside with our carrier partner, AT&T, so that people coming to the concerts will see, touch and feel our product, learn what it has to offer them, see pictures with it, have a little bit of fun with it,” Kalbfleisch says. “We will have the ability to interact with the audience without interfering with the concert itself.”

Live event sponsorship, particularly music events, has experienced huge growth in the past few years as marketers struggle to reach consumers in an efficient way. So why is BlackBerry just now getting into the tour sponsorship game?

“The product offering and our strategy had to be in line with reaching out to this type of audience,” says Kalbfleisch, who says the BlackBerry reach is now broad and the brand more mainstream than it was only a few years ago.

“The entertainment world and more unique opportunities started to make sense to us now. Two years ago it probably wasn’t time yet.”

For the Mayer camp, it’s great to be BlackBerry’s first. “Since we were approached by them, it showed they really wanted to be in business with John,” says Michael McDonald, Mayer’s manager.

Both sides declined to talk financial specifics, but typically such extensive tour sponsorships are valued at more than $1 million in cash and more in marketing. McDonald says upfront money from BlackBerry goes into upfront tour costs.

“Something we’ve really focused on is putting the check to good use,” McDonald says, adding that marketing is also a big plus.

“Between RIM and the sort of carriers they’re in business with, they certainly have a greater and wider marketing reach than we have, so it’s great to be able to tap into that,” McDonald says. “So far, it’s been done in conjunction with us and we feel apart of the marketing effort. It’s not like a stranger is coming in and taking over our marketing initiatives.”

The deal was brokered by Kalbfleisch, Marcie Allen Cardwell at Creative Artists Agency, and Amy Pesa and Andre Gacetta at event marketing firm George P. Johnson. Scott Clayton is Mayer’s responsible agent at CAA.

ALTERNATE REALITY

MTV Show Gives Real-Life Talent Agency A Boost

On "Tiquila & Kaul," an MTV reality show that follows two aspiring starlets in Las Vegas, Ricky Greenstein plays the role of Mr. Manager. But in real life, Greenstein is co-CEO, along with Michael Schweiger, of talent agency Central Entertainment Group. And in the weeks since the show’s April debut, CEG has watched its artist roster grow.

This growth continues with a new strategic relationship CEG has formed with Total Entertainment and Arts Marketing, the recently launched agency helmed by Britney Spears’ former manager Larry Rudolph and entertainment marketer Nicole Winnaman. TEAM focuses on securing sponsorship and endorsement dollars for its client roster, which includes A&M/Interscope’s Pussycat Dolls.

RUDY GREENSTEIN, co-CEO of Central Entertainment Group, and his client DMX (inset).

Rudolph—who also has artist management and TV production companies—says the TEAM/CEG partnership was formed out of necessity. “We were getting requests for our clients to make personal appearances at corporate events and nightclubs,” Rudolph says. “But we’re not a booking agency, which is why CEG is a good match.”

CEG books musicians, artists and celebrities for corporate events, private parties and nightclubs. CEG exclusively represents Fall Out Boy’s Pete Wentz and Gym Class Heroes’ Travis McCoy as DJs, and also handles club bookings for DMX, the Ying Yang Twins and others.

To host or make an appearance at an event, an artist’s fee—based on the artist’s level of celebrity in the media food chain—can range between $10,000 and $60,000. CEG’s cut is 5%-15%.

The TV show has legitimized “what we do here at CEG,” Greenstein says. “Artist managers and label executives take us more seriously now.”

Frozen Pond Entertainment’s Trish Lum, who oversees DMX’s career, says CEG is getting her artist into markets he’s never played before. On June 15, DMX commences a 30-date club tour of House of Blues-type rooms and smaller venues.

Similarly, Ying Yang Twins manager Derek Crooms says CEG enables the Twins to “play more mainstream rooms, which helps expand the duo’s fan base—and puts money in their pockets.”
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Keeping It In The House

Canada's Indie Distributors Get Labels Of Their Own

TORONTO—Canada's leading independent distributors are attempting to increase their retail selling averages by stepping up to the plate with their own new labels.

Recent arrivals include Toronto-based Koch Entertainment Canada's imprint Koch Records (rock, country and urban music), Hamilton, Ontario-based Sonic Distribution's joint venture with BMI Canada, Labwork Music (alternative), and Montreal-based Distribution Fusion III's Secret City Records (rocks/alternative).

Simultaneously, other distributors have significantly stepped up A&R at existing in-house labels.

According to Nielsen SoundScan, independent distributed labels have jointly accounted for 19.1% of Canada's retail sales so far in 2007, ahead of every major except Universal (17.5%).

The indie distributors say they are preparing the ground for their future digital businesses, where Fusion III president Jim West predicts they will be involved as "record label, in management, publishing—everything."

West's son Justin now heads Secret City Records, home to alternative rock band Patrick Watson and alternative rock/pop act Miracle Fortress. Fusion III has also operated jazz label Justin Time since 1983.

"Part of the future is having the ability to control copyrights," Toronto-based Outside Music president Lloyd Nishimura says. "Our label has become a real priority for us." Launched in 2002, the Outside Records label roster includes roots-styled acts the Sadies and Ole & Susanna.

The 2006-launched Koch Records label's releases to date include albums by Jeff Martin, fiddler Natalie MacMaster and rock act Brandon Paris Band.

"We used to push artists [toward] labels we were distributing," Koch Entertainment Canada president Dominique Zgarka says, "but realized we were doing all of the work. We decided to keep things under one roof.

Despite the added competition for signings, Canadian indie scenes largely remains about the distributors' moves. "They're just protecting their rear ends," Toronto-based The North records president Bernie Finkelstein says. "In five years, acts might not need a distributor if the business is all digital."

Sonic co-owner Tim Polotic says adding Labwork to its wholly owned labels Sonic Unyon Records and Goodfella will mean 20 album releases in 2007, its highest in-house total yet: "There's a lot of opportunities around," he says.

Those opportunities have partly raen through Canada's majors reducing domestic signiings in recent years. Universal Music Canada's most recent direct domestic signing was 18 months ago, although senior VP of A&R Allan Reid says the company is increasingly inking licensing deals as "more artists are coming forward with finished masters, seeking to retain master ownership."

Warner Music Canada VP of A&R Steve Blair confirms the domestic roster shrinkage. "When I started here nine years ago," he says, "we had 22 Canadian bands. Now we have 12."

Independents have also been affected by changes in the administration of Department of Canadian Heritage funding for new recordings. In 2006, those changes saw larger independent labels like Nettwerk Productions, True North and MapleCure switch from funding under the Foundation to Assist Canadian Talent on Records scheme to another program, the Music Entrepreneurial Component.

FACTO's annual $12.9 million Canadian ($11.65 million) budget provides loans/grants for individual recordings, regardless of their project's success.

However, MEC's $5.8 million Canadian ($7.7 million) budget goes directly to labels annually as loans/grants to cover overall operating costs. Importantly, it employs a sales target-based formula—and missing targets can mean reduced or revoked funding.

"I have signed less acts [with] MEC than I was in FACTO," Vancouver-based Netwark president Ric Arthur says. "Before I could take a chance on an act. Now, I have to know it's going to be a winner."

However, some insist the MEC system has benefits. "What's the point of companies signing more acts," Finkelstein says, "if their infra-structure is weak and they can't produce results?"

"MEC leaves it to me to decide how I spend my money—providing I get results."

Epic Everlasting
Sony BMG's Doherty Brings Label Back In The United Kingdom

LONDON—Sony BMG U.K. chief Ged Doherty has some Epic plans.

As the company adapts to the demands of the digital age, Sony BMG Music Entertainment U.K. and Ireland chairman/CEO Doherty has already launched an innovative online A&R service (billboard.biz, March 30). But he's also heading back to the future—reintroducing the Epic label division that disappeared in the United Kingdom almost five years ago.

Epic Label U.K. is helmed by managing director Nick Raphael, a 10-year-plus Sony Music/BMG veteran, who reckons the time is right for a U.K. return. "Brit music is particularly strong at the moment," Raphael says. "We want to build a formidable roster that will be spoken about on a global basis."

Raphael was previously managing director of Epic U.K. in September 2002, when Sony BMG replaced its three-label structure (Columbia, Epic and S2) with internal and U.K. repertoire divisions and he became VP of the latter. Most recently, he was managing director of Sony BMG U.K. label White Rabbit, now an Epic imprint with acts including R&B/pop vocalist Lemar, dance act Mylo and singer/songwriter Imogen Heap.

Although the label division disappeared, Epic continued as a Sony BMG imprint, registering a 2.3% U.K. albums market share in 2005, according to labels body the BPI (2006 figures are not yet available). In previous years, its share swung between 6.6% (1984) and 2.5% (2000).

Doherty succeeded Rob Stringer after the latter's June 2006 appointment as president of Sony Music Label Group. His "new" Epic sits alongside front-line U.K. label groups RCA and Columbia.

"In the first year [after the 2004 BMG merger]," Doherty says, "we had an enormous blob of labels lumped together. The second year was working to bring back Columbia and RCA, and I remember thinking at the time, 'if things go well, we'll launch a third label.' Epic is our next best-known brand."

The revived Epic's A&R philosophy will reflect the previous broad mix of domestic signings, which ranged from alternative rockers Manic Street Preachers to pop acts like B*witched and George Michael. Raphael says he's aiming for a roster of "versatile, nongenre-specific acts . . . which we can sell in the U.K. and abroad."

The label was also the U.K. home for such international acts as Michael Jackson, Celine Dion and Rage Against the Machine, but Doherty says, "Epic in the U.K. will be primarily U.K. repertoire-based."

HMV marketing director Graham Sim says he is watching the Epic developments with interest. "Universal, for one, has shown how classic labels can be successfully revived and re-energized to drive the record company forward. Epic certainly had a lot of heritage as a label."

The new Epic's first album will be the Aug. 6 release of "Memory Man" by eclectic British alternative singer/songwriter Aqualung, signed to Columbia worldwide out of New York. Aqualung's Brighton-based manager Phil Nelson enthuses about being in at the start of the revived division. "It really does feel like a team that's not only really into the act, but currently doesn't have a huge amount of product to work with," he says.

"We can really get our hands dirty together and micromanage." Doherty's recent introduction of online A&R "virtual neighborhoods" for RCA and Columbia, where unsigned acts can post demos while Sony BMG U.K. staffers participate as bloggers, will expand with the launch of an Epic area.

He says the innovation is intended to counter mistrust between the artistic and label communities. "This is the first step to say, 'Here we are—take a look at us, warts and all,'" he says. "The major record company in the future will be based much more on a partnership basis with the artist," Doherty adds. "You can only get to that point if you start from a position of openness and transparency."

AQUALUNG, whose Aug. 6 "Memory Man" will be the first album on Sony BMG's new Epic imprint.

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Why Amazon Won't Dominate the Digital Marketplace

Things will really get interesting when Amazon finally jumps into the digital fray. Amazon is a powerhouse in the book marketplace, but has so far failed to duplicate that feat in music, although its business is on the upswing with Tower Records’ demise.

Still, even though Amazon has been in music since 1999, iTunes—which debuted in 2003—now sells four times as much music. Billboard estimates Retail Track figures Amazon's market share at about 2.5%—3%, while iTunes will end this year at about 12%-13%, making it the fourth-largest music retailer, behind Wal-Mart, Best Buy and Target.

Although Amazon claims its service will launch with 12,000 labels, Billboard's down-and-dirty conjecture is that the labels it will sell probably comprise about 25% of the U.S. marketplace. Meanwhile, iTunes has signed deals with labels, including the majors, that likely generate about 95% of retail business in the States.

If Amazon were to push digital downloads the way it pushed the opening of its bookstore, Retail Track would be willing to bet that it would kick iTunes' ass. That's because Amazon is far more skilled than Apple at merchandising music. Also, its business model is built around getting lower pricing than iTunes (Billboard, May 26), but only time will tell how successful it will be in that approach. (More on pricing later).

But since Amazon is opening its store with labels that comprise only about one-quarter of the marketplace, it won't be able to establish dominance like it did with books. Those commercials about looking for a place to contain the world's biggest bookstore don't apply here.

No, that type of marketing approach simply ain't going to work this time around. And that's why the majors were disappointed when Amazon abandoned its previous digital approach last fall, one that would've seen it launch a subscription download service with its own private label, digital rights management-powered portable player and with a physical product tie-in. The majors were hoping that Amazon would help them maintain a DRM world, while at the same time taking on iTunes head-to-head. The majors pray for such a champion every day, as they try to figure out how to get out of the box Steve Jobs has them in.

But instead of being a potential giant killer out of the gate, Amazon now looks like it might be a spoiler to those majors with a stake in DRM. The staunchest proponent for DRM is Sony BMG's Music Entertainment Global Digital Business and U.S. Sales president Thomas Hesse. Hesse's stand against an MP3 commercial marketplace stems from the belief that eventual bandwidth advancements may eventually allow peer-to-peer to trade entire music libraries in a matter of minutes—or in other words, the whole world becomes one giant dorm.

Amazon certainly represents another crack in the DRM foundation, which may be why Hesse wouldn't even let RED negotiate with the merchant on behalf of the independent labels it distributes. While I applaud him for taking a principled stand, I wonder at the wisdom of losing the chance to monitor how MP3 sales perform in the marketplace, let alone how it affects physical and even digital sales.

Warner Music Group also refused to supply its music to Amazon, but it shrewdly agreed to allow its Alternative Distribution Alliance to negotiate a digital deal with the merchant on behalf of its independent labels. Likewise, Universal Music Group Distribution is negotiating for its Fontana-distributed independent labels, as well as whatever MP3 tests UMG's own labels will undertake, but a deal has yet to be signed.

And compounding that situation, if Amazon is successful in its label negotiations and its launch with consumers, it will only box the labels in even more. Besides Bertelsmann's record club, Amazon and its marketplace is the lowest-priced player in CDs in the States, even withstanding Best Buy, Wal-Mart and Target. It if emerges as a dominant player in digital sales, it would likely add its voice to iTunes in insisting on low-priced downloads.

That would not only be bad news to labels, but brick-and-mortar merchants struggling to prop up the CD see cheap downloads as undermining the CD price point.

All of which leads to a mea culpa, with a little history. When EMI announced it was going DRM-free and would sell higher-quality downloads, which would carry an implied $1.29 list price, brick-and-mortar merchants counted that as good news.

That is because some merchants were under the mistaken impression that EMI's digital albums would then sell for $12.99, which doesn't undermine the CD's price point in traditional stores the way $9.99 does.

But while EMI will wholesale DRM-free, higher-quality digital track downloads at 90 cents, it will continue to wholesale its $9.98 list-price album downloads at $7, as reported in Billboard last week. What that story left out, though, is that the major has other single-album pricing levels, as well of $7.98, $11.98 and $12.98.

25% OFF

25% The 12,000 labels Amazon plans to launch its digital store with will comprise about this percentage of the U.S. marketplace

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Nightclub Nudging
Spanish Societies' Friendly Approach to Rights Awareness

MADRID—Two Spanish performing rights societies are taking a "softly, softly" approach to collecting rights that they admit many bar and club operators are barely aware of.

Rather than threatening legal action to extract money from clubs, the bodies have been rolling out a campaign called Somos Música—which translates to "We Are Music"—aimed to convince owners of the benefits of correctly licensing their premises for playing recorded music.

Within the next three years, Agedi and AIE—representing labels and performers, respectively—hope the campaign will help them triple the €7 million ($9.4 million) they collected in 2006 from the public performance of recorded music in bars and clubs.

The two bodies jointly own collecting unit OCR, launched in 2003.

Somos Música "is about recognizing the economic, cultural and leisure value of music and countering the urban myth that music is free," AIE chairman Luis Cobos says.

OCR estimates 25,000 venues play recorded music in Spain, but Agedi chairman Antonio Guisastola, who also chairs labels body ProMusica, says 2006's total represents "only about 50% of the rights that we should be collecting."

The campaign is intended to raise awareness among those venue operators who are not currently paying OCR that performing rights exist and need to be paid.

Venues that play OCR and also sign up for the initiative receive a Somos Música plaque to display on-site so customers "can see they are entering a venue that respects music and musicians," Cobos says. In the first two weeks of the campaign's May launch, AIE says 60 venues put up plaques.

Those who sign up also gain access to somosmusica.com, which offers links to an online music promotion service, event listings, a classified advertising area for staff and general industry news and charts.

AIE managing director Jose Luis Sevillano says several trade groups are publicizing Somos Música to their members, including discotheque owners association Fasyde, which claims to represent 3,000 of Spain's 5,000 discos.

"We're happy to join up with Somos Música," Fasyde managing director Jesus Garzas says. "We're talking with OCR about collaboration—[on] threats—and this seems very correct."

That approach appeals to such venue owners as David Novaes, chairman of Madrid's 45-strong La Noche En Vivo group of music bars. "The advantages Agedi and AIE are offering are reasonable," Novaes says. "It is important to know what you are paying for. If you don't know why you are paying, you're less likely to pay."

Agedi and AIE launched in 1990 after 1989 intellectual property legislation introduced rights for the public performance of recorded music. They collect royalties from broadcasters as well as venues.

Previously, Spain's only collecting society had been authors body SGAE, and until 1995, Agedi and AIE contracted their collections out to the larger, established body, which already collected its own royalties from broadcasters and venues.

After those contracts ended and Agedi and AIE began collecting independently of SGAE, Cobos says they found that, in many cases, their fees had not been paid to SGAE.

Few music venue operators were actually aware that performing rights for labels and performers needed to be paid.

"There was a widespread feeling that once you paid SGAE its authors' rights' sum, you had taken care of your music payments," Cobos says.

Agedi and AIE claim Somos Música is a significant step toward resolving that situation. The bodies are keen to avoid the negative publicity—and legal costs—SGAE has attracted in the recent past through lengthy lawsuits over music licensing.

"In the past, we've sent the troops in too sometimes," Sevillano says. "But with Somos Música we are putting on a pleasant face. We want owners to feel it's worthwhile working in a legal framework—rather than being illegal."

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ROCKIN' THE MIC
Rage, Wu-Tang Add Heft To Summer Hip-Hop Tour

With a lineup catering to the b-boy, backpacker and graffiti art culture, this summer's traveling Rock the Bells festival could be the rap community's answer to the Vane Warped tour.

Rock the Bells, which went down in the hip-hop record books in 2004 after reuniting the Wu-Tang Clan (including Ol' Dirty Bastard) for an onstage performance, will revisit history by hosting the recently re-formed Rage Against the Machine at Randall's Island in New York (July 28-29); the ROS Events Center in San Bernardino, Calif. (Aug. 11); and the McCovery Cove Parking Lot in San Francisco (Aug. 18).

Although Rage Against the Machine, which played its first show in seven years at last month's Coachella Valley Music & Arts Festival, is slated to perform on only four of Rock the Bells' 19 cross-country dates, founder and organizer Chang Weisberg of Guerilla Union is hopeful that the political rockers' involvement "spills into other markets. The fact that Rage Against the Machine is playing these shows has made it a big deal not only nationally but worldwide. So, you try to leverage that and be thankful for that awareness."

At press time, these remain the only shows on Rage's schedule.

New York rapper Nas will co-headline the majority of the trek along with the Wu-Tang Clan, which has signed on for the entire festival to promote its upcoming reunion album "8 Diagrams."

Press Hill, Talib Kweli, Pharoahe Monch, Immortal Technique and Jedi Mind Tricks will perform on all fest dates, while the Roots, Public Enemy, Sage Francis, Mos Def, EPMD, MF Doom and others will play select shows.

Ticket prices for each of the four bicoastal festivals range from $75 to $80 and expect to draw approximately 40,000 concertgoers.

Prices for the remaining 15 dates, which will visit primarily outdoor venues, range from $40 to $45, and Weisberg says that between 8,000 and 10,000 people are expected. So far, Rock the Bells has teamed with several hip-hop media partners, and SanDisk signed on as the title sponsor.

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GLOBAL NEWSLINE

>> COLLECTIONS FALL AT JASRAC

Japanese authors society JASRAC says copyright fee collections for the year ending March 31 fell 2.2%—on-year to 111.1 billion yen ($923.2 million)—the first time in five years collections have not risen. Performance right royalties rose 0.9% to 48.8 billion yen ($405.3 million), but mechanical fee collections fell 5.4% to 41.9 billion yen ($348.4 million), largely due to declining CD sales. Royalties from polyphonic ringtones fell to 3.3 billion yen ($27.6 million) as Japanese mobile-phone users turned increasingly to master ringtones. Collections from the latter increased 23.3% to 2.2 billion yen ($18.2 million).

—Steve McClure

>> RECORD REVENUE AT PPL

U.K. collecting society Phonographic Performance Ltd. has published its best-ever financial results. The society, which licenses performance rights on sound recordings on behalf of record labels and performers, reported license fee income of £97.9 million ($193 million) in 2006, up 13% from 2005. Distributable

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GLOBAL NEWSLINE
Although the festival's 15 U.S. dates without Rage have a solid lineup of "established touring acts," according to Weisberg, some industry observers speculate that the absence of a mass-appeal urban headliner could make high attendance draws challenging. And with virtually no other large-scale hip-hop package tours going out this summer, rap looks unlikely to crack the Billboard year-end list of the top 25 grossing tours, which it hasn't done since 2005's Eminem/50 Cent Anger Management tour, which pulled in $22.7 million from 23 shows, according to Billboard Boxscore. Prior to that, in 2003 50 Cent rang up nearly $23 million in ticket sales, much of it co-headlining with Jay Z on the Roc-the-Mic tour.

But Weisberg, who through the years has promoted one-off festivals and dozens of club gigs under the Rock the Bells moniker, doesn't compare his festival to mainstream rap. "Even if Eminem, 50 Cent or Jay-Z were touring this summer, that wouldn't be an indication to me that this is the right time for Rock the Bells," he says. "The indication for me is the music and growth of it in the markets we've done it in."

Last summer, a one-off Rock the Bells drew an impressive crowd to Concord, Calif.'s Sleep Train Pavilion, says Nick Mueller, president of Live Nation San Francisco, which is co-producing the Aug. 18 date. "For a lineup that didn't have 50 Cent, Eminem or a flashy headliner, we did 10,000 people at a $55 ticket," Mueller says, "which is a great number."

As opposed to chart-topping rappers who "might be really good in the studio" but "not really able to perform," Weisberg says that the bottom line with Rock the Bells is "that everybody on the show can fucking perform. People want to go to a show and be entertained," he says. "They don't want to go to a show where six dudes are onstage running around not knowing how to project their voice correctly."

Indie rapper Sage Francis, a self-declared "road warrior," will perform on the Paid Dues stage on select Rock the Bells dates. He says his indie hip-hop contemporaries like Atmosphere, Brother Ali, El-P, Cage and Buck 65 aren't strangers to drawing respectable crowds and commanding the stage. "We're all people who've been out for 10 years developing our fan bases," says Francis, who will embark on a 40-date club/theater trek later this month to promote his latest Epitaph effort, "Human the Death Dance."

"We stay focused on what we do, how we do it and make sure it continues to grow," the rapper continues. "Our shows really have a lot more interesting elements. I don't think that a lot of other hip-hop acts have the tenacity or fuel that we do."

net revenue rose 11.8% to £84.4 million ($166.7 million). The figures included international income of £6 million ($11.8 million), double the figure from 2005. Until five years ago, the society drew no revenue from international sources. Earlier this year, PPL merged with two smaller U.K. collecting societies, PAMRA and AURA. It now represents 3,500 record companies and also collects/pays out on behalf of around 40,000 performers. —Lars Brandle

**SMEJ SALES ON THE RISE**

Japanese market-leading record company Sony Music Entertainment (Japan) has reported healthy sales results for the year ended March 31, boosted by solid performances by its noncore businesses. Revenue for SMEJ and its 44 subsidiaries totaled 162.3 billion yen ($1.3 billion), up 6.4% from the previous year. Sales and distribution of recorded music fell 4.8% to 81.6 billion yen ($674.5 million), the remaining 80.6 billion yen ($666.5 million) came from music publishing, artist management and other SMEJ subsidiaries, up 20.8%. SMEJ does not publish profit figures. Domestic product accounted for 77.4% of music sales, down from 79.4% in the previous year. —Steve McClure

**SANCTUARY RECEIVES TAKEOVER BID**

Financially troubled British music company Sanctuary Group confirms it has received at least one takeover bid. Sanctuary issued a statement Feb. 18 saying it had "received approaches from third parties that may or may not lead to an offer for the company." The company said a further announcement would be made "in due course." The London-based firm issued the statement to the London Stock Exchange after the update that its stock price rose 40% on May 18 to 15.75 pence (31 cents). Sanctuary has been cirled by a handful of suitors in recent years. Recently, the company has been pushing ahead with a program of strategic disposals, including the sale of its stake in independent label Rough Trade. British indie powerhouse Beggars Group is understood to be in talks for Rough Trade. —Lars Brindle
Upfront

On the Road

Ray Waddell rwaddell@billboard.com

Friday and Saturday Night Special

A No-Brainer Bargain for Hank Jr. and Skynyrd's Rowdy Friends

Sometimes you just gotta get rowdy.

The Rowdy Friends tour—produced by Red Mountain Entertainment and Blue Goose, and booked by the William Morris Agency—is a perfect gumbo recipe for wild-eyed Friday and Saturday nights. It gives fans value for days, provides arenas with a solid booking and double-digit concession, per-caps, and in many ways, puts Red Mountain on the map as tour producer. Oh, yes, and it rocks mightily, which came as no surprise to me at the May 4 show in Nashville.

Truth is, Red Mountain stepped up when other promoters passed and put forth so sure that the big guys understood the value and the nuances involved in this thing," philosophizes Greg Oswald, VP at WMA and responsible agent for Fronds.

"It doesn't even really take any balls. You just either understand it or you don't," he continues. "I have to admit, you have to have a feel for that lifestyle, but it's not a secret. It's been going on for 30 years."

Ah, the lifestyle out in full force. "You've got Hank [Williams Jr.] and Lynyrd Skynyrd, who both have extremely solid, loyal fan bases," says Brock Jones, senior director of booking at Nashville's Sommet Center, where Rowdy Fronds grossed a stout $709,774 from 12,575 rowdy friends, according to Billboard Boxscore. "Then you have 38 Special, which adds a new dynamic, both Van Zant on tour together. There's a high entertainment value for this ticket price."

The tour was indeed a big move for Birmingham, Ala.-based Red Mountain and its partners, Gary Weinberger and John Ruffino. Ruffino's father, Tony, was a legendary Southern concert promoter who was instrumental in breaking Williams in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

"Over the years we've promoted Hank all over the place," John Ruffino says. "The opportunity came up to do Hank and Skynyrd, and it was a no-brainer for us."

Still, 20 dates with a healthy combined guarantee is hitting off a lot for a midsize independent, with a guarantee Oswald admits is "stiff."

"Most of the time we buy four or five cities. This was the first time we've bought 20 cities," Ruffino says. "Obviously, when you're buying that many dates there is a fear involved, but we believe in both [Williams and Skynyrd] and, like I say, it made sense to us."

Ross Schilling, who manages all three acts with Ken Levin through Vatican Management, says Ruffino, Weinberger and Blue Goose president Russell Dousane were "believers from the beginning and saw the viability of these artists, and saw a very active fan base. They really micromanage each promotion and make sure it fits the market."

There's no denying that Skynyrd and Williams have legions of fans, but there was a very real question as to whether these fans were the same people. Synergy means one plus one equals three, not one plus one equals one. To cop a quote from manager Doc McGhee, this isn't exactly "cats and dogs living together."

Rowdy is as rowdy does.

"Musically, it works good. It's not exactly the same, but it's in the same range," Ruffino says. "We did almost 13,000 people in Nashville; so it looks like one plus one equals three."

Oswald says he'd like to do a "scientific poll of the audience, which to me is kind of scary. I think what you would find would be the following: a significant percentage of the diehard Skynyrd fans that never miss a show, the diehard Hank fans that never miss a show, the diehard rebel redneck Confederate flag waving group that likes racing—the Southern rock lifestyle oriented people—and the people who remember or have recently heard what a party it could be to see a real live Hank and Skynyrd show," Oswald says. "The latter are the ones I think got mobilized that wouldn't have ordinarily been there."

It helps that the show is value-priced, with tickets at $69.50, $59.50, $39.50 and $25. "Obviously, we have to get enough of a ticket to pay all the bills and guarantees, but we didn't want to charge anybody anything," Ruffino says.

Schilling adds, "Pound for pound. I don't think there is another tour out there that is giving the fans four- and a-half hours of hit music from start to finish. I'm glad we decided to tour on Friday and Saturday nights only—if everyone recuperate the next day."

The tour is scheduled for 20 markets through June 16, but discussions are under way to extend into the fall.

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Johnny Sigal, Superstar?

Balladeer Ramps Up Rock Opera And Solo Careers

Johnny Sigal was seeking his musical fortunes in Miami when the call came from Caracas—a casting director was looking for someone to play God. Sigal was reluctant to return to Venezuela—after all, his home country’s top musical exports had found their biggest success abroad—but he ended up going home and landing the title role in “Jesus Christ, Superstar.”

“I quickly realized it was the best decision I’d ever made in my artistic life,” says Sigal, 27, during a break from rehearsals. In addition to film and TV offers in Venezuela, another opportunity was the “We Hear the Future” competition at the recent Billboard Latin Music Conference in Miami, which Sigal won along with Colombian singer/songwriter Monica Girald. Sigal ducked out of preparations for the musical to fly to Miami for the event. He’s also started working on his debut album with producer Marcello Azevedo (Chayanne, Paulina Rubio), the husband of one of his fellow cast members.

“It’s a great window to present myself in a totally different market,” Sigal says of his record, which he hopes to release independently and shop to labels in August. Meanwhile, Sigal says his role in the rock opera—which was scheduled for 12 shows in Caracas through the end of May before going on the road—has allowed him to pack the powerful vocal punch he’s always wanted to.

“I sang for six years in a cover band. But I have my own style,” he says. “I like projecting my voice.”

Sigal has been a power balladeer at heart since playing quinceañera in a rock band as a teenager. To get the attention of a girl he liked, the gangly Pearl Jam fan learned all of Luis Miguel’s repertoire. He studied music theory after high school and was in the choral group at Caracas’ Metropolitan University. He also learned guitar, Venezuelan canto, and Afro-Caribbean percussion.

He eventually joined dance-pop group Tartara, which mostly performs live and plays private functions but released its debut album last July. Sigal left the group to start a solo career, and then play Jesus—which isn’t as hard as it would seem, he says.

“Andrew Lloyd Webber gave him a totally human touch,” he says. “He had frustrations, including doubts in his faith. He also had human behaviors any of us could have, and I look at my own behaviors to try to represent him.”

Sigal’s solo album will be solidly pop-rock, but “a little stronger, more aggressive, more daring vocally than what others do.” —Ayala Ben-Yehuda

EN LA RED: For 24/7 coverage of the Latin music world, Billboard has partnered with MSN. For a complete roundup in Spanish, go to BillboardLatino.MSN.com.
Sign On A Different Line

Branding Deals Are Changing The Nature Of Artist/Label Contracts

It's a brave new world out there for brand marketing, and that hasn't been lost on managers and labels when it comes time to agree on a contract.

With band/brand marriages creating multimillion-dollar revenue streams—in the face of declining physical CD and flattening digital sales—both parties acknowledge that contracts between labels and artists are morphing into something else.

"These changes started in earnest in 2006," says Brian Avnet, who manages the careers of Josh Groban and Lori McKenna. "Labels began putting together strategic marketing departments. They had to—the Internet has grabbed them and hit hard."

Indeed. "We're a full-service label, which enables us to ask for a percentage of artists' ancillary profits," Epic Records president Charlie Walk says. "A few years ago, it was difficult for labels to get this [additional] percentage. Now, we put our money where our mouth is to get the percentage. This is reflected in new language we are putting into contracts."

Managers like Avnet understand that labels have to develop other sources of income. But, he adds, "it doesn't mean I, as a manager, must buy into it all."

In a general sense, labels have taken the initiative—forced, perhaps—to alter the business models of their economic relationships with artists, with more and more labels acting as agents to bring in branding deals. In the process, labels have become more aggressive in bringing such deals to the table.

"Today, a label is partnering with an artist's own brand," Geffen GM Jeff Harleston says. Historically, the engine for generating revenue was record/CD sales, which drove publishing, touring and, in a few cases, endorsement deals.

"Today, though, other mediums pay a part in promoting an artist's brand," Harleston says. "Labels and artists are now becoming partners in these other areas—such as we share in the risks and upsides.

In addition to more traditional endorsement deals, today's deals are digging deeper when joining forces with artists, and can include exclusive content and multiproduct campaigns. This is directly affecting today's contracts. On more than one occasion, particularly when dealing with established artists, fans recall agreements being amended to reflect newer, nontraditional revenue streams. Of course, as is often the case, the nontraditional is fast becoming the traditional.

Tommy Boy VP Rosie Lopez likens today's artist/label agreements to such business investments as real estate. "We are developing value together, and will share in revenue splits as a result of that development," she says.

The "profit sharing" plan Lopez speaks of is not etched in stone, and likely never will be. Label/artist splits vary in each case. "It depends on the value of the artist when we get involved," Lopez notes. For example, an artist with a stronger fan base could get a larger percentage of the split.

When discussing branded entertainment, Lopez cannot help but point to two former Tommy Boy artists: Queen Latifah and RuPaul. "Would Queen Latifah be as successful today without a successful recording career?" she wonders aloud. "And would RuPaul have gotten a contract with MAC Cosmetics without "Supermodel"?"

For Reach Media's Michael Pagnotta, who oversees the careers of "Erasmus" and "Girl Authority," today's branding deals hark back to ownership of copyright. But in the current scenario, this extends to ownership of content. "Does an artist own his or her own likeness and image?" Pagnotta asks. "If not, why not?"

Pagnotta points to years gone by when artists "signed away" their likeness and image for promotion, CD artwork and touring. "Now, it extends to endorsing a cosmetic brand, appearing in a TV spot for a national brand or designing apparel wear for Nike," he says.

The greatest challenges in all of this is re-tooling the mind-set of older executives and reinventing what the companies do. "We all have to think of artists in different ways—as an artist as well as a brand," one M-space label exec says.

He continues, "If we, the labels, don't deliver, no artist will give up these rights. If we bring two lousy branding opportunities to the artist, but their agent brings them 30, they won't want us to share in the additional revenue. The best publicity for us is if we put money in artists' pockets via successful deals with Jeep, American Express and other widely recognized brands."

MICHAEL PAOLETTA

Making The Brand

www.americanradiohistory.com
Concert 2.0
Monetizing Live Music Online And In Virtual Worlds

In a small abandoned warehouse in an industrial area north of Denver, local bands Bad Weather California, born in the Flood and Meese are playing a very unusual gig.

At first glance it seems pretty straightforward. The warehouse contains the headquaters and studios of Internet video outfit ManiaTV, which is streaming the performances live via its Internet TV network.

Nothing new there. Ever since the online success of the worldwide Live 8 music festival—during which some 5 million viewers tuned in to AOL to view the concerts—companies like Control Room (formerly Network Live) have emerged to air concerts live online, while such venues as the Knitting Factory, the Gig, Center Stage's rehearsals.com and various Live Nation properties now record and broadcast almost all their performances.

What makes this Denver concert different is that it is also being simulcast in the popular virtual world Second Life. Again, by itself that's nothing unheard-of. Suzanne Vega and Ben Folds performed in avatar form in Second Life last year.

But taken together it's an attempt to merge the three different platforms—live, Internet and virtual world—into one common experience shared by all. Why? Because with CD sales falling like a rock and digital revenue not yet making up the difference, live events could be the music "product" of the future, sparking a flurry of innovation around monetizing it worldwide in multiple locations, producers will air the event live online via MSN, where viewers can choose from several camera angles, interact with venue and city maps where the shows are taking place and even submit their own user-created videos adhering to its green-friendly theme.

Exactly how all this translates to more revenue remains something that needs to be worked out. Acts can charge admission for both Second Life and Internet TV performance, and sponsors might pay a premium for interactive banners in Second Life shows as an extension to their visual banners at the live show.

But before we can expect big bands and big sponsors to add such a multiplatform extension to their upcoming tours, the experience needs a bit of work. As the initial Denver attempt shows... it's hard.

First, there's the time lag that has long plagued Second Life. Get more than 30 avatars in the same space and people start losing clothes, the audio skips and video load times get real jump which makes it difficult to seamlessly patch it into live feeds in real life.

Tantra got around the problem somewhat by holding the event simultaneously in 25 Second Life locations so no one would get overcrowded, but some venues still crashed. Which raises the second issue—ticketing. Just as in real life, friends in virtual worlds want to hang out together, not get randomly assigned to different venues based on which has the best refresh rate. So Singh hopes to build a reservation system that would apply a real-world ticketing structure to the virtual events.

Finally there's the task of controlling the artists' avatars. Since the talent performing in real life can't exactly be at a computer manipulating their digital dopplegangers, someone has to do it for them. But spontaneous actions like a flip of the hair or a Peter Tosh-style windmill aren't exactly standard commands. They have to be preprogrammed.

One option, though expensive, is to apply motion-capture technology to the artists performing in real life, which will control how their avatar responds as a sort of 21st-century cyber-marienette.

But technology aside, the real X-factor is whether anybody will show real interest in attending virtual concerts. Close to 1,200 fans signed up to attend ManiaTV's event in Second Life, with an average of about 300 actually present at any one time. Meanwhile, some 40,000 viewed it live online.

That's a decent turnout for an event that had little marketing support. But Singh himself attributed it to the "hook" factor of it being something new and different. But once that curiosity factor dies, will anybody still care? 

Bugged Bunny
Where to even start? Apparently mere speakers are no longer good enough anymore. Now they have to visually express you as well.

Enter the Wassup (yes, you read that right), a dancing speaker that works with any digital MP3 player. Simply hook it up to your device, hit play and watch it get its groove on.

In that respect, it's similar to the popular iDog and various other "interactive speakers" to hit the iPod accessory market. The only difference is that it's shaped like a rabbit—sort of.

The Wassup will be available in June in silver, blue and red for $25.

—Antony Bruno

Bluebird Is The Word
Nashville's Bluebird Cafè has opened a virtual live music venue within Second Life. The venue plans to bring national acts and local favorites to perform in the virtual world, and will charge between $3 and $10 for admission. Artists initially will perform via streaming video in the Second Life venue. No word yet on whether avatar-based performances are pending.

I'm Wide Awake, It's Moggling
Music-based blog community MOG is hosting a contest with Bright Eyes to give away an iPhone. New members to the MOG site are invited to create a page on the social networking service and upload their music collection list for all to see. As long as entrants have at least one Bright Eyes song in their collection, they're then eligible to not only win an iPhone, but the band's label Saddle Creek Records will load them with vinyl releases from the entire Bright Eyes catalog.

Zeros, Not Heroes
The vastly popular "Guitar Hero" videogame has spawned a real-life band—Guitar Zeros. The group uses the guitar-shaped game controllers connected to laptop computers to create acoustic and electric guitar sounds, along with drum machines and other digital noise-makers. The devices are shaped like a regular guitar, albeit smaller, but have a series of color-coded buttons on the neck in place of strings, as well as a toggle switch to emulate strumming. The group is based in San Francisco.
Help Me, Rondor: ‘Covermount’ Leads To Beach Boys Legal Wrangle

Brian Wilson must have a smile on his face. He is now rid of 18 legal claims that former bandmate Mike Love filed after a London newspaper circulated 2.6 million free compilation CDs of Wilson’s concert performances that included some Beach Boys songs. A U.S. federal court ruled that Wilson didn’t have to notify Love, or secure his permission, before the songs were used for the promotion.

But then Wilson wasn’t really involved in the free-CD promotion anyway—the band’s publisher Rondor Music had the right to grant permission. The compilation was part of the frenzied, competitive newspaper publishing scene in London—one that is quite lucrative for music publishers.

Shortly before the 2004 release of Wilson’s solo album “Smile,” Big Time.tv worked with Associated Newspapers to compile a promotional CD, called a “covermount.”

Jeremy Fabinyi, executive director of U.K. mechanical rights society MCPS, explains that newspaper publishers will license and wrap a book, a poster or other free products with the newspaper (i.e., mount the product on the cover) to increase its circulation. U.K. music magazines have often wrapped a compilation CD with their issues. But CD covermounts are relatively new to London’s daily newspaper market, where about nine top papers compete for readers.

“A couple of years ago, the market had gone absolutely crazy for CD covermounts,” Fabinyi says. “It’s like a drug addiction for the newspapers because you put a covermount of high-quality sound recordings that you give away for nothing, and you get an enormous boost in circulation. Then your competitor does the same. It’s this incredible battle that raged for awhile.

One music industry source says that in 2005, there were more CDs given away by U.K. newspapers than CDs sold in the country. But those giveaways generated about $12 million ($20.7 million) in 2005 publishing royalties collected by MCPS, Fabinyi says.

For the “Good Vibrations” covermount CD, Associated Newspapers licensed from Sanctuary Wilson’s rerecordings of some Beach Boys songs from a live concert, along with some recordings of Wilson’s own songs. Associated also licensed the compositions from MCPS, which represents Rondor, publisher of the Beach Boys’ songs.

But Love claimed that the covermount and related ads violated his rights. Damaged existing and future sales of the Beach Boys albums and concert tickets and tarnished the band’s trademark. Love also argued that his partnership with Wilson meant he had the right to approve any covermount.

“This lawsuit wasn’t about money,” says Wilson’s lawyer, Lee Phillips of Manatt, Phelps and Phillips in Los Angeles. The Beach Boys’ members have a very litigious history.

Barry Mellon, the Manatt partner in charge of the litigation for Wilson, says that he had to whittle away at each of Love’s 18 legal claims to ultimately get the case dismissed. Some claims were made under U.S. trademark law. Love’s lawyers argued that a consumer who bought the U.K. covermount CD in the States from eBay was misled into believing it was a Beach Boys CD.

But Wilson’s lawyers had evidence that the “consumer” was actually a client of Love’s attorneys, represented by them “in dozens of gender and age discrimination laws its filed against various businesses and non-profit entities,” the court wrote in a February order. He was not a “confused consumer.”

The court threw out the trade-mark claims.

Manatt’s Eric Custer, who worked on the case with Mellon, says they had evidence that the covermount promotion actually generated higher publishing royalties than in the past and increased sales of original Beach Boys’ songs in the United Kingdom.

Still, Love argued that he had a partnership with Wilson, and that Wilson therefore owed him a higher duty of care (i.e., a fiduciary duty) to let him know about the promotion and to get Love’s permission for that CD.

But on May 10, the court granted a summary judgment for Wilson. Judge Audrey Collins wrote that Love and Wilson had a songwriting partnership “in the colloquial sense of the term,” there was no legal partnership and no obligation to inform one another of their use of their co-authored songs. In fact, the court noted, Love himself had admitted to recording some of the co-written songs several times without first informing Wilson.

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Still, Love argued that he had a partnership with Wilson, and that Wilson therefore owed him a higher duty of care (i.e., a fiduciary duty) to let him know about the promotion and to get Love’s permission for that CD.

But on May 10, the court granted a summary judgment for Wilson. Judge Audrey Collins wrote that Love and Wilson had a songwriting partnership “in the colloquial sense of the term,” there was no legal partnership and no obligation to inform one another of their use of their co-authored songs. In fact, the court noted, Love himself had admitted to recording some of the co-written songs several times without first informing Wilson.
Hillary Clinton’s doing a contest on her Web site but she’s partial to U2’s “Beautiful Day” (Oh, yeah? Where?). And Barack Obama wanted to make a statement that songs are a distraction from the issues so intentionally didn’t have one, and now all people are talking about is his lack of a song.

Of course we all remember blasts from past campaigns (more than we do their speeches) such as John Kerry’s “No Surrender” (Bruce Springsteen & the E Street Band), Howard Dean’s “A Little Less Conversation” (Elvis Presley) and my personal favorite, Bob Dole’s “Dole Man” (going to the tune of Sam & Dave’s “Soul Man”).

As good as those are, let’s face it—they’re not particularly appropriate given the state of our country’s ecology, homelessness, infrastructure, schools, poverty, etc.

So I’d like to suggest a few titles that give a more accurate picture for those guys jumping in late and needing a tune.


See you on the radio.

THE Indies

JOHN EDWARDS, left, campaigns to the tune of JOHN MELLENCAMP’S “Our Country.”

Reissue Rescue

Selling Old Music In Old And New Ways

Even as the indie label sector tries to get a handle on the potential of new business models in the Internet age, there are still places where old-school practices reign. Few labels rely completely on the strength of the indie retail base as much as those that traffic in catalog and reissues.

Check Seattle’s Light in the Attic, a reissue-heavy label that distributes its own music and manages its retail network by loading up the trunk for an ol’-fashioned road trip. The label isn’t all old school, of course. It recently experimented with lighthearted marketing tactics like a coloring book contest, and co-founder Josh Wright notes that “digital sales are exploding,” but tradition and a conservative approach still rule the day.

Without much money for co-op spending, “we still need to be face-to-face with stores,” Wright says. “I’ve done three trips in the past few years, where I drive all the way to Philadelphia and back.”

On May 15, the label rereleased two albums from funk soul diva Betty Davis, packaging the first two albums from the vibrant, scratchy voiced singer with extensive liner notes and lively artwork.

“We don’t have a lot of advertising money,” label representative Chris Esteys says. “In fact, we don’t have any advertising money. The money goes into whatever we can do on the retail level.”

And the retail landscape for catalog and reissue product isn’t nearly as bustling as it was a few years ago. Chicago’s Numero Group thrives on niche stores like the Windy City’s Dusty Groove and New York’s Other Music, with label co-founder Ken Shipley noting that a store-scribbled review at a respected indie inspires more sales than a listening station at a chain retailer.

“When we started, we believed we should spend $5,000 for co-op per record,” he says. “Now we’re doing less than $500. We need sympathetic record stores. If we’re selling 5,000 records, we cannot afford $2,000 for co-op.”

That’s why he’s concerned about the closing of a number of key stores during the past few years—New York’s Vinyl Fever being the most recent. Yet Numero Group seems well-prepared for any changes brought by digital distribution.

The label sells downloads via its site with a cleverly designed digital store based on an interface with clickable record crates. Ryko-distributed Numero Group, which has focused heavily on soul compilations, also has a subscriber series, in which fans can plop down $100 to receive six albums in Numero’s line each year (think the Sub Pop singles club).

In three years, Numero has about 380 subscribers. Shipley says, “That doesn’t seem like a lot, but if you stack it, it’s $100 per person, we’ve just created $38,000 in income. That essentially pays for our entire catalog releases right there. If we’re looking to sell 5,000-10,000 records, we’re almost at 500 people, and that’s nearly 10% of the people buying our records.”

Los Angeles-based garage label Alivé Records relied a bit more heavily on Tower Records than Numero and Light in the Attic, and founder Patrick Boissel says the label has been “tonguing down” its reissues during the past two years. Yet Alivé, which is closely aligned with Bomp Records, will soon begin a larger branding campaign for the latter, whose founder Greg Shaw passed in 2004.

“There’s a Bomp book coming out, and I have a feeling many of the bands in the book will get some attention,” he says. “We’re going to try to use Bomp a little bit as a launch pad for the reissues.” On the horizon is a repackaging of early material from L.A. punk band the Weirdos, as well as Alivé’s reissue of Two Gallant’s “The Throes,” an act now signed to Saddle Creek.

Boissel also just recently brought the Bomp mail-order business into the modern era with an online store that offers CDs and limited digital downloads at bompstore.com. Up and running for about two months, the site has more than doubled the mail-order business of Bomp.

“Thank God it did,” Boissel says. “That means people want these records and just can’t find them in the stores.”

For 24/7 Indies news and analysis, see billboard.biz/indies.
Interview with Todd Patrick

When Todd Patrick was 16 years old, the brakes of his car gave out on a six-lane highway in Texas. The only way Patrick was able to stop the car was by flipping it onto the medium.

Leaving the car unharmed—though covered with gasoline—the teenager was arrested on charges stemming from having a false age, 19, on his ID. But Patrick was just scratching out his birthdate to drink. He simply wanted to get into 18-plus rock shows.

Patrick, now 31, laughs. "I used to be just one of hundreds of thousands of kids who are ripe to be moved by music." These days, such kids are his customers: Patrick, better-known as Todd P, has thrown nearly 300 low-priced, all-ages, roving avant-garde rock events across the New York metropolis during the last six years. His venue choices range from Williamsburg hot spot Studio B to deserted back rooms on the Lower East Side and obscure lofts in Queens. He cites his own desire to watch his favorite bands play for booking the gigs.

He and his team of 14 interns work from his Long Island City apartment booking anywhere from three to six shows per week and sending out updates to his 13,000 mailing list subscribers. Explicitly serving an audience he says has been priced out of seeing live music at larger venues, his average show draws 150-200 people, with tickets costing $5-$8 (some are free). In the coming months, he will open a pair of his own clubs. In the meantime, Patrick has just launched the biweekly, all-ages show "zine Showpaper."

**Is it difficult putting on nothing but all-ages shows in New York?**

It's really difficult. You don't have to circumvent liquor laws or anything, but the core of the problem is the economics. Most clubs are organized by a cadre of investors who put up a shit-ton of money with the goal of making a shit-ton of money. There's a lot at stake. They run their clubs like it's a war. So the idea of bringing in people to a bar or club that aren't drinking is perplexing to them and more trouble than it's worth as far as they're concerned. They don't think about the fact that these are the next generations that will be at their bar drinking. So I work with establishments that understand their potential for tapping this next generation, are hungry for new music and [want] to be part of something. By the way, only about 20% of the people who come to see my shows are under 21.

**What are your major expenses?**

My investment is very small. The big thing you need is a PA—and that's it. Starting out, I'd take big advantage of Guitar Center's 30-day, no-questions-asked return policy. Eventually, I bought a $500 PA system, for vocals, and bands bring their own amps. That means I can set up shop wherever and the bar is just happy that I brought in a shit-ton of people who are buying beers. I work with people who have the same goals and ethics as me and get to take home a ton of money from the bar. I take home 10%, then split the rest between the band and the door guy, who are friends or interns. I run the sound. The house keeps the bar, I keep the door.

**Do you think regular rock clubs spend too much money?**

Absolutely, and it's easy to spend money on stuff you don't need to spend it on. Understandably, there's the matter of rent and union workers. But then when you're dropping $500 or more on a sound guy you don't trust? Or outrageous specifications on sound equipment, that's going to make an indie rock guitar band sound just the same? Trickling out your space to look trendier, when people move along so quickly from trend? A indie rock is a cottage industry. It's like the fashion or wedding industries, with a lot of money to be made and lost based on the fact that they assume you don't know what you're doing yourself. I don't make a lot of money. But I now make about as much as I did wearing a suit as a financial analyst in midtown when I first moved here.

**What's your history in this business?**

I was booking shows at a coffee shop while I went to school at the University of Texas in Austin. After that, I opened Seventeen Nautical Miles, an all-ages spot, in Portland, Ore. I came there and worked in finance. I didn't take a cut of the door for the first three years. All in all, I've been doing this for about 11 years.

**What are some of the problems you see happening at traditional rock venues?**

First and foremost, we're in a country where the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer, and you're seeing an economy where only the rich can go to a rock show. Some are paying hundreds and hundreds of dollars to see their favorite band. It's suddenly only a gilded class that can see anything quality, and even for a heralded indie rock band like Wilco, you're going to pay $50 a person. And then these expensive shows, they're so tightly wound, it's not fun. I don't like velvet rope or VIP policies either. Everyone there is important. That kind of childish elitism is intolerable. It's just trying to bow to class divisions in what should be one of the most communal, audience-friendly experiences—a rock show.

**Most clubs are organized by a cadre of investors who put up a shit-ton of money with the goal of making a shit-ton of money.**

You've booked shows for acts like !!! (chk chk chk), Cat Power, Animal Collective, Lightning Bolt and Deerhoof at some pretty strange places. What is an example of one of your more interesting shows?

At South by Southwest this year, we threw a free party in a lot behind the Amtrak station at 2 a.m. with Spank Rock, Aa, Dan Dacun, Kids in the Hall and some other hip-hop acts. I didn't have to ask permission or get a permit. It was in the middle of nowhere, so nobody was going to complain. With all that, 600 people still came out. It was also cool booking Matt & Kim and 900 people coming out. A few months later, they sold out Bowery Ballroom, a 550-person venue, and suddenly everyone's like, "Oh, wow, they've really made it now."

In what other ways are you expanding the Todd P brand? I don't really think of it as a Todd P "brand." It's just the Todd P "guy." I am running around at nearly every show, hooking things up and dealing with the problems. Right now, I'm working with some investors on securing permanent spaces for shows. These spots could serve as surrogate living rooms for kids in and out of town who are excited about music.

We also have a new biweekly, tabloid sheet called Showpaper, which will list all-ages, DIY shows and events in the tri-state area. While it won't carry the Todd P name, it's crafted by me and the people I work with. My ultimate dream is to get these things rolling, hand them over to people I trust, then opening up shop in Mexico City. Those kids down there are primed for these types of raw rock shows. All of these goals serve a larger goal: to invite the nerds to the party.
When executives from Warner Bros. Records were looking to put together a bonus DVD to include in a special Wal-Mart edition of country singer Blake Shelton’s latest album, “Pure BS,” the label turned to an unconventional partner for visual footage—radio giant Clear Channel.

The broadcaster’s Online Music and Radio (CCOMR) unit in late January had produced a special performance by Shelton at Starstruck Studios in Nashville as part of its “Stripped” series—an upstart video-programming initiative for the Web focused on acoustic performances by featured acts.

A number of Warner’s key Music Row executives were at the shoot—including VP of promotion Gator Michaels, VP of sales and marketing Peter Strickland, new-media VP Lynette Carbonola and A&R VP Bill Bennett—and they were sold on using it as a value-add.

Five days later, Kelli Cashiola, an online marketing executive at Warner Bros., called Jenny Smythe, one of Clear Channel Online’s regional reps in Nashville, about adding the performance to the Wal-Mart retail package, which was due for a May 1 release.

During the next 48 hours, amid dozens of phone calls and e-mails among Cashiola, Smythe, CCOMR VP of content Peter Harper and video director Mitchell Stuart, a deal was made.

For Clear Channel, the request marked a first. The company was already making inroads with the major labels on participating in the 18-month-old “Stripped.” Warner Bros. Records in Nashville had already teamed with Clear Channel on similar promotions for the Wreckers and Big & Rich. But no label had sought a monetizable use for the content before.

No money changed hands in the deal, but it carried big upside for Clear Channel just the same. Not only was the radio giant receiving validation for its video-programming efforts, but also as part of the agreement “Stripped” received branding on the CD art, the bonus DVD and in tags on the actual footage.

Call it a sign of the times of radio’s shifting role in the digital era.

Just 24 months ago, most major radio groups, Clear Channel included, weren’t even available for online streaming, let alone producing Web video.

But since Clear Channel hired Evan Harrison away from AOL in November 2004 to head its digital strategy, the radio giant has been in the midst of a scramble to overhaul its stodgy image online and play catch-up with the leading music powers on the Internet.

Clear Channel, along with the radio business, finds itself under mounting pressure from all sorts of competitors, a group that includes satellite radio, iPods and a new breed of portable Internet radio upstarts like Slacker.

The company’s ability to adapt to new technology also is coming under greater scrutiny late in the midst of a controversial buyout bid by a consortium of private-equity firms led by Bain Capital and Thomas H. Lee.

This is the backdrop against which “Stripped” has emerged, syndicated nationally to the local Web sites of more than 1,000 Clear Channel radio stations around the country. The program is one of more than a half-dozen new digital features Harrison and his team of 80 staffers have introduced as part of the company’s Web revitalization effort.

Also in the mix: streaming radio, free on-demand streaming previews of upcoming album releases (“Sneak Peeks”), an emerging-artist program (“New”), music videos on demand, artist-hosted video channels (“Video 6 Packs”), live concerts on-demand and even social networking.

While on one hand, the company is simply bringing itself up to speed with features that the likes of Yahoo, AOL and MySpace already offer online, the transition is impressive given it is effectively delivering on functionalities that are anything but core skill sets of the radio business.

Even more impressive is that the radio giant is making substantial gains in its collective Web traffic in the process. And it is doing so by pushing its sites on-air to people who are trapped in their cars during the morning and afternoon drive hours. Advantage: terrestrial radio.

“Radio is incredibly potent,” Harrison says. “We saw an opportunity to make it a dual medium by making an event of something on-air while making it interactive online.”

Combined, Clear Channel station sites now rank sixth among online music properties (see sidebar, page 26), with almost 11 million monthly unique visitors, according to ComScore/Media Metrix. While that’s still well behind the top tier of Yahoo (almost 22 million), ArtistDirect (16.9 million) and MySpace (16.4 million), it’s rapidly closing in on AOL (almost 14 million) and MTV Networks’ combined Web properties (more than 14 million). In fact, Clear Channel is almost neck-and-neck with MTV if you count only the latter’s music-related properties. Meanwhile, the radio conglomerate now gets more traffic than MSN’s music portal.

And in the core streaming radio business, Clear Channel has vaulted ahead of AOL as the No. 2 programmer during after-work hours of Monday-Friday from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m., with more than 1 million cume or unique listeners—an almost 50% gain in Web listenership during the last eight months.

Also surprising is consumer use of Clear Channel’s on-demand content, which has increased more than 90% since January to more than 6.5 million plays per week. The company credits that to the fact that in any given month it now claims content from the majority of artists in the top 20 on The Billboard 200 in any given week.
All that growth is paying off for the company. The online division has been the radio unit's fastest-growing source of revenue in 2005 and 2006—reportedly accounting for approximately 5% total revenue. The radio business reported first-quarter 2007 revenue of more than $819 million, which would put digital revenue in the range of $40 million.

**THE MAN WITH THE DIGITAL PLAN**

Harrison is sitting in his midtown Manhattan office on a sunny afternoon in late April, proudly demonstrating the online unit’s latest creation—a social networking site.

A week earlier, the company had introduced the feature on more than half-a-dozen stations around the country, including New York’s mainstream top 40 station WHTZ (Z100). Harrison is giving Billboard a guided tour of his underground profile on Z100’s take on the offering, the Z-Zone.

He is in the early stages of collecting friends and posting pictures. He plays a shot of a video he just uploaded. The clip shows Harrison sitting on the couch in his office. He welcomes users to his page, while he changes his shoes. The scene is vaguely reminiscent of the opening “Won’t You Be My Neighbor?” sequence to “Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood.”

That’s no accident. Harrison sees big opportunity in helping listeners to Clear Channel’s stations draw social connections online.

“ar the indicators are that people want to connect locally,” he says.

In its competition against rival Web portals, Clear Channel is looking at differentiated features like social networking to make stations sites more sticky with users.

“Whereas an MSN or a Yahoo already has tens of millions of people coming online every day to [instant message] and get news, we’re not the place you go to manage photos and e-mail. So we have to give people a compelling reason to dial up our URL,” Harrison says.

In the midst of the conversation, Warner Bros. VP of marketing Rob Gordon pops into the office to play Harrison cuts from upcoming releases from the White Stripes and the Smashing Pumpkins. Warner is hoping to work with Clear Channel to promote the acts online.

The original programming that may spring from this impromptu meeting is another key way Clear Channel is improving the appeal of its Web sites. And the eagerness of labels to participate is a sign that the moves are working.

However, turning around Clear Channel’s digital fortunes has been anything but easy. When Harrison arrived at the company at the end of 2004, its stations’ Web sites were a decentralized collection of locally managed properties with cluttered design and more often than not, a lack of radio programming.

Primarily, they were destinations to see pictures of on-air talent and register for contests and promotions. And they were awash in a hodgepodge of advertisements.

In hiring Harrison, the company moved to create a new structure that would centralize Clear Channel’s Web infrastructure, but give the stations the autonomy to separately brand, design and operate their own stations. Destinations would also have the freedom to program much of their stations' on-air content, but would also carry nationally syndicated programming developed by CCOM.

Given the immeasurable layout of Harrison’s seemingly paperless, free-workspace, decorated with framed Ramones posters and family photos on the walls, it’s no surprise that one of his first pieces of business was cleaning up the visual presentation of the sites. But just as urgent was ensuring that Clear Channel’s biggest stations were streaming on the Web.

Getting the local stations to buy into the concept that streaming their broadcasts was something they wanted to be doing was the company’s first big hurdle under its new Web strategy. Many broadcasters at the time viewed streaming as a cost they didn’t want to incur. Stations had made earlier forays into streaming in the late ’90s and early ’00s, only to later pull back after realizing the bandwidth and copyright royalty expenses associated with delivering content on the Web. At the time, the online advertising market wasn’t offsetting the cash outlay. Nor was it geared toward the kind of local ad business that is Clear Channel’s core revenue driver. There was also the issue of how to get credit for online listeners with terrestrial radio advertisers.

However, as 2005 approached, the online ad market was in the midst of a takeoff, reaching a level of around $9 billion. And digital ad agencies were sprouting in response to the success Yahoo and Google were having selling advertising.

Clear Channel’s radio division CEO John Hogan was determined to tap into that growing market regardless of previous challenges and was willing to invest in streaming radio to make it happen.

“We had to come up with an approach to talk to our audience in a way that made sense for a company that at the time was still measured by Arbitron, which is a diary recall system,” Harrison says.

The answer the company came up with was to push online at-work listening as a new daypart (the time segments that divide a radio or TV day for ad-scheduling purposes).

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**Music’s Web Masters:** Clear Channel Is Gaining Ground On The Biggest Names In Online Music

Clear Channel’s growing presence—and nearly 11 million unique monthly visitors—in the online world comes amid a shift in the Web traffic patterns of some of the biggest music-focused portals, according to data tracked by ComScore/Mediakix. Making hard charges in the space during the last 15 months are both familiar names (MySpace, MTV) and some surprises (ArtistDirect). And while Yahoo remains dominant, former powerhouse AOL is showing declines in visitors. MSN has fallen out of the top five entirely; in April of last year it was third of all online music properties based on traffic rankings provided by ComScore. MSN is currently in the seven hole, down to some 9 million unique visitors from roughly 16 million two months ago. Billboard breaks down the current horse race among Clear Channel’s competitors in the U.S. online music space, as tracked by ComScore:

**YAHOO MUSIC**

Unique visitors: 21.9 million
A year ago: 23 million

**ARTISTDIRECT**

Unique visitors: 16.9 million
A year ago: 14.9 million

**MYSPACE MUSIC**

Unique visitors: 16.4 million
A year ago: 7.9 million

**MTV NETWORKS**

Unique visitors: 15.5 million
A year ago: 11.3 million

**AOL MUSIC**

Unique visitors: 13.8 million
A year ago: 16.3 million

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The notion of at-work listenershhip is nothing new in the realm of the Internet. But when it comes to terrestrial radio and its interaction with advertisers, much of their business has been rooted in the ratings around the morning and afternoon drive times.

To establish the new daypart, Clear Channel, within three months of Harrison’s arrival, had all the stations in its top 25 markets up on the Web and streaming. The company also registered with ComScore/Media Metrix to measure its online listenershhip. In addition Clear Channel standardized all the banner ad space it offered on its sites to conform with guidelines from the Interactive Advertising Bureau.

At the same time the company worked closely with its sales force of more than 5,000 to ensure they could sell advertising against the programming and use the ComScore data as proof of its online reach.

This was no small undertaking. For years, a majority of the company’s stations had been giving away online advertising slots as a free bonus to sponsors who bought time on air. Banner ads were offered in all sorts of shapes and sizes. And in most markets there was only one specified person trying to sell Internet advertising.

“We had to pull up the brake and establish internally that there is a value online,” Harrison says. “If we wanted to establish value, we had to stop giving it away.”

Under the new system, the company was incentivizing its salesforce to look at selling online in a more holistic fashion. It wasn’t just a case of selling advertisers a banner ad. The goal was to package offers that called on sponsors to buy 15- and 30-second spots in addition to a banner so listeners to streaming radio could hear a call to action and then click through on an accompanying banner to find out more information.

Local advertisers — particularly companies like automotive dealers and direct-response marketers — took a quick liking to the offers and began buying time online.

Listeners came online, too. “The strategy from the beginning felt natural,” Harrison says. “We weren’t trying to force people to go to a new destination. We already had a deep connection in local markets with our listeners. We were simply giving the stations the opportunity and the tools for listeners to choose them when they’re behind the computer.”

With a revenue model in place and a growing audience for streaming radio, the company — now six months into its Web transformation — then set its focus on redesigning its Web sites, ramping up its label relationships and building its original-content initiatives.

During the next year-and-a-half the company would roll out revamped destinations along with a series of on-demand offerings like “Stripped,” “New!” and “Sneak Peeks.”

In each case the purpose of the program was the same: create content that could be syndicated to stations around the country and would give on-air talent a reason to talk up special features on the Web site in an organic way.

“That was a big step,” Harrison says. “Up to that point radio hadn’t been thought of as an outlet for anything but [real-time] programming.”

Clear Channel is now hoping to further improve that circular on-air/on-line relationship with its social networking efforts.

The company plans to drive traffic to the social networks via the “listen live” Web radio streaming area on the flagships sites of the stations.

As part of the initiative, each station that has a social network will introduce a new chat feature in the Web radio player that will feature profile pictures of social network members who are participating in the chat.

Users will be able to click on the user profiles in the chat area to enter and explore the social network. Stations will also promote the social networks through on-air plugs and special stunts and promotions centered around the sites.

“That fully completes the circle with our listeners,” says Tom Poleman, senior VP of programming and marketing for Clear Channel/New York and Z100 and one of the executives tasked with implementing the online strategy on the station level. “Back when we all started in radio we got into a dark room with a bunch of records and a microphone, and we thought we were communicating with our listeners. The reality is that was just one-way communication. Now, the process is a full, complete experience.”

The company hasn’t yet established additional content or promotion deals with major and indie labels geared around the social networking sites. Harrison says Clear Channel envisions opportunities for everything from artist profile pages to special/exclusive content from artists that will be featured on the networks.

It’s just another way Clear Channel hopes to strengthen itself as a promotional partner with the recording industry.

With most of the top 20 artists on The Billboard 200 featured on the Clear Channel sites in a given week, it’s already the case that jocks almost always have something online they can reference. And it’s not just music stations benefitting. For special online features from superstar artists like Bruce Springsteen, even the company’s news, talk and sports stations occasionally get in on the fact of talking up on-demand programming features on the Web.

The rise of Web programming also gives stations ways to more effectively expose the artists in rotation and even promote more artists to its audience than those getting played on-air. Suddenly all Clear Channel Web sites featured a listing of the last 10 songs they played on-air. And with the rise of secondary programming streams, developed in conjunction with the company’s high-definition radio efforts, Clear Channel has new outlets of exposure it can offer labels whose artists they can’t get on the air.

And with a growing slate of video offerings, the company has also been able to tap into a new source of revenue — local TV advertisers that are now buying time in front of playbacks of “Stripped” performances and on-demand videos.

In the process, the company claims its online advertising growth rate is far outpacing the industry’s overall 20%-30% expansion clip. Clear Channel is now doing business online with more than 10,000 customers and attracting many new advertisers locally in markets like restaurants and retail as well as automotive that may have not previously advertised with online radio. The company is in the midst of building a base of national advertisers, too, to supplement the core local business.

In addition to creating programming features and advertising opportunities, the company is also looking to change the dynamic that online has on the company’s overall perspective by installing “online program directors” who sit at the same level as traditional PDs and are responsible for stations paying as much attention to the online product as the on-air product.

“Years ago before CCOMR was built out, there was inconsistency across all our stations online. For a lot of stations, the Web was kind of an afterthought and now it’s a priority," Poleman says. "We are miles ahead of where we were.”

The goal remains to continue to build audience, bring new people in, have users spend more time with us on online and start doing business with advertisers we haven’t worked with before,” Harrison says. "All the trends appear to be moving in the right direction.”

— Tom Poleman

**Dialled Up**

Clear Channel's lead as a destination for online radio is growing. Below, a snapshot of the unique monthly visitors for the top five radio sites.
BRAD PAISLEY'S CAREER KICKS UP A SERIOUS NOTCH WITH HIS LATEST TOUR AND NEW ALBUM, '5TH GEAR' BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE

Brad Paisley says he called his upcoming album "5th Gear" for a few reasons. It is his fifth album, and a half-dozen of the songs mention some sort of vehicle. And, he adds, the June 19 Arista release is "an aggressive-sounding album...everything about it feels a little bit more intense than my previous efforts..."

The title—and that growing intensity—just as well describes what's happening with Paisley's career and life right now.

Case in point? Paisley just picked up his first top male vocalist trophy at the Academy of Country Music Awards after several nominations. No small feat considering it's a field that includes such heavy hitters as Tim McGraw, Keith Urban, Kenny Chesney and others. But Paisley is reaching the level of such superstars in more ways than one.

His last album, "Time Well Wasted," has been certified double platinum and won album of the year honors last year from the Country Music Assn. and the ACM. And he's burning up the road on his Hershey-sponsored Bonfires and Amplifiers tour with Taylor Swift, Kellie Pickler and Jack Ingram. "So far in the first three weekends, everything is pretty much between 50% and 60% higher than what we did last year," says his agent Rob Beckham, senior VP at the William Morris Agency.

Last year was a breakout year, as Paisley ranked among the top 25 touring artists for the first time, ranking No. 23 among all acts in all genres. He grossed $28 million with total attendance slightly less than 700,069 from 57 shows.

"We're traveling and touring in a way that I'd never dreamed possible," Paisley says. "That you could do it with this much fun and be out here with these kinds of bells and whistles blows my mind every night."

Paisley has earned a reputation for having one of the industry's most innovative road shows. He includes animated videos in his performance, which he creates himself, and he utilizes cutting-edge technology. "There's this unique moment where we've got Allison [Krauss] appearing and the way we do it now is you'll think she's there," Paisley says of the performance of "Whiskey Lullaby," his hit duet with Krauss. "It's like a hologram. It's really, really weird how she just walks out and starts singing."

Paisley says he can see the growth at his gigs. "That's really obvious as we look out [from the stage]," he says. "A guy that sells our merchandise out on the road says just in the first three weeks of this tour we're selling 40% more merchandise than we did last year. That's exciting because that's a combination of selling a few more tickets and at the same time people want to buy the stuff even more. I definitely feel like we have momentum on our side and things are going up."

Radio is mirroring his touring success. His latest single, "Ticks," is one of the fastest-climbing tunes of his career, and sits at No. 4 on Billboard's Hot Country Songs chart. "People have an expectation of Brad, and they know that he's the modern-day Roger Miller," Sony BMG Nashville VP of marketing Tom Baldrich says. "He can write a phrase unlike anybody else, but what people will really appreciate about this record is it continues with Brad being Brad, but it just takes it to another place. Musically, from a production standpoint, it sounds bigger and better and fat. There's more of Brad's guitar work and some stretches by him vocally. He has stepped up to the challenge of following up 'Time Well Wasted.'"

Paisley says the label almost came with a greatest-hits package this time, but opted for a new studio album instead. "The label was talking about a greatest hits, but I felt I had things to say. I wrote the first few things and knew that we were really on our way to a whole album of material. I felt like we had what we needed, and I'm happy with the outcome."

The singer, who has a baby boy with his wife, actress Kimberly Williams-Paisley, says being a new father influenced the record and created a somewhat nostalgic feel. "Letter to Me," was written to myself at 17 years old," he says. "I realized later that—even though that was written in January before we knew whether the baby was a boy or a girl—it was written for my kid as much as it is for me because I think children are the closest thing we get to a second chance at things."

Paisley wrote the song alone and admits it's very autobiographical. Aunt Rita, who is mentioned in the song, was a favorite aunt who died of cancer. "So much of it is absolutely true," the West Virginia native says. "Mrs. Brinkman was my speech teacher and when I started speech class as a sophomore, I was petrified to get up in front of the class and talk. I couldn't do it and she encouraged me."

As he did on his previous album, Paisley designed the cover. "As I look at the songs on this record, many are retrospective," he says. "There is a lot of looking back at high school and mistakes and things that I've done as a kid. That's what the album cover represents. You have the one photo staring in one direction and the other sort of walking off in the distance the other way.

NASHVILLE NUGGETS

CAN '5TH GEAR' KEEP PAISLEY ON HIS IMPRESSIVE ROLL OF HITS?

Title: "My Needs Not Your Pictures"
Debut: 9/18/2004
Peak: 8
Weeks: 25 (still charting as of June 2 chart)

Title: "What\'s Your Favorite\"?
Debut: 5/13/2000
Peak: 1
Weeks: 25

Title: "When I\'m Gone\"
Debut: 10/14/2000
Peak: 1
Weeks: 25

Title: "What\'s Your Favorite\"?
Debut: 9/9/2006
Peak: 3
Weeks: 17

"Kung Christmas."

BRAD PAISLEY on stage during the 42nd annual Academy of Country Music Awards earlier this month in Las Vegas. BOTTOM: Paisley shakes hands with GEORGE STRAIT after Paisley won the award for top male vocalist at the ACM show.

Two People 1999
"Part II" 2001
"Mad On The Vine" 2005
"Time Well Wasted" 2005

*5TH DEBUT DEBUT DATE PEAK WEEKS ON CHART LABEL
*TIE

"We Didn\'t Have To Be" 72 9/14/99 1 12/14/99 30 Arista Nashville
"We\'re Us" 58 11/20/2002 11(2 weeks) 12/22/2002 32 Arista Nashville
"Hard To Be A Husband, Hard To Be A Wife\" 75 10/24/2000 8 10/24/2000 2 KEMAX Nashville
"Two People In Love" 48 5/12/2001 4 7/11/2001 21 Arista Nashville
"Sea Country" 58 8/9/2001 6 8/11/2001 1 Arista Nashville
"I\'m Gonna Miss Her (The Pickup\'s Song)" 49 9/5/2001 2 9/15/2001 31 Arista Nashville
"Memories\" 58 5/12/2002 11(2 weeks) 7/14/2001 15 Arista Nashville
"I Wish You\'d Stay" 59 8/15/2002 7 8/22/2002 10 Arista Nashville
"Little Moments" 58 5/6/2003 2 7/20/2003 22 Arista Nashville
"West Of The World\" 50 10/8/2005 1 11/12/2005 16 Arista Nashville
"I\'m Gonna Miss Her (The Pickup\'s Song)" 37 4/15/2006 1(2 weeks) 11/15/2005 25 Arista Nashville
"Santa\'s Looked A Lot Like Daddy\" 59 10/19/2006 4 11/19/2006 4 Arista Nashville
"Pong Pong Backwoods Holiday\" 59 10/19/2007 3 11/30/2007 1 Arista Nashville
"Pong Pong Backwoods Holiday\" 55 5/19/2007 5 11/30/2007 1 Arista Nashville
"Winter Wonderland\" 58 11/19/2007 5 11/30/2007 1 Arista Nashville
"Dogs\" 50 10/1/2008 6 6/2/2007 12 Arista Nashville

*Top Country Albums: Peak
**Billboard 200: Peak
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www.americanradiohistory.com
The new project features a duet with Carrie Underwood on the song "Oh Love." Underwood toured with Paisley last year and the two would sing "Whiskey Lullaby." When he needed a female voice for his new duet. Underwood was a natural choice. "I'm a huge fan of her singing. She's just tremendous and deserving of everything she's getting," he says. "When I heard that song, it ripped me out (especially the line) 'Strong like a mother holds her child.' I feel that doesn't appeal to me at this point, I don't know what does.

Previous Paisley albums have included special guest appearances by George Jones, Little Jimmy Dickens and Bill Anderson as the Rang-Pao Buckaroos. Jones is absent from the festivities this time around, but Vince Gill fills in and they join voices on a tune called "Bigger Fish to Fry."

Paisley includes a gospel song on every album and on the new set he delivers the classic "When We All Get to Heaven."

One thing fans won't hear on the new album is a reprise of "Waiting On a Woman." During a performance at a Country Radio Seminar, Paisley announced to media and radio programmers that the song, from his previous album, would be included on the new album and would finally be a single. However, plans changed. "We finished the album and it had all these ballads that really fit the bill for what we needed," he says, "and I wasn't going to put 'Waiting On a Woman' on this album if there was a chance that it wasn't going to get singled."

So now the game plan is for the song to be included on the next album, which will be a greatest-hits collection. Then it will be released as a single. "It's one of those masterpieces that rarely ever comes along and it will get its shot," he says.

Fans will get a preview of the new album on Father's Day weekend when GAC airs a 90-minute special, "Brad Paisley 5th Gear." The program will include interviews and special segments taped at his farm as well as a recent concert filmed at the Verizon Wireless Amphitheater in St. Louis.

Paisley's touring is only gaining momentum. "We're averaging between 12,000 and 15,000 a night at the amphitheaters, paid," Beckham says. "It's only going to get better. The on-sales we are having now are going even stronger, especially in June and July."

Baldrica feels Paisley's career is moving up another notch with the new album and tour. "I remember when Kenny (Chesney) headlined the No Shoes, No Shirt, No Problems tour," Baldrica says. "There was a feeling that he was in a different place...you could see the crowd and you could see the energy and the electricity. This feels like where Kenny was when he really hit the launching pad."

For now, Paisley is enjoying the ride. "It's a fun time to be me," he says.
Kara DioGuardi is a busy woman. Perhaps that should be expected for a prolific songwriter/producer with a hand in 19 hits on The Billboard Hot 100 (including Christina Aguilera’s “Ain’t No Other Man” and Kelly Clarkson’s “Walk Away”) and who has contributed to 28 top 10 albums on The Billboard 200 (by everyone from Avril Lavigne and Celine Dion to Santana and Enrique Iglesias). After getting a political science degree from Duke University, the daughter of a congressman pursued a music career while selling ads for Billboard. Her love of music likely comes from her mother’s side of the family, which includes several opera singers. “I wanted to be an artist,” DioGuardi says. “The only reason I became a writer is that no one would give me any songs.” As it turns out, she didn’t need them.

10:30 A.M. At ArtHouse’s weekly meeting, DioGuardi strategizes potential deals for her writers and gets the status update on pending ones as staffers Paige Parsons, Niki Watkins, Kara Britz and Christina Kline take notes for follow-up. One of the most promising new areas for the company’s writers is country music. A reciprocal deal with Nashville publisher Big Loud Shirts helped DioGuardi land cuts on Carrie Underwood’s and Faith Hill’s next releases.

“We need to start setting up a Nashville trip for [Greg],” she says, referring to writer/producer Greg Wells (Mika). The idea, Finfer says, is to leverage the respective companies’ relationships with pop and country labels: “We trade them on unique and special access. You’re not sending the track to an A&R guy. And when [DioGuardi] goes, she can drag someone in with her.”

11:15 A.M. Another strategy is hooking up “topline” or melody and lyric writers, with track producers—either keeping it in the ArtHouse family or making new connections. DioGuardi is excited about Dream, a topline fresh off Rihanna’s hit “Umbrella” with C. Tricky Stewart. “Can we figure out a way to meet with him?”

Writer Johnny Reid (Il Divo) has expressed interest in working with DioGuardi; she suggests meeting with him and ArtHouse writer Emanuel Kiriakou (JC Chasez). “I don’t always want to have to write everything,” she says. “It’s not where I’m at. I want to be focusing on the business.” And the way to get more and more pieces of songs is “cross-pollinating all the writers . . . then they have a relationship.”


11:45 A.M. Writer/producer Ryan Leslie, whose catalog is administered by ArtHouse, signed YouTube sensation Mia Rose to his production company. Should ArtHouse hook her up for co-writes and pursue publishing opportunities with her? “She’s got good ideas. Let’s agree to a week and test her out,” DioGuardi says.

NOON Where are the Austin songs? an exasperated DioGuardi asks. She’s referring to Austin Carroll, a contestant on “The One,” a quickly canceled ABC singing competition on which she was a judge. After the show, DioGuardi let him stay at her house for two months and signed him to ArtHouse for publishing on the strength of “Better Off Alone,” a soulful ballad he wrote. The track ended up on Katharine McPhee’s album, but DioGuardi has repitched it to Tina Turner and Cher, hoping for a single. “Clive Davis made a career of finding songs that slipped through the cracks and bringing them back,” she says.

1 P.M. DioGuardi recalls how her rapport with Nicole Scherzinger helped them write together. The Pussycat Doll had asked DioGuardi to look over her part on the Daddy Yankee track “Papi Lover.” DioGuardi recalls the lyric went something like, “ ‘Papi lover, you are everything to me, I am nothing without you, I come to the door, I beg for you.’ So I walk in, and I’m like, ‘Dude, you are not writing that. You’re a fucking hot bitch, and you are not begging for anything. These guys are begging for you.’ And she’s like, ‘Yeah, you’re right, fuck that!’ So we rewrote it.” (Scherzinger returned the favor, lending DioGuardi a loan to wear for an impromptu on-camera appearance; DioGuardi points out that she is currently wearing it.)

1:15 P.M. “Where do you want to go lyrically?” DioGuardi asks

Theory of a Deadman vocalist/songwriter Tyler Connolly over glasses of red wine. “It has to start from a place of truth,” Connolly plucks out an insistent, scratchy riff and throws out some phrases that have been in his head lately. One phrase keeps coming up: “I told you so.” DioGuardi tries it out in a soft growl, the two go back and forth, and gradually fill in the rest. “You’re like a broken record that I have to play.” “You never listen to a word I say.” “I got to listen to your bullshit all day.”

They mull over matching up the cadences, then Connolly observes: “Broken records spin, but they also spin the truth.” “I like that,” DioGuardi says. They try out a possible chorus—“I told you so—oh—” —and DioGuardi suggests places to break up the rhythm. Connolly says that unlike a one-on-one session, writing songs with a whole band can be unwieldy. “There’s so much battling.”
Having found success in the pop world, DioGuardi founded ArtHouse Entertainment three years ago with her manager Stephen Finfer. In addition to her own K' Stuff Publishing, the company administers, publishes and manages stable of established and up-and-coming songwriters and producers. ArtHouse aggressively pursues collaborations for them with hitmakers across different genres while allowing labels to essentially offload A&R.

There's never been a bigger need for songs and producers," Finfer says. "Right now, there's less artists who write their own stuff, or at least don't collaborate, than there has been in a very long time. You can just put your artist with us for a week or two and come out with a batch of songs and be almost done with your record."

But DioGuardi's approach is also about mentoring other writers, whether they be teen-age artists at Los Angeles' Phoenix House (where she built a recording studio) or promising pros like ArtHouse's first signing Zythian Bey (Jim Jones' "We Fly High") and new writer/Capitol artist Bruce Boniface.

DioGuardi has also recorded with Eurythmics' Dave Stewart as Platinum Weird and sometimes sings backing vocals on tracks she co-writes for others. Her upcoming projects include albums from John Rich, Daniel Powter and Britney Spears.

All of this leaves DioGuardi just enough time for finding a buyer for her 300-song catalog: shopping a pilot for a reality show around her songwriting sessions; composing music for an animated DVD based on a new line of dolls by Bratz maker MGA; writing a screenplay, "Baby Love," with a soundtrack; and getting a 1920s house so her current home can be a full-time office and crash pad for her writers. Billboard tried to keep up with DioGuardi a week before she received her seventh BMI Award, and her first as songwriter of the year, May 15.

3:30 P.M. Over cake and ice cream for Kline's birthday, DioGuardi explains a way artists can hear themselves on her songs. "I just listen to what they have to say. Take the 'Dignity' record, the Hilary Duff record. We just talked about her life and based it on what she was going through every day. We sat down and were able to put her life into music in a way that she was happy with. Ultimately, isn't that my job as a songwriter?"

4:15 P.M. With her Chihuahua, Tiki, on her lap, DioGuardi returns calls on the drive to writer/producer Mitch Allan's (Daughtry) studio. "So she likes the melody, she just wants me to hook up the chorus?" (It's Ashlee Simpson's cameo.) "She wants to play me a song and see if I can help her finish it," DioGuardi explains after hanging up. "Sometimes I nail it, sometimes I don't."

4:30 P.M. A nearby fire is busily destroying a swath of Griffith Park; a hot wind is kicking up and so are DioGuardi's allergies. Writer Brent Paschke is lagging on completion of a Santana track, and she's out of patience. "You have got to finish that now," DioGuardi says testily into the phone. "You're going to lose this opportunity."

4:45 P.M. Allan and DioGuardi tweak a mix of a Nick Lachey song, "Coming Up For Air," before sending it to Jive/Zomba for possible inclusion on Lachey's next album. The rock sound is a departure for the pop star. "Before it goes out I need to make sure it sounds the way we all envisioned it," DioGuardi says. "Once they listen to it, that's it. They either like it or they don't."

Allan proposes adding some more guitars ("I think it can be ballier...") but one music bed seems a little long to DioGuardi. "It feels like there's supposed to be an incredible thing that comes after it, and it's just the chorus again," she says.

5:00 P.M. DioGuardi sets the track to ProTools as Tiki chews up Scherzinger's bra, which DioGuardi has ditched on the sofa. If the track is used, it will get a more aggressive re-record from Lachey, but for now DioGuardi steps into the booth to do a husky backing vocal. After listening to Allan's mix, "You can't even hear that it's a girl," she says approvingly.

5:30 P.M. The bra goes back on for a writing date with Leslie and R&B artist Cassie at Encore Studios, which still hasn't aired the herbal odor of many a Dr. Dre recording session.

DioGuardi joins a drowsy Cassie on a small couch and finds they have a similar affliction. "The worst thing about allergies is that they make you really tired," DioGuardi says sympathetically.

Cassie says she'd like to write, but that Leslie usually comes up with material. "We should come up with something to write about," DioGuardi encourages.

Leslie and Paschke have already started a bass-heavy, wall-wah synth track, onto which Cassie has recorded some vocals about a romance that doesn't get post email. "It keeps coming around, but it never turns into anything," Cassie says.

DioGuardi thinks for a second. "A revolving door, maybe?" With the track blasting, she maps out a chorus with her voice and hands. "My heart's not an open door... even if it was before..." as she and Leslie serenade each other. "That's old-school right there," DioGuardi says with delight.

9 P.M. With the song finally on its way, DioGuardi looks around happily. "At four o'clock I was ready to kill myself," she admits. "But you get in a room with people that inspire you, and you feel rejuvenated..."
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MARTY STUART'S 'COMPADES' CELEBRATES A CAREER RICH IN MUSICAL FRIENDSHIPS

Marty Stuart's new album "Compadres" is a collection of previously released duets, along with a few new collaborations.

Arriving June 5 on the singer's Universal Music Enterprises imprint through Universal Music Enterprises, the album—from one of Nashville's most beloved performers and champions of traditional country music—can be viewed as a career summation that coincides with an extraordinary confluence of high-profile activities. The Tennessee State Museum on June 5 debuts "Sparkle & Twang: Marty Stuart's American Musical Odyssey," a choice selection from the singer's immense private memorabilia collection.

June 5 also is the publication date of "Country Music—The Masters," a new book of Stuart's photographs of such country music greats as Johnny Cash, who graces the cover. (Stuart's first photography book "Pilgrims: Sinners, Saints and Prophets" was published in 2000.)

The following evening, Stuart will host his sixth annual Late Night Jam at Nashville's Ryman Auditorium, to benefit Music Cares. Stuart and his hand, the Fabulous Superlatives, are due to host John Rich, Neko Case, Charley Pride, Eric Church, Pam Tillis and Porter Wagoner.

Stuart has already played the inaugural Stagecoach Festival May 5-6, one of several live shows supporting the release of "Compadres." And he hosted a May 19 celebration of Wagoner's 50th year as a performer at the Grand Ole Opry. Stuart also produced Wagoner's new album "Wagonmaster" as well as Kathy Mattea's forthcoming album "Coal," a collection of Appalachian mining songs.

"I just didn't have time to really do a 'legitimate' studio album at the moment," says Stuart, explaining the "Compadres" concept.

"I'd actually done four records—'Souls' Chapel,' 'Badlands' [both in 2005], 'Live at the Ryman' [2006] and another gospel record, 'Cathedral,' off at the side that's completed. So that's four pretty concentrated records. And then I just finished the photography book—150 pages of gorgeous stuff—and the Tennessee State Museum exhibit, and Porter's and Kathy's records.

So Stuart understandably jumped at the suggestion to take a look back at his many collaborations through the years, "starting with Lester [Flatt] and Johnny [Cash], and Merle [Haggard], Connie [Smith], Steve Earle, B.B. King, the Staples Singers. It just kept going [to where I said], 'I did all that!'"

"So it's a legitimate record in every sense of the word, and I recorded a couple of new tracks [Dallas Frazier's 'Will You Visit Me on Sunday' with Loretta Lynn and the Who's 'I Can See for Miles' with the Fabulous Superlatives and the Old Crow Medicine Show]. All of a sudden there was a completed circle, with the book and the museum exhibit—and also a career moment to look back at and go 'Wow.'"

The additional tracks on "Compadres" include "Farmer's Blues" with Merle Haggard; "Doin' My Time" with Johnny Cash; "Rawhide" with Lester Flatt; "The Whiskey Ain't Workin' Anymore" with Travis Tritt; "Cryin', Waiting, Hoping" with Steve Earle; "Hearts Like Ours" with Connie Smith; "The Weight" with the Staple Singers; "Confessing the Blues" with B.B. King; "Let Us Travel" with Del McCoury; and "Move Along Train" with Mavis Staples.

"It's an amazing collection of artists," says Jeff Moskow, marketing VP at Universal Music Enterprises. "From B.B. King to Steve Earle, from Merle Haggard to Loretta Lynn, it's a star-studded CD—and that's exactly where an icon like Marty Stuart deserves to be."

This album celebrates "Marty's friendship and leadership in the American musical landscape," Moskow says.

Universal is using in-house and independent publicity via the Greenroom, a Nashville publicity firm. Coverage of "Compadres" is planned online via Amazon and in such major print outlets as the Los Angeles Times, Chicago Sun-Times and Dallas Morning News.

TV and radio venues lined up so far include CMT and GAC programming, the Craig Ferguson and Conan O'Brien latenight shows and NPR's "All Things Considered." Stuart will do additional interviews during an extensive summer and fall tour.

Universal is in discussions for a marketing campaign with the Home Shopping Network that coincides with HSN's increased emphasis on its entertainment division, and its recognition that Stuart—with all his current projects and his dynamic personality—is a perfect fit for its core target demographic. A proposal calls for HSN to feature exclusive Stuart merchandise that may include such items as signed CDs, photos, limited edition releases and concert vacation packages. Associated merchandise such as Grand Ole Opry product and apparel by famed country designer Manuel (Stuart is a key customer) may also be included in the Stuart promotion. Confirmation of the plans is pending.

The aggressive schedule of activities at this juncture in Stuart's career is what M. Dottore Artist continued on >p34
 dread management had in mind when it began representing the singer three years ago.

"We had a lot of things in the kit bag," manager Marc Dottoresays. "Here was a guy who wasn't on the radio so much anymore, so we had to come up with different strategies."

With his new CD, book and museum exhibit, the Late Night Jam and Stuart's production of "Wagonmaster," "we have a foot in the old and the new," Dottoresays. "Then we realized that there is a moment in time in early June where we can celebrate this unique, colorful artist who has taken a little bit of something special from each place he's been over the years and brought it all to who he is today."

For Stuart, it all comes from what he calls his "Mississippi heritage."

"So much of America's music sprang from there," says the Philadelphia, Miss., native, whose hometown is within 15 miles of Meridian, home of country music pioneer Jimmie Rodgers.

Stuart points to such Mississippi music notables as Elvis Presley, B.B. King, Tammy Wynette and Pop Staples among the state's rich legacy of American music figureheads.

"I realized early on that I come from there, and that any form of music that's from there I could legitimately go to, and make a contribution," Stuart continues. "When I embraced that, I went beyond making music from one street, one town to the whole American roots system that's bigger than anybody's chart. I love that."

A string-playing prodigy, Stuart was on the road with bluegrass/gospel group the Sullivan Family at age 12. After befriending Roland White, the mandolin player for bluegrass legend Lester Flatt, at a 1971 bluegrass festival in Indiana, Flatt gave Stuart — then 13 — a job as rhythm guitarist.

"Compadres" includes the Bill Monroe classic "Rawhide," which was Stuart's mandolin showcase number with Flatt and the Nashville Grass and is taken from a 1974 concert at Vanderbilt University for Flatt's "Live! Bluegrass Festival" set.

"I hadn't heard that song in probably 25 years," Stuart says with a laugh. "I listened and grinned the whole time. I could feel me trying, a young musician trying to find his way. A young musician being favored by the presence of so many titanic figures. The word 'blessed' comes to mind. I wish every musician could have the mentoring I did that shows on this record. Basically, they're the people that raised me."

Flatt had recently split with his performing partner Earl Scruggs, who had gone off to form the more progressive Earl Scruggs Revue. Stuart teams up with Scruggs on the "Compadres" track "Mr. John Henry, the Steel Driving Man," which originally appeared on Stuart's 1999 album "The Pilgrim."

"He's a great singer, musician, talker and entertainer and I've always enjoyed picking with him," says Scruggs. "He's a real asset to everything he does. We've been friends for 35 years."


"The first two records I ever had were [by] Flatt & Scruggs and Johnny Cash," Stuart says, "and the fact that I ever got to meet — much less play with and be lifelong family with and have them as mentors — is beyond understanding."

His "Compadres" collaboration with Cash, "Doin' My Time," was a Jimmie Skinner prison song that he used to perform live with Cash, and was recorded for Stuart's 1992 album, "This One's Gonna Hurt You." Stuart's debut solo album was "Marty, With a Little Help From My Friends," released in 1977 for the Ridge Runner label. More substantial was his 1982 set "Busy Bee Cafe" for Sugar Hill. A self-titled album for Columbia came out in 1986. But it was his move to MCA that broke him commercially with 1989's "Hillbilly Rock" (thanks to the top 10 title track and two other hits, "Cry Cry Cry" and...)
Many thanks
Marty Stuart
for hosting our
Special Awards Reception
and for sharing your
collection of treasures
with the world
from >>p.34 “Don’t Leave Her Lonely Too Long”). His 1991 follow-up “Tempted” yielded another title track hit (along with fellow top 10s “Burn Me Down” and “Little Thing”) and prompted Columbia to release his album “Let There Be Country,” which it previously had shelved.

In 1992, Stuart became a member of the Grand Ole Opry. He also released “This One’s Gonna Hurt You,” which featured the duet title track hit with Travis Tritt. He co-wrote and sang on Tritt’s Grammy Award-winning hit “The Whiskey Ain’t Workin’,” which appeared on Tritt’s 1991 album “It’s All About to Change” and is now included on “Compadres.”

“Tempted” Uncle Dave Macon Days festival in Murfreesboro, Tenn. He later invited the act to play the Grand Ole Opry and has toured with the band. Stuart’s link to the group also serves the vision of his management company. "A lot of these Americana and jam-band artists are doing Marty’s thing,” Doctore says. “We see him as a ‘bridge.’ He has a foot in several different musical worlds and because of that he’s always involved in different kinds of projects. So we want to take all these ideas and continue his long career arc.”

Scott Munn, who works with Dotore at Stuart’s management company, says the singer is “an American music icon, naturally encapsulating all the American roots music: rock’n’roll, country, folk, blues, native—even a jazz vibe.”

Doctore wants to encourage Stuart’s work as a producer, a role that Wagner can strongly commend. “Marty said, ‘It’s really important to me that this is the best album you’ve ever done, and I want you to have all the time to work on it and get the songs the way you want them the way you want them.’” Wagner recalls.

Stuart produced and co-wrote Connie Smith’s self-titled 1998 comeback album—and married the legendary country star. From that album, “Hearts Like Ours” has been remixed with a new vocal from Stuart for “Compadres.”

Stuart has been on a particularly creative roll in the last decade. “The Pilgrim,” from 1999, explored the roots of country music in a concept album that featured the likes of Ralph Stanley, Emmylou Harris, George Jones and Cash. In 2005, he launched a Superlatone imprint and the string of concept recordings now culminating in “Compadres.”

The two new songs on the new disc also have special significance for Stuart: “I’d never recorded with Loretta Lynn—or cut a Dallas Frazier song,” Stuart says, noting that his wife has mined the Frazier catalog heavily. Of Lynn he adds: “She is such a treasure—that’s the word for her—and it’s wonderful being in her presence.”

Stuart also recorded the Who song “I Can See for Miles” with neotraditional string band Old Crow Medicine Show, an act he first heard busking at an Uncle Dave Macon Days festival in Murfreesboro, Tenn. He later invited the act to play the Grand Ole Opry and has toured with the band. Stuart’s link to the group also serves the vision of his management company. "A lot of these Americana and jam-band artists are doing Marty’s thing,” Doctore says. “We see him as a ‘bridge.’ He has a foot in several different musical worlds and because of that he’s always involved in different kinds of projects. So we

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The earth started shaking when Paula Cole and Bobby Colomby first met—literally. "It was 1994, and I had just seen her perform for the first time in Los Angeles," Blood, Sweat & Tears co-founder Colomby says. "I went backstage to be introduced, and as we shook hands, things started rattling. It was an earthquake."

Years later, a reunion between Cole and Colomby would again be accompanied by some serious shifting, this time only on a metaphorical level. "In 2004, I got an e-mail from Bobby wanting to know what I was up to," Cole says. "I had just seen him in '97, and I was in a far different place. I wasn't doing music anymore and I told him I wasn't sure I ever wanted to again."

Although she did not cut ties with Warner Bros. until 2003, Cole had walked away from the business years earlier after her third release failed to match the success of its predecessor, 1996's "11 in Fire." That album catapulted Cole into the spotlight, earning her two hit singles and several Grammy Award nominations. It has sold 1.64 million copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Cole says she had "worked brutally" in the years between her 1994 debut "Harlot's Cry" and 1999's "Amen," but never felt she was seen as the depth of her musicianship. "I felt like a race horse forced to play in the pop market, and I realized I was hurting too much. All I could do was stop caring."

Cole left New York for Los Angeles and turned her attention to a marriage and raising a child, but was soon faced with nagging, yet daughter's severe asthma and an increasingly troubled relationship with her husband. With superb timing, it was then that Colomby stepped back into the picture. "I wanted her to sing on an album I was producing," Colomby says. "I called her manager only to find out he was no longer managing her. He was very cryptic. He just said, 'Paula could use a friend.'"

Colomby was struck when he reached Cole. "I had no idea she had been singing. I thought that was crazy," he says. "Convinced she was too good to quit, he persisted until she agreed to do a session. Cole says Colomby was "so ebullient, positive, that I was like the sunshine was coming back into my life. It was fun and refreshing working with him. I had a realization that at the heart of it, I did still care."

Cole soon started co-writing new material with a select group of songwriters, and, in the meantime, Colomby inked her new deal with Columbia. A finished album, aptly titled "Courage," ended up sitting on a shelf as Sony and BMG merged, but ultimately found a new home at Decca/Universal/Universal Music Classics/Decca Label Group GM Paul Foley says, "We are now signing artists directly to Decca in the U.S., which marks a new phase for us. And Paula is our top priority artist to launch this new phase."

Cole says the deal with Decca is "a blessing," in part because the label is more "adult-oriented," thereby better-suited to the full range of her talent. "This album isn't constrained to three-and-a-half minute pop songs or to one style," she says. "Courage" runs the gamut from such classically smooth jazz-tinged entries as "Lovelight" to such Southern gothic-tinged affairs as "Caminin Down." Elsewhere, gentle bossa beats and lovely acoustic shuffles seem well-suited for AC or adult top 40 radio. First single "14," meanwhile, steadily builds its graceful midtempo to a fiery furl verse: "This mighty woman's ready to explode/Fire seen below the surface of my volcano."

The album's diversity may prove a marketing challenge, especially at radio, but Foley says, "By no means do we think this record is dependent on radio. We think the press campaign is really the major driver. People want to know where Paula's been, and we're saying, 'She's survived, she's back, and she's better than ever. And you can hear all of that in the music.'"

Decca launched "14" at triple A instead of adult top 40 or pop, feeling that the "slow-building" nature of the format would work to Cole's advantage. The label is also counting on live performance to drive sales. "I went to the showcase she did in February at Berklee College in Boston—you would never have thought she'd been off the road for so many years," Foley says. "It certainly gave us the confidence that when she gets out there, that will strengthen our marketing effort."

Dates are still being lined up, but Foley expects Cole to tour through the summer and says the "Courage" campaign will run into 2008. Cole ruminates, "I'm a 35-year-old woman in a sexist, ageist business given a golden second chance, and I'm profoundly grateful for that. I hope music continues to bring me joy. And I hope people still want to listen..."
**Quik Change**

**Veteran DJ Back On The Radio With AMG As The Fixxers**

Few people have better beats, or better hair, than one of my favorite producers, DJ Quik. His new single, "Can U Werk Wit Dat," with AMG, under the moniker the Fixxers, is climbing up the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart (No. 76) as well as R&R's Rap radio chart (No. 18).

"This is going to be a DJ Quik record—it’s going to be a Fixxers record," AMG says. "We’re here to make good songs. "Can U Werk Wit Dat' doesn’t sound like a California record."

Though the track began as a ringtone one-off, Interscope quickly offered the pair an album deal. "Can U Werk Wit Dat" was recently added to MTV Jams as "Jam of the Week." With spot dates across the country, the guys plan to stop touring in a few weeks, hunker down and finish the record, slated for release in the fall.

"Honestly, it’s just good music for the time being," DJ Quik says. "I’ve had a good time doing it, and I have one professional that’s a little spiritual. But it’s all very minimalistic."

Quik, AMG and longtime collaborators Greedy Greg and Hudson Baxter have also launched a production company, Dirty West. They’ll be looking for artists in the long term.

"With Dirty West, we’re doing the production first," Quik says. "When the artists come, we’ll turn the lights on for them." Meanwhile, Quik and AMG have been producing tracks for Rick Ross, Yung Joc, Wyclef Jean, T.I. and Young Jeezy. Quik also may have found someone, P Traxx, to carry the California producer's torch.

"I’ve been educating P Traxx about the studio and how to get around it," Quik says. "Just teaching him about the SP12 and the MPC 3000. Give him a few months and he’s going to be a knockout. Well, maybe I’m not giving him the torch, but I’ll be sharing the torch."

**BANNER TO THE WORLD:** Although David Banner has been quiet for a while, it’s not because he hasn’t been busy. Rather, he’s been doing some soul searching.

"2006 was the worst year of my life," Banner says. "2007 has been the best year of my life. I’ve learned to say no and not take on everyone’s problems. My father had brain and lung cancer, and I had high blood pressure because I was working 18-hour days. You have to value the person you are."

Banner was one of the first rappers to respond to Hurricane Katrina by giving out his own clothing to victims. But now, he’d like to help those less fortunate by helping himself onto a bigger platform to give back.

"I took on too much responsibility," Banner says. "I did volunteer work for six months for Hurricane Katrina but my own business wasn’t right." Now, Banner is focusing on his new album, "The Greatest Story Ever Told," slated for release by summer’s end. With production from himself along with Nitti, Cool & Dre, Akon and Get Cool 3000, he’s also wrangled features from Chris Brown, Jim Jones, UGK, Snoop Dogg, Lil Wayne, Carl Thomas and Xscape’s Kandy.

I have a tendency to want to change music," Banner says. "But I realized that people just want hits. The ladies want a ‘Play’, I made a ‘Cadillac on 22’s,’ and I made a few ‘Like a Pimp’ records. I did a rock song that’s probably going to get me hung. Let’s just say the record was written three years ago—it’s just truthful.”

Banner has also logged time behind the boards of late with Famly, Lil Wayne, Snoop, Brown and the Shop Boyz.

**The Ringtone King**

**Unk’s Second Single Follows His First To Mobile Success**

When Unk topped urban radio charts last fall with his dance ditty "Walk It Out," inspiring folks across the country to walk bow-legged on beat, few industry people thought he would make it to a second single. But this month, "2 Step" claimed the No. 1 spot on Billboard's Hot Ringtones chart after just four weeks, the chart’s fastest climb in 2007 thus far. "2 Step" has sold 307,000 digital copies and 425,000 ringtones, according to Nielsen SoundScan and RingScan, and is now No. 5 on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart.

Meanwhile, "Walk It Out" has chalked up 1.02 million downloads and 1.51 million ringtones, while demonstrating remarkable staying power—It spent 41 weeks on R&R’s rap radio chart.

"We picked up ‘Walk It Out’ because of the Oomp camp’s immense popularity in Atlanta," Koch VP of special markets Bill Crowley says. Big Oomp Records is an Atlanta record, publishing and production company. Unk had joined Oomp's fold after building a name in the local club scene. "When we released the album in October, ‘Walk It Out’ was a big hit in Atlanta," but Koch heard the song and the album as more than just a regional smash.

So in September 2006 the label joined both with mobile partners Zingo, Hudson, Moda and 9 Squared—owner of mobile company the Mob—to peddle "Walk It Out" as a ringtone. And even before many urban radio stations and video outlets added the song into their rotation, 9 Squared pulled together TV spots. In the ringtone's second week, 9 Squared, led by partner Oomp camp, have grown to 10 million downloads and 2.5 million ringtones.

"It's been a really good argument in convincing programmers to add "Walk It Out," iTunes also jumped on the Unk bandwagon last September, and within weeks the track ranked No. 1 on its rap chart. Last November, the track peaked at No. 1 on R&R’s Urban radio chart for three weeks. Now “2 Step” has followed in the debut track’s path.

"2 Step" grew from all of the DJ and radio programmers relationships we built while working "Walk It Out," says Big Oomp, CEO of the company that shares his name. "Also, his record is fun, and there aren’t any fun records out now. Unk grabbed all those different age groups on ‘Walk It Out,’ and they kept going with him."

"Words can't describe how all this feels," Unk says over the phone from Atlanta. "I've also got the "Walk It Out" remix [with] T-Pain, Jim Jones and F-40, which is still getting spins. It's all a dream come true."

Unk’s album "BeatN Down Yo Blocks" has sold only 47,000 units, according to Nielsen SoundScan, but he’s shooting a clip for his third single—either “Hit the Dance Floor” or “B-Eat N Down Yo Blocks”—shortly. The Oomp camp also has a reality show, featuring 8-year-old child producer Big Corey, planned for BET later this year. And Unk is now recording his second album, "Got the Block on Lock," to be released first-quarter 2008.
**Jazz Notes**

**DAN OUELLETTE** douellette@billboard.com

**Finding A Muse**

**Bloomberg Channel Giving Jazz A Boost**

Who would guess that jazz is alive and well at Bloomberg LP’s new midtown Manhattan headquarters, a place dominated by the pulse of the financial marketplace? The company, founded by Michael R. Bloomberg before he became New York’s mayor, stands out as one of the global leaders in providing information, data and analytical software to the financial community through its real-time marketing Terminal Installation that accesses Bloomberg’s various media platforms.

But lesser-known is its large and very visible cultural arm, Bloomberg Muse, which covers a range of arts topics on its Bloomberg News wire service and radio and TV outlets. Increasingly given short shrift by demographic number crunchers, jazz is enjoying significant exposure on Muse.

“Jazz is a part of America’s history,” says Manuela Hoelt-erhoff, a Bloomberg Muse executive managing editor and one-time Pulitzer Prize-winning critic for The Wall Street Journal. “I’d rather not waste brain cells on what Britney Spears is doing. Our audience is more interested in reading and hearing about unusual jazz or opera singers.”

Hoelterhoff estimates the Terminal has 300,000 subscribers. “The people who sit on boards of cultural institutions are likely Bloomberg customers,” she says over lunch in a glass conference room overlooking the spaceship-like inner architecture of the building. “They’re also the people who sit in the expensive seats. Providing information to them seems logical.”

Hoelterhoff says Muse, which launched three years ago, is a work in progress. When Bloomberg News editor-in-chief Matthew Winkler hired her, one of her first recruits was Paris-based International Herald Tribune jazz writer Mike Zelin. Muse’s birth also coincided with the genesis of Jazz at Lincoln Center’s new performance space, which Hoelterhoff says was instrumental in weaving jazz into the Bloomberg cultural fabric. “A lot of Bloomberg people are on the board there, so we offer a service to them,” she says. “Plus, Wynton Marsalis is such an articulate spokesperson and accessible. He reinforces what we do.”

One of the key tenets of the overall Bloomberg philosophy is philanthropy, which crosses into jazz territory with New York-based writer Patrick Cole’s coverage of such organizations as the Jazz Foundation of America. “We’re always trying to break stories on how music, and jazz in particular, is supported,” he says, adding that crossing media platforms at Bloomberg is seamless because the Muse team works under the same roof. Bloomberg Radio, whose flagship station is WBBR New York, syndicates reports to 750 radio stations in the United States as well as through Sirius Satellite Radio. Recent jazz stories featured interviews with bassist Stanley Clarke, drummer Billy Cobham and singer Kurt Elling. Some segments, says Paul Goguen, a producer of the weekly Muse radio show, may soon appear as iTunes podcasts.

Muse on Bloomberg TV, available worldwide to 200 million households, also gives jazz a boost. An upcoming piece on Blue Note Records pianist Bill Charlap will air in early June. “I’ve followed Bill’s career for several years and feel that he’s an important artist,” says Jeremy Gerard, a Muse editor/critic. “He has an album coming out and a lot of concerts coming up. We’re into covering artists who may be off the beaten path. We’re not going to report on Elton John at Madison Square Garden. That’s covered everywhere.”

As for not being bound by demographics, Gerard says that the Muse team is passion-driven. “We’re a diverse group of people who have their ears to the ground. If someone is impressed by an artist or an event and we’ve got a hole to fill, we’ll give them coverage.”

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**Pump It Up**

**Costello Reissue Program Benefits From Artist’s Involvement**

Elvis Costello fans can’t complain about “No Action” when it comes to his catalog. The Rock and Roll Hall of Famer, who is celebrating his 30th recording anniversary, last year struck a deal with Universal Music Enterprises (UME) for the label president Bruce Resnikoff’s “a multilingual, multiyear, multifaceted series of reissues and special compilations,” which is being done with Costello’s full cooperation and involvement. It began with the May 1 release of “The Best of Elvis Costello: The First 10 Years” and “Rock and Roll Music,” as well as the reissue of his first 11 albums in their original form—and for the first time digitally—with codes that allow buyers access to a wealth of Internet-based bonus material.

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**What we’re trying to create is the complete Elvis story over the next few years.**

—BRUCE RESNIKOFF, UNIVERSAL MUSIC ENTERPRISES

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Retro Fitting
Ryan Shaw’s Old-School Soul Swims Upstream

Ryan Shaw is working it. Having won the coveted opening slot on Joss Stone’s national tour, the newcomer doesn’t kick back during the two days’ downtime between each concert. At various stops, the Decatur, Ga., native is busy staging his own shows at smaller venues. When I caught up with the singer/songwriter, he was preparing for a performance at San Francisco’s Boom Boom Room after opening for Stone the night before. “I’m not well-known enough, so I have to make some money in between,” a pragmatic Shaw says with a laugh. “I’m getting my hustle on.”

These miniconcerts not only give him the chance to “stretch out a bit.” It’s also a chance to enlist more disciples for his soul revival, a movement reflected throughout his One Haven/Columbia debut album, “This is Ryan Shaw.” With a voice reminiscent of Sam Cooke, Jackie Wilson and Otis Redding, the 26-year-old puts a modern spin on songs by such predecessors as Wilson Pickett and Bobby Womack plus lesser-known names like the Combo Kings and the Sharpees. Evening out the mix are several Shaw-penned tunes, including first single “Nobody” and the upbeat “Over and Done.”

“Ryan is a reminder of where soul music once was and where it could be again,” his manager Ant Denby says. “R&B fans in this musical climate want more. His [audience ranges] from college kids to people my grandparents’ age.”

Weaned on gospel, the Brooklyn-based Shaw nurtured his chops singing one song every half-hour at New York’s now-defunct Motown Café. Soon after, he boarded a cruise ship for a summer gig with a four-piece band interpreting songs from the ’50s through the ’70s. But it was his 2004 teaming with doo-wop and classic soul vocal group the Fabulous Soul Shakers that fired up a passion to resurrect what he feels contemporary music is lacking—the old-school skill of marrying strong melodies with timeless, meaningful lyrics.

“It’s into music—chords, melodies, lyrics and arrangements,” Shaw says. “It seems like the mid-’90s were the last time we really had all these elements in black music, such as artists like Anita Baker and Luther Vandross. By the mid-’90s, we were down to two chords and a drum loop. I want to bring back real artistry.”

It was Fabulous Soul Shakers guitarist Johnny Gale, whose credits include Hank Ballard and the Ramones, who brought Shaw to the attention of noted percussionist Jimmy Bradalor. Their cutting of four Shaw numbers with the Soul Shakers led to his signing with Columbia. Beyond opening on the Stone tour, Shaw’s arresting, expressive vocals and spirited, tent-revivalist live gigs have netted an appearance on Martha Stewart’s show and a July 28 guest spot on CBS’s “The Saturday Early Show.” Another of his original tracks from the album, “We Got Love,” was featured in the January promos for ABC-TV’s “Brothers and Sisters.” He and his three-piece band (who double as backing vocalists) will jump back on their bus two weeks after the Stone tour ends June 16 for a series of festival dates. A sweep through Australia and Japan is also being planned.

It appears Shaw’s barnstorming on the Stone tour is making some headway. His album recently re-entered Top Heatseekers at No. 46 (Billboard, May 25). But swimming upstream against the mainstream R&B/hip-hop current isn’t easy. A case in point is retro-vocalist soul artist Ricky Fanté, whose 2004 Virgin album, “Rewind,” failed to make a dent.

Denby says it’s been an uphill battle but notes that “radio is starting to take notice [thanks to] the buzz of his live performances.” Mindful of the challenge, Shaw marches ahead. “My typing skills aren’t that good, so I’ll just keep singing.”

process go smoothly. "While Jason's out touring and supporting the first album, Michael's back here in Nashville looking for songs for the new record," Howell says. "The two of them work extremely well together."

Big & Rich's John Rich, who co-wrote "Why," "Hicktown" and "Amarillo Sky" on Aldean's first record, contributed two songs to the new set including the first single, the head-over-heels-in-love tale "Johnny & Savannah," which is No. 15 on Billboard's Hot Country Songs chart. But Aldean's favorite song on the record is "Back in This Cigarette," a painful tale about trying to rekindle the love in a relationship ("It's like trying to put smoke back in this cigarette"). "It's just a kind of swampy, broken-hearted song," Aldean says. "It's anything that I've done before.

While Aldean played the area with Rascal Flatts earlier this year, "he got a tremendous response," Thomas says. "That was one rock 'n' roll, and the crowd was with him all the way."

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HEATHER NOVA: "I loved her voice but wasn't happy with what we wrote (for her 2000 album "Two Worlds"). I say, "It wasn't strong enough. That's why I wanted to work with her again."

The second time was definitely a charm. "Renaissance" hums with the energy of ATB's clubier compositions, but also boasts 12 guitar sounds. Nova's distinctive Joni Mitchell-esque quiver, a memorable lyric "Baby, I'm a renegade with you/I'm searching too/Been around the world/Now I'm running back to you" and a poppy hook and bridge. The result is a gorgeous summer love song.

"Lots of DJs are really into hard electronic stuff. But I miss melodies and feelings," the Savannah, Ga.-bred DJ says between Tampa, Fla., and New York stops of an eight-city bus tour. "When you get emotion in electronic music, people notice. It's not just sounds out of a computer—there's a human being who's creating it. People realize that electronic music can be from the heart."

ATB has sold 406,000 albums in the United States since his 1999 debut, plus 130,000 commercial singles and more than 200,000 song downloads, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Dance veteran Ultra Naté, whose fifth full-length, "Glimpse Silk & Thunder" (Tommy Boy), was released last week, is similarly unconcerned with radio or other standard measures of success.

"Being able to sustain a living off of your art is already successful, you don't need a megahit," she says. "It only takes a small corner of the universe to sustain a career. "Being successful is making the kind of records I want, growing my label arrangement, getting more control over my masters and making my fan base happy as time goes on."

The adventurous artist, who covers the Pointer Sisters' "Automatic" on the new album, recently added DJing to her performance portfolio ("all soulful, underground house") and sometimes blends singing and spinning live.

NELLY IN THE HOUSE: No one does summer sounds quite like Kaskade. He's the latest producer to join Nelly Furtado's "Loose" all-star remix team, taking a stab at a new single "All Good Things," with typically moist, pulsing results. "I always try and put together well-rounded packages that appeal to more than just one genre or style while still maintaining the integrity of the original," says Universal's Juan Martinez, who A&R'd the mixes for every single, including "Promiscuous" (Axwell, Mørel, Ralphi Rosario, Richard Vission), "Maneater" (David García & Morgan Page, Sugarfip, the Discount Rhinos & Gorgeous George, Richard Vission) and "Say It Right!" (Dummies, Menage Music, Peter Rauhofer, Frisica & Labby). The last of which, he says, "has gotten the strongest reaction. Nelly and Timbaland approve the mixes. They've really only given feedback since. She wanted a mix to be a little more house-y." Now that's what we like to hear. ---

Hector Montaner bears an uncanny physical and sonic resemblance to his father, noted songwriter/balladeer Ricardo Montaner. But his sophomore album, "Apariencias," due June 5 on VeneMusic, bears his own distinct brand of music.

"It's a natural quest—trying to mark a difference at a musical and lyrical level," says Montaner, who has a close relationship with his famous dad. "If I sing a classic ballad, it is to Ricardo Montaner. I had to find a way to present my ballads in a different manner.

As such, "Apariencias," produced by guitarist Andrés Castro (who has worked with Carlos Vives, among others), is an acoustic-minded album with pared-down production, plenty of guitars and percussion, and a distinctly earthy singer/songwriter sound. It's a different approach compared with the more classic feel of Montaner's first disc, "Amor del Bueno," released in 2004.

We wanted something different from his first album and also to try and find his identity as an artist," VeneMusic VP Jorge Pino says. "Maintain his songwriter side, but also develop a commercial sound."

To that effect, Montaner signed with VeneMusic's publishing arm, VeneVision International Publishing Latin, and via its director, Jose Antonio Beltran, put together a variety of songwriters including stalwarts Donato and Jose Luchi. Most of the new songs were written or co-written by Montaner, and the lyrics have a colloquial feel compared with the more romantic "Amor del Bueno."

At that point, Montaner, the 23 year-old, was very much his father's protégé. The album is a showcase for Ricardo as executive producer, but also as the author of three tracks.

Today, the relationship between father and son continues to be airtight, and Hector presented his dad with the Spirit of Hope Award at the Billboard Latin Music Awards in April.

But the artist and his label want to make it clear that—despite the kinship—this is a different act with a different potential audience.

Montaner is the third child of Ricardo Montaner, and the second progeny in the close-knit family to embark on a musical career. His older brother, Alejandro, released one album on Sony Discos in 2002, then settled on a different musical route. He is now Hector's manager, but also continues writing and penning several songs with his brother, including the first single, "Apariencias."

The track's contemporary sound and lyrics appeal to the 18-34 female demographic, says Felix Bonnet, programming VP for Spanish Broadcasting System in Puerto Rico. In Puerto Rico, it is being initially programmed on the more youth-driven WIOA (Cadena Estereotempo), where, Bonnet says, Montaner will be discovered as an up-and-coming artist.

"He is focused toward a new generation that perhaps wasn't exposed to his dad, but who are accepting him the way they is," Bonnet says.

If the track is successful on Estereotempo, Bonnet says, he'll also add it to WCMA (Roman), which is geared to an older female listener. "There they will inevitably associate him with his father, and perhaps it will help."

"But he shines through on his own merits."

At a recent showcase in Miami, Montaner was impressive, dominating the stage that he's called home since he was a little kid who often performed with his dad.

"I am not ashamed of that," Montaner says of his family ties, noting that he will like y tour with his dad this summer. "The little I've done in my career so far, if I've done it well, it is thanks to my father's merits.

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MONTANER
6 QUESTIONS
with AMANDA GHOST
by PAUL SEXTON

When Billboard first championed Amanda Ghost in the summer of 2000 on the eve of her Warner Bros. debut "Ghost Stories," the label's veteran VP of A&R worldwide Andrew Wickham, who had signed her, was moved to say that she "sings in the key of heartbreak." Heartbreak did indeed ensue when the album founders and Ghost. London-born Irish and Spanish descent, spent several fruitless years stuck in the deal. But she continued to write and emerged triumphant when "You're Beautiful," co-written with then-unknown former housemate James Blunt, became a global smash, winning her two Ivor Novello Awards and two Grammy Award nominations.

Ghost's latest co-write, "Beautiful Liar" (Columbia) by Beyoncé and Shakeria, recently topped the Eurochart Hot 100 Singles list, after reaching No. 3 on The Billboard Hot 100. Ghost is now recording herself, producing and A&Ring other artists and being courted for her songs by superstars from Britney to Whitney. The very pregnant Ghost spoke to Billboard about how she survived and prospered.

Many people knew you chiefly as the co-writer of "You're Beautiful." Has "Beautiful Liar" laid that ghost to rest?

The great thing about "Beautiful Liar" is that it's not just a success in America or the U.K. It's No. 1 in 10 countries, and it proves I'm versatile. My own style is country-folk-pop with a little bit of electronica. "Liar" is an R&B-Latin groove. I did doubt for a second I could do it. I like R&B, but [only] up until 1975. But it made me realize a good song is a good song.

Do you want to be known primarily as a songwriter?

I want to be known as a musician. That covers me as a singer, a writer and a record producer. And I'd like to be known as a musical entrepreneur, because I scout and sign acts, which is such a buzz for me. I'm working with an artist called Hugo that we've just got signed to Island. To take something and develop it and see it succeed, you have a greater sense of achievement.

But your own record will come out through your label Plan A?

Yes, my label that we license through various majors throughout the world. That's because I can't be A&R'd. I am an A&R and I know too much [laughs]. The pressure on me to write a radio hit is off. Every hit I have [as a writer] will only steer people back to my own music.

Did your previous experience at Warners, as an artist, turn you off to the majors?

It has. The biggest complaint I had from the chairman there, who's still the chairman, was, "Amanda Ghost is a fabulous singer, but she can't write hits." With my artist Hugo, I very much act as a buffer between him and the label. He's sold records [at home] in Thailand, and I've consistently drummed it into his head that [new artists] operate on a 99% failure rate.

Where are the majors at now?

They sign things and then spend two or three years changing everything about the act. I think they should stay out of the A&R process. But they are learning. The edict at Universal U.K. is that they don't want to sign things that don't have a fan base. A lot of people complain there's no artist development, but you have to find alternative ways to fund bands. When the public's saying, "Yes, yes, yes," that's when majors should step in and put their might behind them.

Your baby's due June 22. Will you stop working for a couple of hours?

I'm going to take about a month off. People think I'll be done for the rest of the year, but it's not true at all, as long as you've got a phone, and I can sit in a recording studio. It's not like I'm lifting heavy boulders.

A Boost In Belgium

Clouseau Inspects The Top Of The Chart

Belgian pop/rock act Clouseau celebrates its 20th anniversary this year, boosted by the success of its latest EMI Belgium album "Vonken en Vuur," which has topped the Flanders Ultratop chart for seven weeks since its March 31 release. The album—Clouseau's 10th studio set—sold more than 60,000 copies in the first three weeks of release, according to EMI. Clouseau is also one of Belgium's leading live attractions.

Since 2002, its annual series of December concerts at Antwerp's Sportpaleis has become an institution. In 2006, it attracted 210,000 to 12 shows at the 17,500-capacity venue. Live dates, which see original members Koen and Kris Wauters joined by six other musicians, are booked by Diet-based Kog International Agency. The act is self-published.

"Clouseau is the biggest local artist in our market," EMI Music Belgium managing director Erwin Googebeur says. "Retailers confirm that the new album has been one of the fastest-selling albums ever here." He adds that "2007 will be a very Clouseau year" for the major's domestic repertoire arm, with a set of catalog reissues also being planned for release later this year. The 20th-anniversary celebrations also include a new run of Sportpaleis shows, for which tickets are already on sale.

SOUL SLEEPER: Smooth jazz album "A Handful of Soul" by Mario Biondi and the High Five Quintet has been Italy's sleeper hit of the year so far. The album, currently in Italy's top 10, was released Oct. 27, 2006, by independent label Schema. Sales began rising earlier this year after radio-only single "This Is What You Are" picked up hefty airplay on Italy's most listened-to commercial station, Radio Deejay (top 40/AC). The album hit the No. 1 spot on the FMI chart in March, and sales have now passed the 130,000 mark, says Schema artistic director Luciano Cantone, who produced the album. Sicilian Biondi sings in English and cites influences ranging from Isaac Hayes to Cole Porter. His style is decidedly retro, Cantone concedes, but adds, "as with Michael Bublé, if you re-present music of the past to a generation that has never heard it, you find it goes down really well."

The album was released in France in February, licensed to EMI-distributed Bonsai, and Cantone says shipments have passed 10,000 units. He adds that license deals have been struck for Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Japan, with negotiations for other territories under way.

Biondi is published by Tabar Editzioni, live shows are booked by Milan-based Live Tour.

- Mark Worden

PLANETAS SWEET: Some 15 years after pioneering flamenco singer Camarón de la Isla died of cancer at 41, Spanish alternative rock outfit Los Planetas has been paying tribute to him on the charts. The band is currently touring Spain, with dates running through the summer, promoting seventh album "La Leyenda del Espacio" (Sony BMG), which peaked in the Media Control top 10 in April and remains in the top 50. The title nods to de la Isla's 1979 flamenca-pop/rock fusion album "La Leyenda del Tiempo" (PolyGram), long acclaimed by music critics for opening up the traditional world of flamenco to a entire generation of emerging rock fans following the cultural stalling dictatorship of Francisco Franco, which ended in 1975.

Los Planetas, published by Música Solar, hails from the same southern region of Andalucia as de la Isla, and released its first album on BMG-Ariola in 1994. Widely regarded as one of the key alt-rock outfits to emerge in Spain during the '90s, it takes de la Isla's approach a stage further on "La Leyenda del Espacio," adding dense elements of electronica and psychedelic rock to traditional flamenco themes. "Spanish rock needs albums like this to establish its own identity in a genre that is so Anglo-Saxon," Sony BMG product manager Ernesto Múñoz says. However, Sony BMG does not have any plans for releases outside Spain.

- Houwei Linelllyn
THE BILLBOARD REVIEWS

ALBUMS

ROCK
PERRY FARRELL'S SATELLITE PARTY
Ultra Payloaded
Producers: Perry Farrell, Nuno Bettencourt, Steve Lillywhite
Columbia
Release Date: May 22

There's something very likable about "Ultra Payloaded." Maybe nothing more so than the fact that it's not trying to be cool. In some sense, frontman Perry Farrell dispensed with any perceived notions of "cool" when he formed the band with former Extreme guitarist Nuno Bettencourt, who adds tempered crunch, pretty atmospheres and silky melodies here (Farrell's wife Etty is also in the group, on backing vocals). With help from such guests/co-writers as Flea, New Order's Peter Hook, and Fergie, Farrell and company have made an album without inhibitions or self-consciousness. Heavily programmed by Farrell, the songs live up to the band's name–somewhat spacey and totally free-spirited. "Ultra Payloaded" is a party record that veers from the light, airy and catchy to the absolutely cramped. In the end, it's all interesting.—WO

HIP-HOP
YOUNG JEEZY PRESENTS USDA
Cold Summer
Producers: various

Def Jam
Release Date: May 22

It's always suspect when a multiplatinum rapper subjects his fans to his friend's lyrics. And even worse when the first single, "White Girl," which manages to referenceselling cocaine and Christina Aguilera, unfortunately hits radio during inauspicious. And though the cut probably won't get its full radio run due to the subject matter, it's still good deer-dealing fun. "Cold Summer" takes the electric and sinister sound that Jeezy has made famous, and adds Slick Pulla's laid-back cadence with Blood Raw's high-pitched rhymes and everyone gets to use drops. Each MC has his own tailored laugh, "yeah" and "oh," peppered throughout their verses, which really are enjoyable. The production is solid, with Drumma Boy and the Nasty One popping up, but the crew should have stuck to trapping and left the sexy songs alone. No one should ever boast about a "six-minute" session, guys.—MC

ROCK
DREAM THEATER
Systematic Chaos
Producers: John Petrucci, Mike Portnoy
Roadrunner Records
Release Date: June 5

The Prog is taking a long road to making a comeback; kind of fitting for a style that's home to half-hour songs. Roadrunner justified its viability by signing Dream Theater, the genre's poster child. The band is in full jam mode for "Systematic Chaos," making this a true journey album. It's not concerning with catching hooks, but crunches out a few on "The Dark Eternal Night." The Pink Floyd homage "Repentance" loops solemn confessions through the meandering track, and "The Ministry of Lost Souls" continues in the soft vein. Dream Theater bookends the trip with parts one and two of "In the Presence of Enemies," indulge in a nearly 26-minute workout. Viva le prog.—CLT

FUNERAL FOR A FRIEND
Tales Don't Tell Themselves
Producer: Gil Norton
Atlantic
Release Date: May 15

Jeremy Pelt
Release Date: May 15

LATIN
SPANISH HARLEM ORCHESTRA
United We Swing
Producer: Oscar Hernandez
Six Degrees Records
Release Date: May 15

R. KELLY
Double Up
Producers: various
Jive/Zomba
Release Date: May 29

Aside from radio-pumped singles "I'm a Flint Remix" and "Same Girl," it's a very sexually explicit R. Kelly who greets fans on this outing. Opening with the short posturing track "The Champ" ("I've been through hell in the belly of the beast/You can hate me, I don't care"), Kelly isn't shy about quickly getting down to boudoir business. The title track with Snoop Dogg outlines a tryst with two females, while additional variations on sexual interplay abound on such cuts as "Tryin' to Get a Number" with Nelly and "Freaky in the Club." After describing lovemaking via two radically different and lusty tracks ("The Zoo") and outer space ("Sex Planet")—Kelly downsifts into traditional mode on the heartfelt ballad "Havin' a Baby" and the Virginia Tech anthem "Rise Up." This jarring juxtaposition only underscores Kelly's Marvin Gaye-remniscent struggle between the carnal and the spiritual.—GM

JASON ALDEAN
Relentless
Producer: Michael Knox
Broken Bow
Release Date: May 29

Jason Aldean and producer Michael Knox set the bar high on Aldean's self-titled, platinum 2005 debut. Thankfully, Aldean's second album delivers as well. "Relentless" will never be confused with a sparse singer/songwriter album—every cut features full, guitar-driven production. The first single, the attitude-loaded "Johnny Cash," is already a hit, sitting at No. 15 on Billboard's Hot Country Songs chart. Other standout tracks include "My Memory Ain't What It Used to Be," which finds the singer wondering aloud why he thought the姑娘 would be greener on the other side, and "Be In This Cigarette," about trying to rekindle love in a relationship ("It's like trying to put smoke back in this cigarette"). And with instrumentation reminiscent of "Poor, Poor Pitiful Me," "I Break Everything I Touch" is a cautionary tale of the singer's propensity for messing up the important things.—KT

GLENN DANZIG
The Lost Tracks of Danzig
Producer: Glenn Danzig
Evil Empire
Release Date: May 29

The Lost Tracks of Danzig" is a dark, cold. A great deal for followers of the lone wolf icon who was spooking parents when Marilyn Mason was just a pup. Listening to the romantic whispers and minimal guitar in a now-forgotten track like "Bound by Blood," you hear the blood-lining through other music—love-with-death acts like Type O Negative. The set works well as a history lesson, although it's dirigible-and-dread atmospheres make the double album extremely linear. Finally seeing daylight and "White Devil Rise" (an edgy response to Louis Farrakhan's call for a race war); "Satans Crucifiction," which was penned as a joke on a Def America VP; and an acoustic version of "Come to Silver" written for the original man in black, Johnny Cash. After listening to Danzig warble for minutes, we're convinced that Jim Morrison's voice has reached its next level of reincarnation.—CLT

RICHARD THOMPSON
Sweet Warrior
Producers: Richard Thompson, Simon Tannous
Shout Factory
Release Date: May 29

Richard Thompson on acoustic guitar is a treat. On electric guitar, he's sublime. That's why we're excited about "Sweet Warrior," a mostly plugged-in return after the acoustic discourse of 2005's "Front Parlour Ballads" and the soundtrack to the Werner Herzog film "Grizzly Man." The tracks find Thompson in typical tasteful form, playing with understated flash that saddles the trans-Atlantic divide to embrace Celtic soul and rootsy Americana, with bits of jazz and "Bad Monkey," "Francesca" thrown into the mix. The album's highlight, however, is one of the acoustic pieces—"Johnny's Far Away," a seven-minute-plus opus in which Thompson's guitar and mandolin intertwine with and dance around the fiddle work by Nickel Creek's Sara Watkins.—GG

For a complete list of reviews, visit www.americanradiohistory.com.

Published by www.billboard.biz
JUNE 2, 2007

ROCK
**SINGLES**

**POP**

**NE-YO**

*Do You (3:50)*

- **Producers:** Stargate, Ne-Yo
- **writers:** T.I. Hermansen, M.S. Eriksen
**Publisher:** not listed

Def Jam

The follow-up to Ne-Yo’s hit "Let Me Love You," and Hot 107.9’s Song of the Year, "Beautiful," is as smooth and soaring as its predecessor. A beautiful, up-tempo tune that will have you singing along in no time.

**COUNTRY**

**JASON MICHAEL CARROLL**

*Livin’ Our Love Song* (3:46)

- **Producer:** Don Germain
- **writers:** J.M. Carroll, T.Galloway, G. Mitchell
- **Publisher:** various

Anista Nashville

Jason Michael Carroll’s hit single "Livin’ Our Love Song" is a beautiful ballad that touches on the theme of love and relationships. The song’s melody is catchy and the lyrics are thought-provoking, making it a favorite among fans.

**R&B**

**AYLA BROWN**

*Forward* (3:42)

- **Producer:** Jim McGregor
- **writer:** Ayla Brown
**Publisher:** not listed

This debut single is a beautiful blend of pop and R&B, with Ayla’s soulful vocals taking center stage. The song’s catchy hook and memorable melody make it a hit on the charts.

**FAITH HILL**

*Lost* (4:09)

- **Writers:** K. DioGuardi, M. Allan
- **Producers:** Byron Gallimore, Faith Hill
- **Publisher:** not listed

Warner Nashville

Faith Hill’s latest single, "Lost," is a beautiful ballad that explores the theme of loss and the passage of time. The song’s melody is haunting and the lyrics are powerful, making it a standout on the charts.

**TRIPLE-A**

**Razorlight**

*America* (3:26)

- **Producer:** Razorlight
- **writers:** Razorlight
**Publishers:** various

Universal Motown

Razorlight’s latest single, "America," is a rock song that channels the spirit of the American Dream. The song’s melody is catchy and the lyrics are empowering, making it a hit on the charts.

**KAT DELUNA**

*Featruing Elephant Man* (3:16)

- **Wine* (3:23)
- **Producer:** RedOne
- **Writers:** K. Deluna, RedOne, J. Cross, E. Alex, G. O’Brian, T. Edmond
- **Publisher:** AIO, ASCAP, Greensleeve

GMB/Epic

"Wine" is a pop song that features Elephant Man. The song’s melody is catchy and the lyrics are empowering, making it a hit on the charts.

**LEGEND & CREDITS**

**EDITED BY JONATHAN COHEN (ALBUMS) AND CHUCK TAYLOR (SINGLES)**

**EDITORIAL TEAM:**

**Leila Colombo, Hillary Creasy, Gary Gratt, Stephanie Horst, Kerri Hanson, Gail Mitchell, Waa Oderoko, Michael Paquette, Sven Philip, Deborah Espich, Abbi Olatunji, Wayne Robins, Chuck Taylor, Christa J. Titus, Ken Tucker**

**RICK:** A new release predicted to hit the top half of the chart in the corresponding format.

**CRITICS’ CHOICE:** A new release, regardless of chart potential, highly recommended for musical merit.

All albums commercially available in the United States are eligible. Send album review copies to Jonathan Cohen and singles review copies to Chuck Taylor (both at Billboard; 707 Broadway, Sixth Floor; New York, N.Y. 10030) or to the writers in the appropriate bureaus.
Linkin Park Puts MVI On The Map; ACMs Spur Sales

With an acoustic week large enough to remind us of the good old dark days, Linkin Park steps into the future. Its "Minutes to Midnight" is not only the first album to be sold in the new Music Video Interactive configuration, it becomes the first MVI-available title to reach No. 1 on The Billboard 200.

The album begins with 67,000 copies sold, the largest first-week sales by any record since Thanksgiving Week when Jay-Z's "Kingdom Come" opened with 80,800. The Warner Bros. label estimates that 62,300 of Linkin Park's U.S. units (almost 10%) were sold in the MVI format which plays on EVD players but until needs such goodies as ringtunes, a paper and other bonus features when piped into a computer. In the album's first eight days on the market, about 6,000 fans went online to receive bonus content from the MVI, but we cannot declare that 10% re- demption rate because that number could include copies bought outside the United States.

Nielsen SoundScan has MVI copies linked with those sold on CD. Digital downloads accounted for 13% of the album's U.S. opener, as 33,000 safely places the title at No. 1 on Top Digital Albums. A total 120,000 copies make it No. 1 on Top Internet Albums.

For the combined total, the tally "Minutes" rang up stands tall in any year, even if it falls shy of Linkin Park's peak week, set when second studio album "Meteora" fetched 810,000 in 2003.

Still, the new album's start stands 69% ahead of the first week notched by the band's second No. 1 album, "MTV Unplugged: Live at the Roseland Ballroom," the band's 2004 collaboration with—coincidentally—Jay-Z. Linkin Park also overtook Norah Jones' "Too Late" for the largest sales week of 2007, set in February when it began with 405,000. In fact, "Minutes" would even have been a standout seller in the halcyon year that was 2000, when six different albums enjoyed million-plus weeks.

The No. 1 album averaged 517,682 during that calendar year, compared with 191,046 through the first 20 weeks of this year, yet Linkin Park's 623,000 would have been large enough to top The Billboard 200 in all but a dozen weeks of 2000. "Minutes" also becomes Linkin Park's second No. 1 on Billboard's Eurochart Albums list, a feat it first accomplished with "Meteora." The new one makes that claim: thanks to No. 1 standings in the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Austria, Switzerland, Ireland, the Netherlands, Sweden and Finland.

Beyond the United States and Europe, the album claims the No. 1 spot in Japan, New Zealand and Canada.

JINGLE, JANGLE, JINGLE: The Academy of Country Music Awards, which aired May 14 on CBS, deliver an annual wave of sales spikes. Among the show's beneficiaries are George Strait, who wins the Pacesetter on The Billboard 200 (106-67, up 32%) and Top Country Albums (25-13), and Taylor Swift, who wins the Country list's Greatest Gainer (4-3, while moving 15-13 on the big chart). Another ACM participant, Gretchen Wilson, chalks her third No. 1 in as many tries on Top Country Albums (see Between the Bullets, page 54), while The Billboard 200 also packs show-related bullets at Nos. 19, 84, 96, 109 and 119.

Although digital sales don't mean as much in country yet as they do in other genres, the ACMs do significantly affect Hot Digital Songs, where Big & Rich's "Lost in This Moment" has the chart's second-largest percentage increase (re-entry at No. 42, up 64%). Swift sees a 35% gain for "Teardrops on My Guitar" (4-36), and sales more than double for "Tired McGraw" (No. 70, up 127%). Digital Songs also registers ACM-related bullets at Nos. 12, 47, 52 and 58.

On another network, an appearance during the second-to-last week of "American Idol" elevens 2006 finalist Elliott Yamin. His self-titled album grabs The Billboard 200's Greatest Gainer as it romps 67-20 (up 136%), while "Wait for You," the song he delivered on the show, re-enters Hot Digital Songs at No. 36 as its sales more than triple (up 276%).
### Billboard 200 Chart

#### Chart Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Genre</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Linkin Park</td>
<td>Minutes To Midnight</td>
<td>Rock</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>TANK</td>
<td>Sex Love &amp; Pain</td>
<td>Rap/Hip Hop</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Michael Buble</td>
<td>Call Me Irresponsible</td>
<td>Pop/Rock</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Wilco</td>
<td>Sky Blue Sky</td>
<td>Alternative</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Gretchen Wilson</td>
<td>One Of The Boys</td>
<td>Country</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Avril Lavigne</td>
<td>The Best Damn Thing</td>
<td>Pop/Rock</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Megadeth</td>
<td>United Abominations</td>
<td>Metal</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Bone Thugs-N-Harmony</td>
<td>Strength &amp; Loyalty</td>
<td>Rap/Hip Hop</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Daughtry</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Carrie Underwood</td>
<td>Some Hearts</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Amy Winehouse</td>
<td>Back To Black</td>
<td>Soul/Funk</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Taylor Swift</td>
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<td>Bobbi Valenino</td>
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<td>Konvicted</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Tim McGraw</td>
<td>Let It Go</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Fergie</td>
<td>The Dutchess</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Rascal Flatts</td>
<td>Me And My Gang</td>
<td>Country</td>
</tr>
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</table>

#### Top 100 Albums

- **Elliott Yamin**
- **Hilary Duff**
- **George Strait**
- **George Michael**
- **Kanye West**
- **Leona Lewis**
- **Lana Del Rey**
- **Lady Gaga**
- **Joss Stone**
- **J. Cole**

#### Sales & Chart Performance

- **New**
- **Reissue**
- **Debut**
- **Moved Within Top 100**

#### Soundtrack Placement

- Films: "Sawarma" episode brings new sales highs (7,000+ up 50%)
- Chart data for this October 2006 release.

---

**Best sales week (85,000) for a holiday charity album.**

The year’s best album (120,000) is set starts with a heart.

See For complete chart data [Go to www.billboard.biz](http://www.billboard.biz)
### HOT 100 AIRPLAY

<table>
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<tr>
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### ADULT TOP 40

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<td>1</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>G. M. / G. M. / G. M.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>H. N. / H. N. / H. N.</td>
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### HOT DIGITAL SONGS

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<td>3</td>
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### MODERN ROCK

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<td>F. G. / F. G. / F. G.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>G. H. / G. H. / G. H.</td>
<td>1.296</td>
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### R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay

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<th>Artist/featuring</th>
<th>Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>#1</strong></td>
<td><strong>BUY U A DRANK (SHAWTY SNAPPIN')</strong></td>
<td><strong>J. JOHNSON / PRODUCED BY TONY CRIBB / REPRISE RECORDS (Universal)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#2</strong></td>
<td><strong>LOST WITHOUT U</strong></td>
<td><strong>J. JOHNSON / PRODUCED BY TONY CRIBB / REPRISE RECORDS (Universal)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#3</strong></td>
<td><strong>GET IT SHAWTY</strong></td>
<td><strong>J. JOHNSON / PRODUCED BY TONY CRIBB / REPRISE RECORDS (Universal)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>#4</strong></td>
<td><strong>PARTY LIKE A ROCKSTAR</strong></td>
<td><strong>NERVO / PRODUCED BY NERVO / ISLAND (Universal)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>#5</strong></td>
<td><strong>I'M A FLIRT</strong></td>
<td><strong>LIL SCRAPPY / PRODUCED BY LIL SCRAPPY / CRUNK / BME / REPRISE / WARNER BROS.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>#6</strong></td>
<td><strong>WHEN I SEE U</strong></td>
<td><strong>LIL BOOSIE FEAT. FOSO / PRODUCED BY LIL BOOSIE / LIL BOOSIE / POWER / UNIVERSAL MOTOWN</strong></td>
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<td><strong>#7</strong></td>
<td><strong>SAME GIRL</strong></td>
<td><strong>LIL' BASS FEAT. EDDIE PERKINS (SILVA JAGUAR)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>#8</strong></td>
<td><strong>BEYONCE &amp; T.I. WITH GERMANY (HOT 107.5 FM)</strong></td>
<td><strong>TUNE SQUAD / PRODUCED BY TUNE SQUAD / VIC/UPFRONT / SRC /UNIVERSAL MOTOWN</strong></td>
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<td><strong>#9</strong></td>
<td><strong>LIKE A BOY</strong></td>
<td><strong>RIHANNA FEAT. KID ROCK / PRODUCED BY TIMBALAND / DTP / DEF JAM / WEBBIE</strong></td>
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<td><strong>#10</strong></td>
<td><strong>WHO DARES WINS</strong></td>
<td><strong>LIL' BASS FEAT. EDDIE PERKINS (SILVA JAGUAR)</strong></td>
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### Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles Sales

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<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist/featuring</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#2</strong></td>
<td><strong>LOST WITHOUT U</strong></td>
<td><strong>J. JOHNSON / PRODUCED BY TONY CRIBB / REPRISE RECORDS (Universal)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#3</strong></td>
<td><strong>GET IT SHAWTY</strong></td>
<td><strong>J. JOHNSON / PRODUCED BY TONY CRIBB / REPRISE RECORDS (Universal)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>#4</strong></td>
<td><strong>PARTY LIKE A ROCKSTAR</strong></td>
<td><strong>NERVO / PRODUCED BY NERVO / ISLAND (Universal)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>#5</strong></td>
<td><strong>I'M A FLIRT</strong></td>
<td><strong>LIL SCRAPPY / PRODUCED BY LIL SCRAPPY / CRUNK / BME / REPRISE / WARNER BROS.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#6</strong></td>
<td><strong>WHEN I SEE U</strong></td>
<td><strong>LIL BOOSIE FEAT. FOSO / PRODUCED BY LIL BOOSIE / LIL BOOSIE / POWER / UNIVERSAL MOTOWN</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>#7</strong></td>
<td><strong>SAME GIRL</strong></td>
<td><strong>LIL' BASS FEAT. EDDIE PERKINS (SILVA JAGUAR)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>#8</strong></td>
<td><strong>BEYONCE &amp; T.I. WITH GERMANY (HOT 107.5 FM)</strong></td>
<td><strong>TUNE SQUAD / PRODUCED BY TUNE SQUAD / VIC/UPFRONT / SRC /UNIVERSAL MOTOWN</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#9</strong></td>
<td><strong>LIKE A BOY</strong></td>
<td><strong>RIHANNA FEAT. KID ROCK / PRODUCED BY TIMBALAND / DTP / DEF JAM / WEBBIE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#10</strong></td>
<td><strong>WHO DARES WINS</strong></td>
<td><strong>LIL' BASS FEAT. EDDIE PERKINS (SILVA JAGUAR)</strong></td>
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### Rhythmic Airplay

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<td><strong>#1</strong></td>
<td><strong>BUY U A DRANK (SHAWTY SNAPPIN')</strong></td>
<td><strong>J. JOHNSON / PRODUCED BY TONY CRIBB / REPRISE RECORDS (Universal)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>#2</strong></td>
<td><strong>LOST WITHOUT U</strong></td>
<td><strong>J. JOHNSON / PRODUCED BY TONY CRIBB / REPRISE RECORDS (Universal)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>#3</strong></td>
<td><strong>GET IT SHAWTY</strong></td>
<td><strong>J. JOHNSON / PRODUCED BY TONY CRIBB / REPRISE RECORDS (Universal)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>NERVO / PRODUCED BY NERVO / ISLAND (Universal)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>I'M A FLIRT</strong></td>
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### HitPredictor

- **Title**: **Party Like A Rockstar**  
  **Artist**: **Nervo**  
  **Label**: **Island (Universal)**
- **Title**: **Like A Boy**  
  **Artist**: **Rihanna feat. Kid Rock**  
  **Label**: **DTP / Def Jam / Webbie**
- **Title**: **Who Dares Wins**  
  **Artist**: **Lil' BASS feat. EDDIE PERKINS (SILVA JAGUAR)**  
  **Label**: **SILVA JAGUAR**
### HOT COUNTRY SONGS

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<td>Billy Currington</td>
<td>Curb Records</td>
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<td>Warner Bros.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>THE ONE THAT YOU WANT</td>
<td>Trace Adkins</td>
<td>Curb Records</td>
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<td>BLOWN AWAY</td>
<td>Tim McGraw</td>
<td>BNA Records</td>
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**Hit Predictor**

**Artists/Tracks (last read)**

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<th>Chart Rank</th>
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<td>DOUGS WORSE (61.7)</td>
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<td>TROY KEITH</td>
<td>HIGH MOUNTAIN WOMAN (79.7)</td>
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<td>ALAN JACKSON</td>
<td>DON'T JUDGE A BOOK (81.8)</td>
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<tr>
<td>TRACE LAWRENCE</td>
<td>I'M A SCIENTIST (88.8)</td>
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<tr>
<td>MONTGOMERY GENTRY</td>
<td>LUCKY MAN (81.4)</td>
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<td>BLAKE SHELTON</td>
<td>DON'T MAKE ME WORK (87.7)</td>
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**BETWEEN THE BULLETS**

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<td>Trace Adkins</td>
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<td>A NEED IN THE AIR</td>
<td>Tim McGraw</td>
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<td>IF YOU'RE READING THIS</td>
<td>Trace Adkins</td>
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<td>I CAN'T STOP</td>
<td>Trace Adkins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE ONE THAT YOU WANT</td>
<td>Trace Adkins</td>
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**McGraw, Hill Make Chart a Family Affair**

Tim McGraw struck a nerve with a previously overlooked war theme called "If You're Reading This" at the May 15 Academy of Country Music Awards. It takes the Hot Shot Debuts on Hot Country Songs at No. 35 (3.3 million impressions). Programmers at 50 monitored stations scrambled to get the TV audio of that moving performance on the air, and sources at Curb say that a studio version of the song is not yet available. Label sources say their focus remains on McGraw's debut with Faith Hill. "If You Need You," which achieves Airpower (23.17) wit 1.9 million impressions in this eighth chart week. Hill also premiers a new solo single on the ACM show, which appeared at radio during the tracking week. "Lost" opens at No. 48 with spins detected at 45 monitored stations (1.1 million impressions). The new song will be included in a forthcoming greatest hits package that has not yet been assigned a street date.

—Wade Jensen

**Hit Predictor**

- **Artists/Tracks (last read)**: COUNTRY COUNTRY
- **Artists/Tracks (last read)**: ILLE CUPIDO GOOD DIRECTIONS (81.7)
- **Artists/Tracks (last read)**: EMERSON DRIVE DOUGS WORSE (61.7)
- **Artists/Tracks (last read)**: TROY KEITH HIGH MOUNTAIN WOMAN (79.7)
- **Artists/Tracks (last read)**: ALAN JACKSON DON'T JUDGE A BOOK (81.8)
- **Artists/Tracks (last read)**: TRACE LAWRENCE I'M A SCIENTIST (88.8)
- **Artists/Tracks (last read)**: MONTGOMERY GENTRY LUCKY MAN (81.4)
- **Artists/Tracks (last read)**: BLAKE SHELTON DON'T MAKE ME WORK (87.7)

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—Wade Jensen

Data for week of June 2, 2007 | For chart reprints call 646-654-4633 | Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data | 55

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**www.americanradiohistory.com**

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EL TOP LATINO ALBUMS.

1. ENRIQUE IGLESIAS
2. JENNIFER LOPEZ
3. MAROLO ANTONIO SOLIS
4. JENNIFER KANZEL
5. JUAN LUIS GUERRA
6. VALENTIN ELIZALDE
7. JESSICA JUAREZ
8. JENNIFER LOPEZ
9. JAY CHAVANNE
10. IVY QUEEN
11. JUAN LUIS GUERRA
12. VALENTIN ELIZALDE
13. KAROL G
14. MANEL TRES TERCEROS
15. LAURA LEIVA
16. BVERAGE KID
17. JENNIFER LOPEZ
18. EL GRUPO BRANZ
19. JAE CHAVANNE
20. XIV Q
21. JUAN LUIS GUERRA
22. VALENTIN ELIZALDE
23. JENNIFER LOPEZ
24. EL GRUPO BRANZ
25. KAROL G
26. JENNIFER LOPEZ
27. IVY QUEEN
28. JUAN LUIS GUERRA
29. VALENTIN ELIZALDE
30. JENNIFER KANZEL

ARTISTS & NAMER (DISTRIBUTING LABEL / PRICE)

1. ENRIQUE IGLESIAS
2. JENNIFER LOPEZ
3. MAROLO ANTONIO SOLIS
4. JENNIFER KANZEL
5. JUAN LUIS GUERRA
6. VALENTIN ELIZALDE
7. JESSICA JUAREZ
8. JENNIFER LOPEZ
9. JAY CHAVANNE
10. IVY QUEEN
11. JUAN LUIS GUERRA
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23. JENNIFER LOPEZ
24. EL GRUPO BRANZ
25. KAROL G
26. JENNIFER LOPEZ
27. IVY QUEEN
28. JUAN LUIS GUERRA
29. VALENTIN ELIZALDE
30. JENNIFER KANZEL

TOP LATIN SONGS.

1. DIAMANTE
2. YAME
3. GUE ME DES TU CARINO
4. ESO Y MAS
5. LA LLAVE DE MI CORAZON
6. NO TE VEO
7. PEGAS
8. SUPER MARIO
9. QUIZAS
10. VI VOY PARA
11. JESUS CEPEDA
12. MA MAMITA
13. I DON'T CARE
14. DON'T CARE
15. DIME QUE Ocupas
16. PEGAS
17. K.P.
18. LUJAN
19. JOSITU
20. CHAKA

ARTISTS & NAMER (DISTRIBUTING LABEL / PRICE)

1. DIAMANTE
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3. GUE ME DES TU CARINO
4. ESO Y MAS
5. LA LLAVE DE MI CORAZON
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19. JOSITU
20. CHAKA

WWW.AMERICANADJHISTORY.COM
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<td>Cari Y Quiero Que Tu Voz Me Escuche</td>
<td>Los Taremianas</td>
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<td>Nuestros Sueños</td>
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<td>Todo Cambio</td>
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<td>La 5A Estación</td>
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<td>De Ti Los 5Gres Y Si Los Tigres Del Norte</td>
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<td>Dije Que Eres Tu Voz</td>
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**Notes:**
- All rights reserved.
- All titles and artists are subject to change.
- Chart data is compiled from various sources, including radio play, download, and streaming data.
- Chart is updated weekly and published annually.
### Japan Singles

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<td>KISS KI-A-MICH</td>
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<td>SHIORI</td>
<td>HIGH TIDE</td>
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<td>SEN NO KAZE HI NATURE</td>
<td>MUSICALIS</td>
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### United Kingdom Singles

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<th>Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>BEYONCE &amp; GWEN STEFANI</td>
<td>SNEP / IFOP / TRITE</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>MIKA</td>
<td>SANSAR</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>LAURA COSMOS</td>
<td>AAA AVER TRAX</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>THE ARK</td>
<td>SANSAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>SWEET MARIE</td>
<td>DUNKA</td>
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### Germany Singles

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<td>TITANIC DREAMS</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>SHINE</td>
<td>KARMA</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>THE SWEET ESCAPE</td>
<td>RAY MIX</td>
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<td>ONCE AGAIN</td>
<td>CHRISTOPHE MAE</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>HUMAN NATURE</td>
<td>AKON</td>
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### Australia Singles

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<td>PRAYER</td>
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<td>LINKIN PARK</td>
<td>SANSAR</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>GIRLFRIEND</td>
<td>SANSAR</td>
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### Italy Singles

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<tbody>
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<td>GEORGE MICHAEL</td>
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<td>S'IL CASABLANCA</td>
<td>MONOGRAM</td>
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<td>COVE Bambi</td>
<td>MONOGRAM</td>
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### Spain Singles

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<th>Artist/Song</th>
<th>Label</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>DEJANDO NOS LLER</td>
<td>HUMO OFICIAL DEL SEVILLA FC</td>
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<td>COMO EN UN MAR ETERNO</td>
<td>NABER</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>LA CRIAMIENTA</td>
<td>NEGRE TB</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>RAIN LOVE</td>
<td>JUAN PAUL</td>
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### Brazil Singles

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<th>Position</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>IVETE SANGALO</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>PADRE MARCELO ROSSI</td>
<td>AKON</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>LINKIN PARK</td>
<td>AKON</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>ARVIL LAVINE</td>
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<td>BANDA CALYPSO</td>
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### Flanders Singles

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>CLAUDEUS</td>
<td>GATEWAY</td>
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### Sweden Singles

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>INGEN SOMMAR UTAN REGGAE</td>
<td>YOUNG Pulse</td>
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<tr>
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<td>DUNKA MIQ GUL &amp; BLA</td>
<td>YOUNG Pulse</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>SWEET MARIE</td>
<td>TIESTO</td>
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<td>THE WORRYING KIND</td>
<td>KAMAL</td>
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### Ireland Singles

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<td>ARK</td>
<td>PAPER PLANE</td>
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<td>SONJA ALDEN</td>
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### New Zealand Singles

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>LINKIN PARK</td>
<td>SANSAR</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>ARCTIC MONKEYS</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>CASCADE</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>RUBY OMALAND</td>
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### Argentina Albums

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<td>LINKIN PARK</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>LA VELA PUERCIA</td>
<td>SANSAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>RICARDO MONTEGRAN</td>
<td>SANSAR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Data for week of June 2, 2007 - CHARTS LEGEND on Page 60**
### EUROCHARTS

#### SINGLE SALES

Top items from global sales charts.

### ALBUMS

Top albums as of May 23, 2007.

### RADIO AIRPLAY

Top songs on the radio as of May 23, 2007.

---

**Data for week of June 2, 2007**

For chart reprints call 646.654.4633

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**View complete chart data at www.billboard.biz**
CHARTS

LEGEND

SALES

CDs and cassettes are listed at consistent prices of $1.98, $1.99, and $1.99. Sales of more than $500,000 are considered significant.

MULTITITLES

RIAA multiplies shipments by the number of units or soundtracks, which are released by major labels.

www.hitpredictor.com

WHERE INCLUDED: RIAA award indicates the title with the chart's highest single-week peak.

WHERE INCLUDED: This award indicates the title with the chart's highest peak single-week peak.

SINGLE CHARTS

Compiled by a national sample of data supplied by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems. Charts are revised by number of grand music impressions, computed by a corresponding one-day sales of singles and albums by Nielsen SoundScan.

RECURRENT RULES

Indicates that the title has been on the chart for more than 20 weeks and were not removed from the chart.

SINGLES SALES CHARTS

The top-selling singles come from a national sample of retail stores, mass merchandisers, and internet sales reports, collected and provided by Nielsen SoundScan. For Billboard Hot 100 and Hot R&B/HL Top, sales data is compiled from a national subset panel of core R&B/HL/Hip Top stores by Nielsen SoundScan.

Singles with the greatest sales gain.

CONFIGURATIONS

CD single available. Digital Download available. DVD single available.

Hi-PREDICTOR

Indicates that the title has been on the chart for more than 20 weeks and have not been removed from the chart.

SOUNDTRACK

High school musical soundtrack, which are released by major labels.

TASTEMAKERS

The top-selling albums come from a national sample of retail stores, mass merchandisers, and internet sales reports, collected and provided by Nielsen SoundScan. For Billboard Hot 200 and Hot R&B/HL Top, sales data is compiled from a national subset panel of core R&B/HL/Hip Top stores by Nielsen SoundScan.

Top Soundtracks

Compiled by a national sample of data supplied by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems. Charts are revised by number of grand music impressions, computed by a corresponding one-day sales of singles and albums by Nielsen SoundScan.

AWARD DEPT.

Awards are given to albums for their achievement in specific areas, such as sales, chart performance, critical acclaim, etc.

ALBUM CHARTS

Riaa certification for net shipment of more than $500,000 is considered significant.

Music Video Sales

Riaa gold certification for net shipment of more than $500,000 is considered significant.

DVD & VIDEO SALES

Riaa platinum certification for net shipment of more than 1 million units.

DVD RENTAL

Riaa gold certification for net shipment of more than 500,000 units.

DVD RENTAL VIDEOS

Riaa silver certification for net shipment of more than 1 million units.

MUSIC VIDEO SALES

Riaa gold certification for net shipment of more than 500,000 units.

DVD SALES VHS SALES

Riaa gold certification for net shipment of more than 500,000 units.

DVD VIDEOS

Riaa platinum certification for net shipment of more than 1 million units.

DVD VIDEO RENTAL

Riaa gold certification for net shipment of more than 1 million units.

DVD VIDEO SALES

Riaa platinum certification for net shipment of more than 1 million units.

DVD VIDEOS

Riaa gold certification for net shipment of more than 1 million units.

DVD VIDEO RENTAL

Riaa platinum certification for net shipment of more than 1 million units.

DVD VIDEOS

Riaa gold certification for net shipment of more than 1 million units.
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<td>Z</td>
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</table>
LEGAL NIGHT SECRETARY

Real Estate law firm seeks secretary/word processor with 2-5 years experience for second shift - 5:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. Applicant should be experienced in drafting, editing and black-lining. Ideal candidate should have commercial and/or residential real estate experience, work independently with strong interpersonal and communication skills. Must be proficient in MS Word, Outlook, Wordbox and Excel a plus.

Please send resumes to elngis@ccj.net.

Yoshi's Jazz Club & Restaurant in Oakland, CA.

Is seeking a #2 person in it's Jazz booking team to be responsible for booking Yoshi's Oakland as well as Yoshi's San Francisco opening this fall. Yoshi's is a world class jazz club booking music 7 nights a week, 2 shows per night. Must have extensive booking experience and solid working knowledge of jazz and other music. Duties also include arranging artist accommodations and transportation and related clerical tasks. Compensation commensurate with experience. Yoshi's is an equal opportunity employer. Please submit your resume to Peter Williams at: Yoshi's, 510 Embarcadero West, Oakland, CA. 94607 or peter@yoshis.com

NO CALLS PLEASE
For more information about Yoshi's visit: www.yoshis.com

MUSIC HEAD—INTERNATIONALLY KNOWN children's camp in the lake and mountain district of Adirondacks, near Lake Placid. June 18th - August 18th. Good accommodations (children of staff warmly welcomed at NO COST) 518-327-3117

www.campregis-applejack.com

HELP WANTED

LEGAL SERVICES

ENTERTAINMENT LAW; COPYRIGHT LAW and Trademark Law. The Law Firm of Anthony Verna. NYC@yoshis.com. NYCTrademarks.com. Call 212-618-1119. E-mail: law@nyctrademarks.com

FATHER'S RIGHTS!!

Call attorney Jeffery Leving 312-356-DADS or visit www.dadsrights.com

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800-233-7624 or 465-654-4597
LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE OF ASSETS
OF
THE SONGWRITER COLLECTIVE, LLC

Notice is hereby given that Fortress Credit Opportunities I LP, a Delaware limited partnership, as a lender and as agent on behalf of the lenders (the "Agent") under that certain Loan Agreement, dated as of March 1, 2004, as amended (the "Loan Agreement"), among The Songwriter Collective, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company, as borrower (the "Debtor"), the Agent and the lenders, having postponed the public sales scheduled for November 4, 2005, December 16, 2005, January 31, 2006, March 14, 2006, April 26, 2006, June 6, 2006, July 18, 2006, August 29, 2006, October 17, 2006, November 29, 2006, January 9, 2007, February 20, 2007, April 10, 2007, and May 22, 2007, intends to sell at public sale in accordance with the provisions of the New York Uniform Commercial Code, certain personal property assets of the Debtor, generally described as all of the Debtor's right, title and interest of every kind and nature in and to all accounts, chattel paper, deposit accounts, documents, electronic chattel paper, equipment, general intangibles, goods, instruments, inventory, investment property, payment intangibles and software belonging to the Debtor, in each case whether tangible or intangible, wherever located or situated, including all rights to a portfolio of musical compositions, including, in some instances, copyrights, sound recordings and mechanical rights thereto, and all rights to any musical compositions, and all claims and causes of action related to the musical compositions accruing at any time and all other rights of the Debtor of any nature whatsoever in the musical compositions (the "Collateral").

A more detailed description of the Collateral will be provided to you upon execution of a confidentiality agreement.

The public sale will take place at the office of Sidley Austin LLP at 787 Seventh Avenue, New York, New York 10019, on Tuesday, July 3rd, 2007 at 11:00 a.m., New York time. The Agent reserves the right to cancel the sale, without notice, in its entirety, or to adjourn the sale to a future date. The Agent may further adjourn the sale herein described to another date from time to time, before, during or after commencement of bidding, without written notice, by announcement at the time and place appointed for such auction, or any adjournment thereof, and, without further notice, such auction may be made at the time and place to which the auction may have been so adjourned. Interested persons should take notice that the Collateral will be sold on the following terms and conditions:

1. All bids must be given orally at the public sale.
2. The Agent reserves the right to bid for and purchase the Collateral and to credit the purchase price against the expenses of sale and principal, interest and any and all other amounts due and payable to the Agent pursuant to the terms of any and all indebtedness secured by the security interest in the Collateral.
3. The Agent has sole discretion to determine which offer is the highest or best offer, and to reject any offer which it deems to be insufficient.
4. Concurrently with the acceptance of any bid, the prospective purchaser shall be required to execute and deliver to the Agent the Asset Purchase Agreement, a copy of which may be obtained by contacting one of the persons identified in the final paragraph of this notice, containing terms of sale and conditions precedent to the Agent's obligation to consummate the sale, in each case, in addition to their standard terms and conditions, including, without limitation, the requirement that the sale of the Collateral pursuant to the Asset Purchase Agreement be consummated no earlier than 30 days following execution thereof.
5. Upon acceptance of any bid, the prospective purchaser shall be required to deposit (the "Deposit") with the Agent earnest money in an amount equal to ten percent of the purchase price. Such Deposit shall only be refunded to such prospective purchaser as, and to the extent, provided in the Asset Purchase Agreement. In all other cases, the Agent shall have the right to retain such Deposit. If such sale of the Collateral is consummated with such prospective purchaser, the full amount of such Deposit shall be applied to the purchase price. If such sale is not consummated, the Agent shall have the right, but shall have no obligation, to refund the Collateral for, without further notice. The prospective purchaser shall not be entitled to any interest on the Deposit held by the Agent, whether or not the Deposit is required to be refunded to such prospective purchaser by the Agent pursuant to the Asset Purchase Agreement.
6. No bid may be withdrawn once a bid has been made, but any deposit is final until accepted by the Agent.
7. Only cash or cashier's check or other immediately available funds will be accepted for the Deposit or for payment of the purchase price. The bid of any prospective purchaser who fails to tender proper payment may be rejected and the Agent may, subject to the other terms hereof, (i) accept any alternative bid made at the sale, in which case the Agent shall have no right to reconvene the sale, accept additional bids, or notify any other bidder of the acceptance of such bid, or (ii) reject the Collateral for sale without further notice, in each case, at the Agent's option. Notwithstanding anything contained herein to the contrary, the Agent shall not be obligated to make any sale of the Collateral pursuant to this notice.
8. In the event the Agent is unable to consummate any sale and deliver the Collateral to a purchaser, then the sole liability of the Agent to such purchaser shall be to refund the purchase price, if any, previously paid to the Agent.
9. The Agent will announce at the outset of the public sale whether the Collateral will be sold in whole or in part, and whether the Collateral will be sold in one or more lots.
10. Subject to satisfaction of all the terms of the provisions of the Agent's obligation to sell the Collateral pursuant to the Asset Purchase Agreement and the terms and conditions hereof, consummation of the sale of the Collateral will be immediately upon receipt by the Agent of the purchase price and shall be evidenced by delivery of the Collateral to the purchaser thereof, BUT WITHOUT DELIVERY OF A BILL OF SALE, BUT WITHOUT GUARANTEE OF SIGNATURES, WITHOUT PAYMENT OF ANY TRANSFER OR OTHER TAX, AND WITHOUT REPRESENTATION OR WARRANTY BY THE AGENT, AND SUBJECT TO ALL DEFENSES.
11. The above terms and conditions of sale may be subject to additional or amended terms and conditions to be announced at the time of sale.
12. If any dispute arises between two or more bidders, the Agent may decide the same or put the Collateral up for sale again and resell to the purchaser submitting the best bid, determined by the Agent. In all cases, the Agent's decision shall be final.
13. All bids and other persons attending this auction agree that they have full knowledge of the terms set forth above and contained in the Asset Purchase Agreement and agree to be bound by the terms hereof and thereof.
14. The Debtor shall have the right to redeem the Collateral in accordance with, and only to the extent provided for, under applicable law. Persons desiring further information as to the public sale of the Collateral, and the terms and conditions relating thereto, and desiring to obtain copies of the confidentiality agreement or the Asset Purchase Agreement, may contact either Michael Jenkins (212/338-7626) of Sidley Austin LLP, 787 Seventh Avenue, New York, New York 10019 or Colleen McDonald (415/772-1207) of Sidley Austin LLP, 555 California Street, San Francisco, California 94104, counsel for the Agent.

May 26, 2007
FATHER DOES NOT KNOW BEST
Dutch rock band Within Temptation is doing its part to raise awareness of family violence and abuse. The video for the act's new continental Europe single, "Frozen," spotlights a family at the turn of the 20th century—a family that is keeping one too many secrets from the outside world. Within Temptation is donating all monies received from its record label, Sony BMG, for sales of the "Frozen" single to Child Helpline International, a global network of youth help phone lines in more than 150 countries. "Frozen" is included on the band's new album "The Heart of Everything," due July 24 from Roadrunner.
The 55th annual BMI Pop Awards were held May 16 at the Regent Beverly Wilshire Hotel in Los Angeles, as BMI issued the legendary Billboard with BMI's prestigious Icon Award. The Icon presentation to the Bee Geos featured performances by Catherine McPhee, Kelly Rowland and Bette Midler. In addition, Kara DioGuardi and Soar Garriti were named songwriter of the year. "Because of you" was honored as song of the year and Warner/Chappell Music was named publisher of the year. BMI also recognized the performance achievement of two other songs: "Miss Vogue," which was honored as the most-performed song on college radio, and "You're Beautiful" as Internet song of the year. Taking home two awards each were Full Out Freys' "Jawbone Hurley, Ralphi Stump, Joe Teshman and Pete Tash of Frey's Harp Gang, Neil Young and "Academy" Award winner Vincent Serio, winner of BMI's "Soca" Publishing contract with BMI, Blackwood Music, Warner/Chappell, Viking/Lipchizzel Music, Warner-Tamerlane Publishing, Jamma Music Publishing (Singer Music/Songs of Universal/Universal-Song & Film music International), BMI Music Group (Mike Track/Truck Songs, Songs/Ro Songs, KSTU Publishing, Chicago X Music Songs, Pulp Songs and Pepper Swan Publishing were each cited for multiple award-winning ranges. 7B BMI Foundation awarded its 10th annual John Lennon-Scholarship to, a 27-year-old Berkeley College of Music student Emyo Shackerley. InSaid, courtesy of LESTER COON.

\[Image of Mike Track/Truck Songs, Songs/Ro Songs, KSTU Publishing, Chicago X Music Songs, Pulp Songs and Pepper Swan Publishing.\]

Artists managers and producers grabbed the spotlight at the annual Music Managers Forum Hall of Fame awards held in London. From left to right: Angela O'Neil, Matthews & Citi Cars executive, V.P. Terry O'Neil, incoa (courtesy of BMIchange.com)

US Weekly's Hollywood 2002: Deliberately Hollywood's hottest style makers in an exclusive VIP-only event at Sugar in Los Angeles. Jennifer Lopez was named style icon of the year, and Lindsay Lohan was honored for her red carpet style. From left are: US Weekly publisher Victoria Landen Ross, JS Weekly Hollywood honoree Pete Wentz, Don't Trust Ambiance's Sylvian Galliano and Cointreau senior brand manager Roberto Cruz.

The Warner/Chappell Music team accepted their publisher of the year honors.

From left are BMI senior VP of writer/publisher relations Phil Graham, song of the year winner Ben Moody, and BMI executive VP/COO John Cody.
MARKETING TO MEN 18-34

AUGUST 8, 2007
THE ALTMAN BUILDING
NEW YORK CITY

LEARN HOW TO ENGAGE AND CONNECT WITH YOUR MALE AUDIENCE THROUGH TRADITIONAL AND NEW MEDIA PLATFORMS!

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Peter Leimbach, VP Multimedia Ad Sales Research, ESPN
Chris Lighty, CEO, Brand Asset Group and Violator Management
Michael Mohamad, SVP, New Business Development & Partnership, A&E Television Networks
Peter O'Reilly, Director of Marketing & Fan Development, National Football League
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