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INSIDE AKON BUILDS AN EMPIRE >P.22 + REBA TRUMPS 50, KANYE >P.49
BROOKS & DUNN >P.41 + INSIDE THE AMAZON LAUNCH
PRINCE VS. NIN IN THE DIGITAL ARENA. >P.16 + DAVID BANNER ROCKS D.C. >P.6

Inside the Amazon Launch Experience the Biz

The New Face of Regional Mexican
Women Bring New Life To The Charts >P.24

Plus Immigration Crackdowns
Killing The Biz? >P.26

Clockwise from left: Yza Landa Perez,
Graciela, Diana Reyes,
Prvera, Virginia Enc, Marisa Terrazas
of Los Horoscopos de Durango

OCT 6, 2007
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- TOP LATIN
- TOP R&B/HIP-HOP
- TOP SALEMAKERS
- TOP WORLD

TOP SINGLES
- ADULT CONTEMPORARY
- ADULT TOP 40
- HOT COUNTRY
- HOT DANCE CLUB
- HOT DANCE AIRPLAY
- HOT DIGITAL SONGS
- HOT LATIN
- MODERN ROCK
- POP 100
- POP 100 AIRPLAY
- R&B/HIP-HOP
- R&B/ADULT
- RHETMIC
- HOT RINGMASTERS

TOP VIDEOS
- TOP VIDEO CLIPS
- TOP MUSIC VIDEO SALES

THIS WEEK ON BILLBOARD

FEATURES
- UPFRONT
- THE AKON EMPIRE
- LEADING LADIES
- SHOW STOPPER
- TIMELESS APPEAL
- THE NEW REALITY

MUSIC
- SHERIFFS OF COWBOY TOWN
- IN EVERY ISSUE

EVENTS
- REGIONAL MEXICAN
- DANCE MUSIC
- MOBILE ENTERTAINMENT LIVE

BLOGS
- JADED INSIDER

www.americanradiohistory.com
Rapper David Banner tested before a House Energy and Commerce Committee Sept. 26 about the controversy regarding offensive language in hip-hop. Flanked by music industry executives and academics, Banner gave a passionate defense of the genre, couched in his own experiences of growing up in Jackson, Miss. Below is an excerpt from his testimony.

Jackson is one of the most violent cities in the United States. Honestly, rap music is what kept me out of trouble. Statistics will never show the positive side of rap because statistics don’t reflect what you do “don’t do” if you don’t commit a crime or a crime. When I would feel angry and would think about getting revenge, I would listen to 2Pac. His anger in a song was a replacement for my anger. I lived vicariously through his music.

Rap music is the voice of the underbelly of America. In most cases, America wants to hide the negative that it does to its people. Hip-hop is the voice… and how dare America not give us the opportunity to be heard.

Some might argue that the content of this music serves as positive to the fabric of our generation. If by some stroke of the pen hip-hop was silenced, the issues would still be present in our communities. Drugs, violence and the criminal element were around long before hip-hop existed. Our consumers come from various socioeconomic backgrounds and cultures. While many are underprivileged, a large percentage are educated professionals. The responsibility for their choices does not rest on the shoulders of hip-hop.

Still others raise concerns about imparting an access to our music. Much like the ratings utilized by the Motion Picture Assn. of America, our music is given ratings, which are displayed on the packaging. These serve to inform the public of possible adult content. As such, the probability of “shocking” the unsuspecting consumer’s sensibilities is virtually impossible.

Some argue that the verbiage used in our music is derogatory. During slavery, those in authority used the word “nigger” as a means to degrade and emasculate. There was no push for censorship of the word back then.

Our generation has since assumed ownership of the word. Now that we’re capitalizing off the use of the word, why is it so important that it be censored? Attempting to censor the use of a word that merely depicts deep camaraderie is outrageous. People should focus less on the “offensive” words in our music and more on the messages that are being conveyed.

For Banner’s Q&A with Billboard, see page 20

A Great Week

On Sept. 23, Billboard took home two key Folio Awards. The magazine won the Eddie Award for best business-to-business magazine in the media/entertainment/publication category; our April 1 feature with Nashville’s Muzik Mafia on the cover took the prize. Billboard also took home an Ozzie Award for feature design, winning in the same category for the Christina Aguilera package in the July 29 issue.

Meanwhile, two nights later, Billboard took home the OMMA (Online Media, Marketing & Advertising) Award for use of user-generated content by an advertiser, recognizing the Mobile Beat contest on billboard.com, in which contestants attended concerts throughout the summer with their LG eV camera phone, took pictures and blogged on billboard.com.

For pictures, see Backbeat, page 74.
Keeping It On The Down Low

Amazon Enters The Download Race With Cut-Rate Pricing

Most label sales and distribution executives were expecting Amazon's download store to undercut iTunes. But now that a consumer beta site has launched, many are expressing amazement at just how low the prices actually are.

Upon the Sept. 25 launch of the digital-rights management-free store, Amazon's top 100 titles were priced at $8.99, a promotional pricing gambit that hasn't been seen in 20 years—since the days of the cassette. Amazon executives may have played to label executives' desires by assuring that the site would price variable pricing, but as one indie label executive puts it, "Amazon is using "sale pricing" not variable pricing."

"I like that they have variable pricing," another distributor executive says. "I just wish they had higher variable pricing to match the lower variable prices."

But Amazon customers "appreciate low pricing, and we strive to deliver that in every product category," director of digital music Pete Balaxis says. "We have over 2 million songs up, and over a million of those songs are priced at 89 cents."

Most albums appear to be priced at $8.99, according to executives shopping the site in the first two days after the launch. And the Amazon site itself supports that assessment, by providing buttons that allow consumers to shop titles by price. When each price button is clicked, a summary is included with the list of albums that qualify.

As a result, it's easy to determine that 29,000 titles are priced at $4.99 or less, though this includes EPs and in some cases singles. 14,000 album titles at $5-$5.99; 33,000 titles at $6-$6.99; 36,000 titles at $7-$7.99; 48,000 titles at $8-$8.99, and 34,000 at $9 or more. That represents about 194,000 albums, or nearly 20% of Amazon's entire 1 million-CD SKU count.

Amazon is also cross-promoting CDs with MP3 downloads and visa versa. And the wide disparity between digital and physical pricing worries some label executives, who say it could help hasten the decline of the CD.

For example, Pink Floyd's "Wish You Were Here" sells on CD at Amazon for $13.97, and on the night of Sept. 26, a new copy of the CD was priced at $7.88 in the Amazon Marketplace. The MP3 download of the album is priced at $15.50. Four out of five songs are priced at 89 cents, including the 13-minute-long "Shine On You Crazy Diamond I." The 12-minute-long "Part II" of that song, however, is priced at $1.99.

Label executives note that, unlike Apple, which pays a uniform rate to all music suppliers, Amazon works hard to get a lower price of 85 cents per track at a $0.60 wholesale cost per album. But as one label executive puts it, "Since every label is not at the same wholesale rate, it is expected that to be reflected in the retail price," one indie label executive says. "But it's not."

Even to the extent that Amazon is employing variable pricing, it is only rarely used for song titles within specific albums. Exhibiting less offers, albums checked out by Billboard mostly are fine uniform song pricing of either 89 cents or 99 cents, depending on the price for the album in its entirety. But occasionally one finds an $8.99-priced album, such as Reba McEntire's "Duets," which lists every track at that price. 99 cents, except for lead radio track "Because of You," which is 89 cents. Likewise, Kanye West's "Late Registration," priced at $9.49, has all tracks at 99 cents, except for the hit song "Gold Digger" at 89 cents.

At this early stage, functionality is also an issue. So far, one indie executive says, the store is "pretty bare bones—it's hard to stumble across things you are not looking for."

Balaxis says, "The site has been tested extensively internally, but we are interested in getting customer feedback. Amazon's goal, he says, is "a great customer experience that's compatible with every digital music player."

Many indie executives, meanwhile, are expressing surprise at how much play major-label titles are getting on the store's home page, considering that the only major to offer its entire catalog is EMI Music. But many seem unaware of how extensive the new service is. According to sources, UMG is testing 10,000 albums titles with Amazon, or about 75% of its current album catalog.

Given Apple's dominance of the digital distribution channel, labels have a vested interest in Amazon taking market share away from iTunes. "If anybody will compete with iTunes, it's Amazon," one indie executive says. "It has the customer base, confidence and great systems to help its marketing effort."

"But more than cut into Apple's business," another indie executive says, "I hope Amazon grows the digital marketplace."

www.americanradiohistory.com
THE LATEST NEWS FROM bbiz

360 Degrees Of Popkomm
Diversification Discussions Dominate Berlin Trade Fair

BERLIN—Diversify or die. That was the blunt message facing the 15,000-plus delegates at the 2007 Popkomm trade fair in Berlin.

Against a backdrop of such recent trends as Universal Music Group’s buyout of the Sactuary Group—which includes merchandise, management and live booking businesses (billboard.biz, Aug. 2)—and Sony BMG Germany’s entrance into the management and live realms (billboard.biz, Aug. 28), all sectors of the international music business had expansion and the 360-degree model on their minds.

Berlin label!K7 used the eve of the conference to announce a move into the concert booking area, while panel discussion titles included “Are Bookers and Agents the A&Rs of Tomorrow?” and “Hug the DJ—the DJ As a Live Band Promote.”

“The dynamics of the business are changing. It’s a team effort now,” said Peter Thompson, managing director of British music company Vital and a speaker on the “Artist-Generated Business Power to the Artists!” panel. “We need to try and create something better than the sum of the parts. And management might be expected to go above and beyond.”

But most managers fail to successfully handle the artist’s brand, noted Rights Marketing Group CEO Michael Bower, who helped piece together Robbie Williams’ groundbreaking integrated deal with EMI in 2002.

“Management need to be much smarter at helping consumer brands solve marketing problems,” he said during the “Artist-Generated Business” session.

Attendance at the Sept. 19-21 conference rose slightly from last year, with more than 15,420 trade visitors registered at the capital’s exhibition grounds, according to organizer Messe Berlin. The major labels kept a low profile, with some delegates unconvinced the big four are best-placed to take advantage of the new opportunities.

“The majors are in a hole if artists and managers do not trust them,” said Gerd Leonhard, digital music expert, author and speaker on the “New Majors (Music) Players” panel. “To get people to sign these [360-degree] deals, they will have to put big money on the table—and they are running out of steam to do this. There’s already a bunch of people selling concert tickets, and they are pretty good at it.”

Another possible stumbling block to such deals emerged at the “Artists as Architects” panel, hosted by Billboard global editor Mark Sutherland. Musician panelists expressed notable reluctance to sign to a music company with interests in all areas of the business.

“At the moment, if your relationship with your label goes sour, you still can’t hang on, keeping your fans happy and surviving until you get a new deal,” said Jon Tufnell of U.K. electronica act Plastic Toys. “But, if it’s all under one roof, people would just forget about you.”

Fellow panelist Hans Röckl frontman Michael Monroe agreed. “If you put all your eggs in one basket, then they’ve got you by the balls.”

THE KEYNOTES
The big names were in a light-hearted mood at Popkomm 2007.

“I’m an expert in failure,” Dramatic Entertainment founder and managing director Brian Schwartz told Billboard group editorial director Tamara Conniff, admitting to losing £700,000 ($1.4 million) in just two weeks around a TV-advertised nostalgia reissue campaign for his 1970s novelty act the Wombles.

THE MUSIC
More than 450 international bands and DJs rocked Popkomm’s festival program. DJ Paul van Dyk and U.K. legend Paul Weller proved big draws, while the buzz act was U.K. alternative rock band Hard-Fi, which launched its new album “Once Upon a Time in the West” ( Necessary/Atlantic). Organizers say Popkomm concerts were attended by 82,000 people, 11,000 more than last year’s turnout.

THE POPKOMM PARTICLES

THE BIG DEAL
New German export office initiative Musik blew its trumpo for the first time.

Deitser Gorny, founder and former CEO of German music TV channel Viva and deputy chairman of labels body BPV, becomes chairman of the supervisory board for the project, which is government-funded to the annual tune of €1 million ($1.2 million).

THE REST OF THE WORLD
“1234,” the single by Cherrytree Records artist Feist, reached No. 36 on the Billboard Hot 100. The track’s “Reminder” jumps 36-28 on the Billboard 200, with sales of 19,000.

In total, “1, 2, 3, 4” and “The Reminder” have amassed sales of 181,000 and 235,000, respectively. (Feist’s debut album, 2005’s “Let It Die,” has sold 147,000 copies.)

“This is the type of clip you hope for,” Cherrytree president Mark Kirszenbaum says.

While the iPod Nano spot is introducing Feist to mainstream America, online chatter is paving the way to sales of the singer’s music. Feist is not identified in the campaign—created by TBWA/Media Arts Lab—and this has led many consumers to the Web in search of the voice behind the song commercial.

According to Nielsen BuzzMetrics—which monitored such search terms as “1234,” “iPod,” “Nano” and “campaign”—Web discussion is increasing by triple-digit percentages weekly. In the days following the singer’s Aug. 27 appearance on “Late Show With David Letterman,” where she performed “1, 2, 3, 4,” online buzz increased 190%. On the heels of Labor Day weekend, discussion of the iPod Nano ad soared 402%. One week later, there was a 166% spike in discussion.

According to Kirszenbaum, this iPod Nano spot marks the first time Apple has used footage from an artist’s music video (in this case, directed by Patrick Daugher) in one of its ad campaigns. Which begs the question: Does the director of the original video receive additional compensation because of its use in a campaign?

In a word, no. “For music video directors, it is a strict one-time fee, a work-for-hire,” 44 Pictures owner/director Sam Erickson says. “But changing this system has been discussed, he adds.

Feist is the latest in a string of microscopic acts to appear in iPod/Apple commercials, including the Pretzeltel, Wolfmother, Eminent and U2.

And while bloggers have fueled rumors of a “deal” between the companies, International A&R president of marketing and sales Steve Berman denies any such thing. (Apple and TBWA/Media Arts Lab declined to comment.)

“We have a great working relationship with them,” he says. “We are a company with much music that can be construed as left-of-center. Our A&R has lined up with Apple’s creatives.”

Kirszenbaum adds, “Apple has too much control in the marketplace to be bothered by such a deal. Everyone trips over themselves to get their music in an Apple commercial.”

BY LARS BRANDLE
swift zentury

Music Megastores Business
Download Will Cease

''The Wall'' reached new peaks in the Top 40, as the band's latest L.A. hit, '1234,' was the subject of a groundbreaking integrated campaign.

The Apple Of Feist's Eye

Sales, Online Buzz Skyrocket In Wake Of iPod Commercial

The use of Canadian singer/songwriter Feist's song "1, 2, 3, 4" in an iPod Nano TV spot is generating major buzz—online and on Billboard charts.

Since the ad debuted in mid-September, sales of "1, 2, 3, 4" and its parent Cherrytree/Interscope album, "The Reminder," have skyrocketed.

Earlier this month, the track was selling about 2,000 downloads per week, while the album was shifting 6,000, according to Nielsen SoundScan. In this issue, "1, 2, 3, 4" clears 73,000 downloads and reaches new peaks of No. 7 on Hot Digital Songs and No. 28 on The Billboard Hot 100. "The Reminder" jumps 36-28 on the Billboard 200, with sales of 19,000.

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RealNetworks VP of music content and programming Tim Quirk is sitting at a picnic table, drinking wine and reciting techno lyrics. "The lyrics are literally, 'Beep-boop-beep-beep,'" he says. "It's a straight transcription of a Darude song, and it blew up when we started our lyrics feature." Quirk is always interested in staying ahead of the curve of the other digital services, whether by offering painfully accurate lyrical transcriptions or by building a database that has breadth and depth, a mission he feels he accomplished when RealNetworks merged with MTV's digital music service Urge. After recently participating on a panel at the Future of Music Coalition summit in Washington, D.C., Quirk sat down with Billboard to discuss the merger, a new partnership with Verizon and the future of portable music.

**What value does a service like Urge add to Rhapsody?**

What we do and Rhapsody both offer music as a service. Urge had a very different programming approach. Put simply, Urge had a magazine style approach to their programming, because of the relationship with MTV, the focus was on music that was very new and current. Rhapsody, on the other hand, was more of an encyclopedia; we have a tremendous amount of evergreen music and content on the site. When those elements came together, we felt the fit was very complementary.

**How did the merger come about initially?**

MTV had wanted to build an online service for years and finally partnered with Microsoft in late 2005. Their plan was to market it as a joint venture, and the partnership with MTV was over. Viacom wanted to partner with someone else, and we sat down with them. Under the new merger, the Urge brand goes away, all the other features are integrated and this fabulous new thing, which we're calling Rhapsody America, emerges.

**How does the partnership with Verizon fit in?**

Verizon is the first major distribution partnership that Rhapsody America has struck. The theory is, "Forget the computer." People will want to walk around with a device that has millions of songs streaming at the flick of a button. You will have the ability to call up whatever you want, whenever you want.

**It seems like a new digital music service sprouts up online every day. What sets Rhapsody apart from the pack?**

Fundamentally, Rhapsody views music as a service. Our approach is: If you want to download songs, go ahead and do it.

For far too long, the music business used a sales revenue model. Whether someone buys a disc and listens to it once or 100 times, it was all the same to the label. Rhapsody is operating with a usage model, where we can measure how many times someone listens to a stream of a given record.

**Have you dealt with any resistance from labels when it comes to the streaming model? Do they fear that they'll lose money if they allow people to listen to albums multiple times without purchasing them?**

We've only had one label pull their catalog in the history of the service. There is a definite correlation between the streams and the download sales on the site. We had three cases—Madonna, Janet Jackson and Linkin Park—where they started with both streams and downloads, then took down the streams. The sales for all three artists fell. When they put the streams back up, the sales rose back up again.

**What are the next steps for Rhapsody?**

Right now, we're looking at developing new ways to access Rhapsody including stereo that connect to the service and making sure our subscribers can always access us. More immediately, in the next 10 to 12 months, we'll be rolling out all the new features that came out of the merger; there will be all sorts of new blogs and music feeds. I'm really excited for this. It's going to be cool.

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**FREE ENTERPRISE**

Will Starbucks Track Giveaway Lure Customers to iTunes?

"Free" is perhaps the most effective word in the marketing lexicon. But so far there's little evidence it has helped goose the nascent digital music market.

Starbucks and Apple have begun the debate by unveiling a promotion to give away 50 million songs, or songs via in-store gift cards from Oct. 2 to Nov. 7. Unlike other promotions that allow users to download any track they want from the iTunes library, the Starbucks Song of the Day promotion will give away a different song card daily—one from Joni Mitchell and KT Tunstall for instance—as selected by Starbucks and its record label partners.

Starbucks and participating labels are gambling that once all 50 million songs are given away, customers will continue buying digitally. But customer loyalty expert Robert Passikoff, founder of marketing consulting agency Brand Keys, says few free promotions succeed in changing consumer behavior in the long run.

"Free is great," he says, "but it's not a guarantee of continued interest or loyalty." Past iTunes promotions have not had much luck with retaining customers after they end. The first free iTunes download promotion conducted on a mass scale was with Pepsi in early 2004, which distributed 100 million soda bottles with redeemable codes for free downloads under the cap. Only 5 million of them were redeemed, significantly fewer than the internal target of 25 million reported at the time.

Starbucks, though, is a different beast than Coke—with whom Apple ran a massive 2 billion-track promotion in Europe that ended in August—or Pepsi. The coffee chain has already proved itself as a major player in the music retail game through its targeted sales of artists, and it's positioning itself as a music tastemaker by giving away only recommended songs.

"They have significant brand equity, there's a great deal of consumer trust, and it's a brand that the consumer sees as a close fit to music. So I actually think Starbucks may have a better opportunity."
Their Way Or The (Super)Highway

Prince, Reznor Are Studies In Differing Online Strategies

At first blush they seem so similar.

Neither Prince nor Trent Reznor is afraid of taking creative steps to reinvent a music industry business model that is in major disruption, and passing off most everyone else in the process.

Prince, the funk music rebel, inked labels and retailers everywhere by encouraging his fans to steal his album from peer-to-peer (P2P) networks or download it free from his own Web site.

Both moves share the same strategy: focus less on record sales and more on using recorded music as a tool to drive sales in other areas, like concert tickets or merch. But when you examine the artists’ online promotional strategies, the similarities come to a crashing halt.

While Reznor is perfectly content with fans posting concert footage to YouTube or downloading his albums from Pirate Bay, Prince is prepared to use the very same outlets for the exact same reason.

The issue is one of control vs. promotion. Prince is fine with using the Internet to distribute his work, and in fact is a pioneer of doing so. But he wants to control the substance of that content—the sound quality, the clip used, etc. This isn’t the first time he’s attempted to rein in the Internet activity concerning him. He famously sued nine fan Web sites in the late ’90s in an attempt to control the information they were being fed, as well as transfer their membership to his official online fan club.

“Historically, artists have felt they should have a certain amount of control over how they’re presented,” says former EMI exec Ted Cohen, now a consultant with TAG Strategic. “I understand Prince’s desire to have a degree of control, but the reality is that control has gone away.”

Camera phones, mobile blogging, YouTube—they all evolved after file trading became popular, and the industry hasn’t even found a way to shut that down yet. So not only are there more channels to distribute content, but more means for acquiring it. How does an act corral all that interest around it into something that can be controlled?

Reznor’s answer is, you don’t. “If you can’t stop it, then the question is, How do you take advantage of it?” Reznor’s manager, Jim Guerinot asks.

Record labels have been taking advantage of it for some time now, utilizing strategic leaks as part of their marketing campaigns and considering the response to a given track when deciding future singles.

Indeed, in Reznor’s eyes, P2P networks and YouTube are no different from radio stations. He can’t control what’s played or expect payment, but he can use them as a means of promotion.

That’s not to say he doesn’t try to manipulate the activity somewhat. Rather than waiting for his “Year Zero” album to be leaked, he leaked it himself—leaving USB drives in the restrooms of concert halls with select tracks. Traffic was then driven to an elaborate alternative reality “game” that built buzz around the album. All the user generated material out there that Prince wants to control is just free advertising to Reznor.

What Prince sees as infringement, Reznor sees as engagement.

“If you want the high-quality experience, you have to participate with him on his terms,” Guerinot says. “People will pay for proximity to the artist’s vision.”

Reznor can afford to take that chance. Whether he likes it or not, he’s still part of the label structure and enjoys the full marketing muscle and financial support of Interscope Records. Prince doesn’t. He independently records his own albums and signs one-off deals for production, distribution and some marketing, often jumping from label to label.

Reznor says he owes the first last record under his contract, after which he’ll sell his albums directly from his Web site for $4 each. But that’s one more album with that safety net beneath him as he experiments and perfects these new models before he’s out there on his own.

“Trent has a little more freedom to not worry about the outcome,” Cohen says, “while Prince has to be a little more concerned.”

And of course all this is complicated by the fact that there’s no clear proof that the strategy of promotion over control is working. “Year Zero” sold 441,000 U.S. copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan, but certainly wasn’t a blockbuster.

“I can’t quantify it, other than it’s 18 years into his career and he feels bigger than ever,” Guerinot says. “I’ll take that.”

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

**BITS & BRIEFS**

**RYAN’S HOPE**

Universal Music U.K. has linked with media technology company Coull.tv to create an interactive, social networking video promoting the debut single by Canadian pop duo Ryan Dan. The technology lets fans click on objects featured in the music video to share and exchange comments with other fans. Fans can also click on links embedded within the video player to purchase individual tracks or the album from iTunes, or grab a copy of the video to upload onto their personal pages on social networking sites. It can be found on Universal’s site, ryanadan.com, coull.tv and social networking services Bebo and MySpace.

**WIDGET WARS**

The music applications on Facebook are coming fast and furious after the phenomenal success of Luke’s widget. Ad-supported free music service Ruckus Network introduced a Facebook version of the My Ruckus Player. Only college students with access to the Ruckus music player may use the application. Meanwhile, Finetune released a Facebook app that allows users to listen to their friends’ soundtracks and trade comments.

**GET THE LED OUT**

Led Zeppelin will throw an after-party following its much-anticipated London reunion show in November, and is inviting several unsigned bands to play the gig. Interested acts must upload a video to Comcast’s answer to YouTube, zidio.com, explaining why they should get the opportunity. Winning acts will be introduced by the members of Led Zeppelin, and must play one Zeppelin cover tune and one original track for the crowd. The contest runs throughout October.
A NEW BLUEPRINT

Film Tie-In For New Jay-Z Album Updates A Tried-And-True Marketing Formula

By releasing Jay-Z's "American Gangster" Nov. 6 as a companion to—but not a soundtrack to—the Ridley Scott-directed Universal Pictures film of the same name, opening Nov. 2, Def Jam Records is offering a new twist on a time-tested strategy.

"Any time you have one of your major artists involved in a feature film, it's a major advantage," Atlantic Records senior VP of marketing James Lopez says. "Record label budgets are nowhere near the amount of a film company's budget. In comparison, our marketing dollars are chump change."

Record labels have obviously been pairing hip-hop releases with films for years. Jay-Z's own imprint, Roc-a-Fella Records, regularly released albums that fed off a film's marketing: as early as 1998 with the soundtrack to Roc-a-Fella film "Streets is Watching," a various-artists compilation that has sold 348,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan; and as recently as Beanie Siegel's 292,000-selling "The Game," released in 2005 and associated with the second installment of the "State Property" film series.

More recently, Atlantic Records used a film tie-in to market T.I.'s fourth album, "King," even though only two of its songs appeared in the movie. The Chris Robinson-directed film, "ATL," which starred T.I., was released the same week—March 28, 2006—as the album. Atlantic collaborated with the film's parent company, Warner Bros., to ensure that the music benefited from the cross-promotional relationship.

"We worked hand in hand with the film studio to include the music in the media campaign," says Lopez, who was involved in T.I.'s marketing for "King." "We partnered for the TV spots and used T.I.'s music during the film's commercials. In turn, we promoted the film in our TV spots for 'King.'"

Spurred by the film's success, "King" became T.I.'s most successful release, racking up 1.7 million units. "ATL" came in at No. 3 at the box office in its opening weekend, grossing $11.6 million.

In the case of Jay-Z's new album, none of its songs appear in the "American Gangster" movie; Def Jam is also releasing an official "American Gangster" soundtrack, consisting primarily of vintage R&B tracks. Instead, each song on the Jay-Z set is said to reference a particular scene in the film. Denzel Washington initially recommended Jay-Z for the soundtrack but the film's producer, Brian Grazer, reportedly disagreed. Instead, Def Jam is elevating a familiar strategy to a major-league plane by tagging the album to a film helmed by Scott and Washington. Still, Def Jam senior VP of marketing Tracey Waples isn't sure if that was the original plan.

"In July, fans online actually manipulated the 'American Gangster' trailer, putting Jay-Z's face in place of Frank Lucas and made the image into a mixtape cover," Waples explains. "We saw that and thought the album's concept was a natural move."

Cross-promotion, though, is still in the planning stages.

"We're in talks to be a part of the future movie trailers," Waples says. "But we're going to do a very aggressive street campaign promoting the album and the soundtrack in and around the movie theaters the week of release."

Def Jam's promotional team shot a trailer to promote Jay-Z's first single, "Blue Magic," which this week enters Billboard's Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart at No. 35, and the label plans to shoot a mini-film for each song on "American Gangster." The first short will most likely be aired in a theater, while others will be released online, creating a dialogue with fans.

"American Gangster" is akin to "Streets Is Watching" with a modern-day balance through the online component," Waples says. "We're expecting to reach both a new younger and older demographic, along with the loyal 30-plus crowd through the 'American Gangster' film association."

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Festival Frenzy

Beijing Event Powers Up China's Live Biz

Onstage, Public Enemy’s Chuck D is belting out “Fight the Power” to a screaming audience while army fatigues-clad dancers gyrate behind him.

So far, so normal. But this is strait-laced Beijing—and the event is the highest-profile rock festival yet in the world’s most populous country.

The third annual Beijing Pop Festival, held Sept. 8-9 in the Chinese capital’s Chaoyang Park, is being hailed by industry insiders here as a potential tipping point for the country’s live scene.

“This year’s BPF put China on the international festival map,” says Matthew Daniel, VP of Beijing-based digital distribution company R2G.

“It’s hopefully a prelude to the huge year 2008 will be for live events on the mainland.”

Organizers say 30,000 people attended BPF, making it one of China’s biggest music festivals. Advance tickets cost 200 yuan ($27) for one day and 380 yuan ($51) for both.

Featured acts included Public Enemy, Nine Inch Nails, the New York Dolls and Marky Ramone, plus local favorites like rock bands Mumia (signed to Shanghai-based label Oriental Sky) and Xie Tian Xiao (signed to Beijing-based label 13th Month).

Rebel Waltz Management’s Jim Gierinot, manager of Nine Inch Nails, says the band “loved” playing BPF. “It was very well run,” he says, adding that the band “can’t wait” to return to China.

BPF has grown swiftly since drawing 10,000 to its 2005 one-day inaugural event, with overseas headliners including rapper Common and former Stone Roses frontman Ian Brown.

In 2006, a two-day event featuring Placebo, Supergrass and former Skid Row vocalist Sebastian Bach drew 22,000 attendees.

In the past year, China has hosted some 15 outdoor music festivals—mostly smaller than BPF—with around 50% featuring international acts. And that boom shows no signs of slowing.

Two new outdoor events are scheduled for October. The Yue Festival, organized by Shanghai-based promotion company Split Works and featuring headliners Faithless, Tallib Keli and Ozzonnati, takes place Oct. 2-3 in Beijing and Oct. 5 in Shanghai. And the Modern Sky Festival, organized by Beijing-based label Modern Sky Entertainment and featuring the Yeah Yeah Yeahs and several home-grown acts, runs Oct. 2-5 in Beijing.

However, festivals still face significant barriers in China. “Piracy, ticketing corruption, an immature ticket-buying public, antiquated security laws—all these are issues we face that developed countries simply do not,” says Hong Kong-based Jason Magnus, president of live promotion company Rock for China, which organized BPF.

“Government approvals for outdoor events are significantly more complicated and time-consuming” than for venue-based shows, Split Works COO Nathaniel Davis adds. “There’s an entire list of government departments that require detailed information regarding the specifics, down to the type of wood used for the stage flooring.”

Magnus recalls it took two years of rejection before finally obtaining permission to launch BPF. “We try to do things in a very proper, structured way,” he adds. “I want to make sure we’re completely legal.”

To do that, Magnus formed a partnership with long-established classical music event the Beijing Music Festival, technically making BPF part of the senior festival.

“Having the BMF be our presenters,” Magnus says, “means that [BPF was] OK’d by the Ministry of Culture and the Beijing Municipal Government.” Magnus feels he might have been unable to get either approval on his own.

China’s expanding festival market is increasingly grabbing international attention. Shanghai-based ticketing/promotion company Emma Ticketmaster brought the Rolling Stones and Eric Clapton to China during the past 18 months and is presenting Linkin Park Nov. 18 at the 35,000-capacity Shanghai Hongkou Stadium.

“Emma believes in the festival model here and has plans to launch our own festival next year,” the company’s CEO Jonathan Krane says. “China has opened up to the point where a professional promoter (can) come in and produce a great festival.”

Additional reporting by Ray Waddell in Nashville.

GLOBAL NEWSLINE

>> K7 ENTERS LIVE BIZ

Berlin-based independent label K7 has set up a concert agency for its acts. The K7 Bookings agency is managed by Paul Fowler, who previously worked as a books for the Littlebig Agency in Berlin.

“This new department will enable us to offer our artists an even wider service than we already provide in the K7 Label Group,” managing director Horst Weidenmüller says.

The new agency will handle K7’s roster—which includes Stateless, Michael Fakesh, Swayzak, Kon & Amir and the Soul Jazz Records Sound System—plus acts signed to other labels.

Fowler says his aim is to build up a broad musical base of artists, ranging from soul, funk and jazz to techno, house and electronic.

—Wolfgang Spahr

>> AEG STARTS SWEDISH ARM

AEG Live has opened an office in Stockholm to cover Sweden’s live music sector.

The giant concert promoter’s new AEG Live Sweden unit is headed by managing director David Maloney, who previously served as head promoter at rival EMA Telstar, a Swedish subsidiary of Live Nation.

“Establishing ourselves in a music nation such as Sweden opens up far more alternatives for artists and audiences,” Maloney said in a statement.

“Sweden is a very important piece of our European strategy as a full-service concert company, and we feel that the entire industry will benefit from an AEG Live presence in Scandinavia,” added London-based AEG Live Europe managing director Rob Hallett, to whom Maloney reports.

—Juliana Koranteng

>> UMG ACQUIRES ARS

Universal Music Group (UMG) has acquired Belgian indie ARS Entertainment and its publishing arm BMC Publishing for an undisclosed sum.

ARS will become a Universal Music Belgium label focusing on domestic repertoire and branded compilations. The rights to ARS repertoire and artists, including local acts Laura Lynn, M-Kids and Nalipin, will transfer to Universal Music Belgium at the start of 2008. ARS’s activities also include DVD and books units.

Through the deal, first tipped on billboard.biz, AEG Entertainment managing director Patrick Busschots will take the same title at the expanded Universal Music Belgium, reporting to Vico Anttillas, UMG International senior VP and president of its Nordic, Central and Eastern Europe businesses. Busschots replaces Dirk De Clopele, who recently left the major label after 10 years.

ARS director of business affairs Peter De Craene will become head of publishing of the new Universal Music Belgium.

—Marc Maes

>> VC FIRM BUYS STAKE IN BORDERS U.K.

Venture capital firm Risk Capital Partners has acquired a majority share in Borders U.K. and Ireland, placing the retailer’s value at more than £75 million (US$115 million).

Borders U.K. and Ireland CEO David Roche will retain his position at the company, and will become a shareholder. Parent Borders Group is retaining a 17% stake in the affiliate.

Risk Capital Partners is led by entrepreneur Luke Johnson, who is also chairman of U.K. commercial TV network operator Channel 4 Television Group.

It’s investment comes during a period of growth for the retailer, which operates 42 U.K.-based Borders superstores, plus 28 outlets and airport shops under brand names Books Etc. and Borders Express.

—Juliana Koranteng

For 24/7 global news and analysis, see billboard.biz/global.
New Up North

Canadian Industry Considers An Emerging-Artist Requirement For Radio

The Canadian music industry, broadcasters and government regulators are set to debate a proposal that would force radio stations to play tracks from the country's so-called "new and emerging artists."

The issue, and how "new and emerging" Canadian acts will be defined, is likely to become a contentious point during the coming months following a report to the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) recommending an industry group be created to investigate the idea.

Radio playlists are required to include 35% of what is defined as "Canadian content," typically songs recorded or written by Canadian musicians. But Canadian music recording companies, mired in a sales slump, have sought to force radio to play new acts, as opposed to filling CanCon regulations by programming more established musicians such as Neil Young, Bryan Adams and Barenaked Ladies.

Music sales in Canada, which have been falling since 1999, declined by 12% in 2006 to $536 million Canadian ($524 million), according to the Canadian Recording Industry Assn. (CRIA), and declined 35% in the first quarter of this year.

At the same time, Canadian radio recorded record revenue of $1.4 billion Canadian ($1.4 billion) in 2006, and profits of $284.5 million Canadian ($284.2 million), according to the CRTC.

Graham Henderson, president of the CRIA, which represents Canada's major labels, says his organization has been promoting the idea of emerging-artist content on radio since 2005. "The CRTC needs to do more than encourage the industry on this issue. They need to push this process forward. Are they or are they not the regulator here?"

Henderson says that according to his organization's research, only 6%-7% of music played on English radio in Canada could be categorized as by new artists. Radio in the French-speaking province of Quebec plays almost double the amount heard in other parts of Canada, Henderson says. Of the 12 debut albums that were in the year-end top 100 in Canada in 2006, only two, by City and Colour and by Hedley, were by Canadian acts.

The 122,000-word report, created by lawyers Laurence Dunbar and Christian Leblanc, who are both part of the communications practice at Fasken Martineau DuMoulin, was issued Sept. 12. It recommended that "workable definitions of 'emerging music' and 'emerging artist' be developed."

"The best way to establish such a definition," the report added, "is to have representatives of Canadian radio broadcasting industry and of the Canadian music industry mutually agree on those definitions."

Kevin Desjardins, a spokesman for the Canadian Assn. of Broadcasters, which represents Canadian commercial radio operators, says his organization had not had time to review the report and could not comment on the recommendation.

Stephanie Friedman, GM of BOS Radio Canada, which tracks airplay, says that defining what "emerging" means is important to the health of the recording and radio businesses in Canada. Friedman has crafted a definition that will be used for a new "Canadian emerging artist" chart. Under her working definition an act would be considered "emerging" until one year from its first top 40 hit on Billboard's Canada Hot 100 chart and have to qualify under current Canadian content rules. Friedman senses there is support from all sides of the industry for the concept.

"I think the industry is behind this enough to create a definition and move it forward so the CRTC can craft a policy around it," she says. Not everyone is that confident. Duncan McKie, president of the Canadian Independent Record Production Assn., which represents such labels as Nettwerk Records, Last Gang Records and Maple Music, says he is worried the recommendation could get lost given the massive size of the report and the myriad of issues raised in it.

"Given what's at stake, and our view of it, they give remarkably little time to what I would consider one of the most important issues facing our industry," McKie says.

But if a definition can be created and radio supports the concept, it could significantly boost the careers of new artists in Canada. "It could help us create the new Joni Mitchells or the new Neil Youngs," Henderson says. ...
LITTLE STEVEN'S UNDERGROUND GARAGE

GARAGE ROCK

Our Coolest Song in the World a few weeks ago was “Too Many Cooks (Spoon the Soup)” by Mick Jagger and can be found on his “Very Best Of... ” out Oct. 2.

While it is not our habit to encourage solo record-selling, Mick’s “Bridging All About Bands” (since the 1950s), this is such an exceptional track that we feel it’s worth spending a minute on.

First, the song's origin seems to be a source of confusion. According to the text, it is a collaboration between Willie Dixon and Holland/Dozier/Holland (the real Motown three). But our research is pointing to Angelo Bond, Ronald Dumber and Edyth Wayne, who worked mostly for Holland, Dozier and Holland’s label Invictus/Hot Wax and wrote for Honey Cone, Freda Payne and General Johnson and—in this case—on the debut single of 100 Proof (Aged in Soul), led by lead singer Joe Stubbs (ex-Contours, Falcons and brother of Fours Tops lead Levi).

John Lennon ended up producing, by way of his organized jam sessions held on a regular basis at Los Angeles’ Record Plant studio during his two year “Lost Weekend.” (Yoko Ono had suggested they separate and instructed employee May Pang to take care of him.) Jagger happened to come by once and sang.

Everyone forgot about “Too Many Cooks” for 30 years or so, until Pang found the master tapes. So she’s the real hero of the story.

On this amazing track are Jim Keltner on drums, Danny Kortchmar and Jesse Ed Davis on guitar, Al Kooper on keyboards, Trevor Lawrence on baritone sax, Bobby Keys on tenor sax, Harry Nilsson on background vocals and Jack Bruce on bass.

I don’t know how many vocal takes there were, but I promise you the final one that’s on the record was the last take.

Jagger is either at the top of his range or just making it to the end of the song before wearing out, much like Lennon’s vocal on “Twist and Shout” on the first Beatles album.

The ragged but still in-control quality of his voice creates a fabulous tone of desperation—underlying and balancing out the standard R&B macho threat that would normally dominate a song like this, had the singer been in full voice.

Instead, a painful soulfulness hits you and stays with you, much like Sam Cooke, David Ruffin and, the King of Agony, Levi Stubbs.

I’m sure there will be other cool things on the record, but this alone is worth the price of admission.

As so it turns out, solo adventures can occasionally be fun.

Let’s just not make a habit of it, shall we?

COOLEST GARAGE SONGS

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<td>CONQUEST</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>TOO MANY COOKS (SPOIL THE SOUP)</td>
<td>MICK JAGGER / RHYNO</td>
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<td>STREAKS AND FLASHES</td>
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<td>RADIO NOWHERE</td>
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<td>SUZANNA</td>
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<td>LIEEN ON YOUR DREAMS</td>
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<td>SALAD DAYS</td>
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COOLEST GARAGE ALBUMS

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<td>BABY 81</td>
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<td>HAVE MERCY</td>
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<td>HERE FOR A LAUGH</td>
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<td>HENTCH-FORTH-FIVE</td>
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<td>CBGB FOREVER</td>
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<td>PSYCHEDELIC SUNRISE</td>
<td>THE GRIFF WHEDD / GROOVIN UP</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>WANNA DO THE WILD PLASTIC BRANE LOVE THING</td>
<td>THE STABILIZERS / WICKED COOL</td>
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Towers Of Power

When three indie record chains on the West Coast announced they were taking over old Tower Records spaces in their respective cities, it seemed to symbolize the triumph of the little guys.

And now, even after the hype has quieted, stores keep seeing gains. Ones that Billboard spoke to are reporting increases in sales and foot traffic, due in large part to their clever utilization of the old spaces. Such strategies as in-store events and diversification of product have been instrumental in ensuring that customers keep coming back, even after the initial “Wow, think of a Tower!” response has faded.

Other indie stores are looking for ways to employ similar tactics, even if they don’t have the massive space that a former Tower location provides. At Music Monitor Network’s recent Noise in the Basement confab, retailers reiterated the importance of in-store promotions to boost traffic, help promote local artists and build strong relationships with the community. To that end, MMN has announced a national day for indie retail, to be held May 3, 2006. Promotion for the event will be a collaborative effort among all three major indie-retail associations, and MMN also hopes to include unaffiliated stores in the promotion.

The conference also featured plenty of celebrating among those who made the move to the bigger locations. “Things have been awesome,” says Steve Duncan, the new product manager for 10-store Bay Area chain Raspum’s, which took over four former Tower stores. “Like everyone else in the business, we’ve been dealing with a decrease in sales of new hit CDs, due to competition from Best Buy and an overall decline in the industry. But the amount of catalog and the wealth of material we’ve been able to stock has gone up exponentially in the new locations.”

Olynn Radakovitz, co-owner of six-store Sacramento, Calif., chain Dimple, which took over two former Tower locations, says that the chain’s new Citrus Heights store posted a 140% increase in sales compared with its former location.

Mike Batt, VP/co-owner of four-store Seattle-area indie chain Silver Platters, is also pleased. “While we don’t have people-counters at the door for exact figures,” he says, “we do think we have more foot traffic at the new location.” This could be due to the 14,000 square-foot prime space in downtown Seattle, which attracts more walk-in traffic than the chain’s other three, slightly more remote outlets.

Batt has also played the central location into looking bigger and better in stores. “Because bands don’t have to travel as far from where they’re playing a night show, they are more open to playing at the store,” he says. So opening in late January, the downtown Silver Platters location has hosted acts ranging from George Clinton to MXPX, as well as a series sponsored by world-music label Putumayo Records.

Raspum’s has likewise chosen to make in-stores at the new locations a priority. In all four new stores, it has used the existing built-in stages and performed upgrades, including adding new mics and speakers. Radakovitz has utilized the additional space to host live DJ sets, and is expecting to draw a crowd of 1,500 for an upcoming barbecue and autograph signing with rock band Tesla.

The Tower relocation class also has made efforts to turn traffic into sales by expanding their inventory. Silver Platters has utilized the increased space to expand into selling used discs and more vinyl. Raspum’s Duncan says that he wants to differentiate the stores from Tower in terms of the non-music product they stock. “Tower was a kiosk-style store,” he says. “Our goal is to be a complete entertainment outlet.” To that end, the chain has opened a bookstore in one location and is looking to expand into movie and comic sales. Radakovitz has taken a similar route, walking into the new Dimple stores, a customer does not only CDs, DVDs and games, but also a range of product, what Radakovitz refers to as “crazy gifts” and even a freezer full of ice cream.

Reaping Tower’s old benefits may seem fool-proof for indie retailers, but those who spoke to Billboard are quick to point out that the situation is somewhat unique. The former Tower outlets that were taken over housed profitable stores, and the stores that commandeered the spaces were established local brands with loyal clients. Still, their strategies can apply to stores without that head start. “Beyond anything,” Radakovitz says, “our greatest success has come from the fact that we get the community involved.”
Retail Track

ED CHRISTMAN  ecchristman@billboard.com

Chesterfield Kings

UPFRONT

Social networks clearly constitute one preferred channel for marketing music. But at least one such Web site, YeboTV, is banking on a belief that you can still reach fans in record stores as well. The site recently approached Fords, N.J., indie store Vintage Vinyl with an interesting proposition: namely, in-store performances streamed live to YeboTV's site.

"Retail has always provided organic marketing to consumers," YeboTV VP of music development Cheryl Shaver says. "Now, we are using new technology to build on that." It isn't the first time someone has used technological advances to capitalize on marketing opportunities from in-store appearances. Even back in 1992, music marketing company Best Performance and satellite communications company Manhattan Microwave Communications broadcast a live studio performance of artist Faith Healer at the annual NARM convention to demonstrate their plans to broadcast in-store performances into hundreds of record stores simultaneously. But the program never got off the ground.

YeboTV hopes to have better luck. Vintage Vinyl, a Coalition of Independent Music Stores (CIMS) member, is well-known for its in-store events, having done hundreds of shows through the years, including Cheap Trick, My Chemical Romance and the New York Dolls. Cleveland-based YeboTV is hoping to parlay Vintage Vinyl's success at booking bands into Web views.

The site, founded in October 2006 by Internet entrepreneur Markus Jokinen, has financed an upgrade in Vintage Vinyl's equipment—for instance, by installing two remote cameras in the store's ceiling. "It's like having a small TV studio," says Vintage Vinyl owner Rob Roth. Vintage Vinyl's long posted on its own site occasional videos from many of its in-store performances, shot with a hand-held camera. But more viewers could ultimately lead to more in-stores and ones from bigger bands—and hence, more customers.

So about five months ago the merchant began streaming shows with YeboTV, which has also partnered with the Newport Music Hall in Columbus, Ohio, and the Cleveland Agora Theater and Ballroom. YeboTV management is working on deals for venues in Nashville and Malibu, Calif., and hopes its list will grow to 30 venues—including one that books Latin music—within the next 12 months, says Shaver, formerly a sales executive for Capitol, Velvel and WEA.

While most of the venue deals are expected to be with traditional concert halls, Shaver says, "This is a model that we would like to be involved in with more CIMS stores.

Naturally, bands and labels will have to sign off on all this. But Shaver says it won't cost them anything, since the site's economic model calls for advertising and sponsorship revenue, and possibly the occasional pay-per-view broadcast.

Also, though bands will ultimately retain control of the content, the site hopes to archive the material.

The company also is creating YeboUnderground specifically for unsigned bands, which will be able to stream their music live from an artist profile page. Yebo, meanwhile, is building tools—including channels for different genres—to help the bands market themselves.

On Sept. 29 YeboTV will use Internet technology to stream the Vintage Vinyl in-store performance by Wicked Cool act Chesterfield Kings, who are promoting their Sept. 18 release "Psychedelic Sunrise." The same day, YeboTV will stream Warner Bros. act the Honorary Title, whose "Scream & Light Up the Sky" came out Aug. 28.

YeboTV expects audience increases, thanks to traffic driven from partnerships with hundreds of other Web sites. With the benefit of a large audience, Shaver says, shows streamed from Vintage Vinyl around street dates could provide a whole new marketing platform for new releases.
David Banner has become one of the most vocal defenders of hip-hop lyrics. A day after testifying before Congress, he expanded on his thoughts with Billboard.

On Sept. 26, David Banner joined fellow MC Master P, music industry executives and scholars to discuss offensive language in hip-hop music before the House Energy and Commerce Committee. Reading from a statement, the 33-year-old Mississippi rapper/producer tenaciously defended hip-hop from its detractors. “Drugs, violence and the criminal element were around long before hip-hop existed,” testified the rapper, born Level Crump.

It wasn’t the first time Banner articulated his stance on the issue. A few weeks prior to the congressional hearing, he sat in on a panel discussion hosted by hip-hop Web site allhiphop.com, on which he debated panelist Master P, once known as a gangster rapper, for denouncing the use of profane lyrics. In recent months, Banner has taken the Rev. Al Sharpton, Jesse Jackson and Oprah Winfrey to task for their roles in the war against rap.

Through his own nonprofit, Heal the Hood, Banner has been at the forefront of a number of philanthropic activities—including, in 2005, the largest urban benefit concert for Hurricane Katrina victims. He also recently created his own Adult Swim cartoon, “That Crook’d Sipp,” and is slated to release his fourth album, “The Greatest Story Ever Told” (Universal Motown/SRC Records), Oct. 9. In coming months, Banner is scheduled to work with Lil Wayne, Chris Brown and Quincy Jones, among others.

“Rap music is the voice of the underbelly of America,” Banner said in the conclusion to his testimony, “How dare America not give us the opportunity to be heard.”

During your testimony to Congress, you said, “If you fix our communities, we’ll fix our lyrics.” What does society need to do to change inner cities? How will that affect rap lyrics?

In Jackson, Miss., there are no boys clubs, no recreational programs. But, they don’t want you to be a gang banger. I have friends who are college graduates that have to resort to other things ‘cause it’s so hard to find a job. You can imagine how hard it is for someone who doesn’t have an education. In the Katrina hearing, one congressman asked, “Haven’t we done enough for Katrina?” They live in a world that we don’t live in, and it’s hard to speak for a majority when you don’t live under the same conditions. People don’t sing happy songs if they’re broke.

You also mentioned that rap music kept you out of trouble growing up. Rap music does for us the same thing gospel did for the slaves. We communicate our anger through our music. Why would Congress focus on hip-hop music as opposed to some of society’s other ills?

Because we’ve taken ownership. Back [during] slavery I didn’t hear them trying to ban words. They called us n***** and we just had to take it. Now that we’ve taken ownership of the word they want to ban it. They said in Congress that the stuff you see on TV is more powerful than what you hear. But you don’t see anyone criticizing Martin Scorsese or the governor of California, who’s killed more people onscreen than anybody I know. We don’t put these standards on actors the way we do on rappers.

You’ve denounced the Rev. Al Sharpton for his efforts to censor hip-hop music. Is your stance still the same? All he’s got to do to make me go away is stop attacking the kids. Out of all the atrocities and stuff going on in the world like the Jena 6, why is rap so important? Come on, dude—we’re making money, and it’s not against the law.

At the allhiphop.com panel, you and Master P engaged in a dispute over the use of profanity in hip-hop and his choice to clean up music. What are your thoughts now?

I don’t want to strike out against Master P. He has the right to feel how he wants about things. But if he does feel so bad about the fact that he denounced black people in his music, then he should give some money back to the people. If you’re a true leader, you have to sacrifice.

You mentioned that horror movies and their directors aren’t as targeted as hip-hop music and rappers are. Do you think it’s a race thing? I try to use facts instead of using the black card. They didn’t expect me to state all those facts at Congress. I went to the library. I spoke to lawyers. I asked questions. Black people are too emotional, and we must stick to the facts. That’s why I stopped saying “black people.” Now I say “poor people.”

Rap is an art, and I can say whatever the hell I want to. I use the words I use because they are graphic and they hurt. It’s supposed to get people’s attention. Where we come from we speak that way.

How about the use of words like “bitches” and “hoes”? But aren’t there bitches out there? Don’t they exist? Those types of women exist, and if they didn’t it’d be different. When someone yells in a room full of women the word “dyke,” my mother isn’t insulted because she isn’t one.

Why has it taken you two years to drop a follow-up album?

I was tired of rap. I was tired of music. So I had to leave and get myself right again with God and get right with myself. My little brother is a grown-ass man and the truth is I don’t know him ‘cause I’ve been running around trying to be a rapper. So, I took time to spend with my grandmother, to spend with my father before he died. That’s one of the reasons I got a better album—cause I got stories to tell.

You’ve been socially active in your community. Is this reflected in this album at all?

I used to, but I think it doesn’t anymore and it shouldn’t. One of the problems we have coming from poor situations is we let our personal life bleed way too much into our business. The truth is I’m a rapper, so my duty first and foremost is to make hits and to satisfy my audience. That’s my day job. The better I do that, the more I can do for my people.

What should be the next move as far as the debate about hip-hop lyrics goes?

People need to stop being hypocrites and clean up the communities. I’ll tell you a story. I drink a little bit. But now that I’m training, I don’t drink. ‘Cause I don’t have time for negativity in my body. The rest of my body is great. I’m healthy. I look in the mirror now and I love what I see. With that I say: If you change our environment, we’ll be happy to talk about something else.

For a transcript of Billboard’s entire David Banner interview, visit billboard.biz/rh.

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OCTOBER 22, 2007 • MOSCON SOUTH • SAN FRANCISCO
VANITY LABELS COME AND GO THESE DAYS, BUT APPARENTLY NOBODY TOLD AKON. CAN THE SINGER’S KON LIVE RECORDS BUCK THE TREND?  BY GAIL MITCHELL

When Senegalese singer Akon first emerged on The Billboard Hot 100 three years ago, fresh from a jail sentence for car theft that he documented in the top 10 single “Locked Up,” listeners weren’t sure how to classify his music. “There was no category for me,” he recalls, taking a moment’s break from his 2007 world tour. “People didn’t know whether I was reggae, R&B, hip-hop, alternative.” So he created his own category, which has now expanded way beyond Akon himself to encompass a stable of promising artists he’s developing through his non-label-exclusive production arm, Konvict Muzic, and his Geffen-distributed label imprint Kon Live Records. “Konvict is the genre,” Akon says as he further delineates the difference between Konvict Muzic and Kon Live. “When I first came out, it was all created in jail, so we called it that. It’s gimmicky but it reminds me of the path I came from and how it changed my life. But Kon Live is the actual money pot.” Of the record label he says, “This is a great opportunity for me to invest in what I’m good at. I wouldn’t want to be an artist forever. I want to graduate altogether and become strictly an executive. So, I’m taking the steps now.”

Akon knows a little something about developing talent. One of his early sightings was R&B singer T-Pain, who is signed to Jive Records through Konvict Muzic, and who has chalked up two gold-selling albums. Current release “Epiphany” debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard 200 and stands at 651,000 units, according to Nielsen SoundScan; his freshman set, “Rappa Ternt Sanga,” has sold 594,000. He’s also charted 12 singles on the Hot 100 (including five top 10s) and sold 3.6 million ringtones. Other artists under the Konvict Muzic banner are Atlanta rap newcomer Dollar (also through Jive) and TLC co-founding member Chilli, whose debut album will be released through Uptown/Konvict at Universal. Albums from Chilli and Dollar are due next year.

But Kon Live—on which Akon is nurturing such newcomers as genre-spanning sister act Brick & Lace and R&B singer Ray Lavender (see story, page 23)—is where the multi-platinum multitasker says he’s in it for the long haul. Following in the footsteps of Motown’s Berry Gordy, LaFace co-founder and current Island Def Jam chairman Antonio "L.A." Reid, and Roc-a-Fella principal Jay-Z, Akon is serious about parlaying his success as an artist, songwriter and producer into a long run as a label president.

A MULTITIERED CAREER

As an artist, especially, that success has been considerable. His 2004 debut album, “Trouble,” has sold 1.6 million units, according to Nielsen SoundScan. And at 2.6 million units, according to SoundScan, his follow-up, “Konvicted,” released last November, is thus far the year’s No. 1 best-selling album. It has spun off four top 10 Hot 100 singles: “Smack That” (No. 1), “I Wanna Love You” (No. 1), “Don’t Matter” (No. 1) and “Sorry, Blame It on Me” (No. 7). And it’s done all that despite a controversy that emerged earlier this year, revolving around footage that showed up online of Akon dancing suggestively onstage with an underage fan in Trinidad. The widely reported incident led Verizon Wireless to back out of Gwen Stefani’s Great Escape tour that Akon had joined as a supporting artist.

Meanwhile, in addition to his booming career as a performer and producer, Akon is juggling other balls in the air. Now available at mom-and-pop retailers, his urban street wear line, Konvict Clothing, has since netted an account with Macy’s. Keeping it in the family, the fashion line’s spokesman is Lavender.

Production is also moving forward on the biographical film “Illegal Alien,” which stars Meekhi Phifer as Akon, and the singer bought the rights to another film that’s due to start shooting soon, “Cocaine Cowboys.” After wrapping his 2007 world tour, Akon plans to go into the studio to collaborate with Whitney Houston for her next album. And as for the follow-up to his sophomore album, “Konvicted,” he says the as-yet-untitled set is almost done.

But he’s still managing to find plenty of time to run Kon Live. “When an artist establishes a label, people discount his ability to be a built-in CEO,” Geffen chairman Ron Fair says. “But that’s who Akon is. He’s a 360-degree visionary: a superb music composer who’s crazy passionate about all kinds of music and has a strong marketing sense that lets him know how to reach people.”

Given today’s cost-conscious industry climate, joint venture deals aren’t as plentiful as they once were. But such deals do remain a bargaining lure for top-selling artists. However, the life span of most vanity labels tends to run shorter than the typical two-to-three-year break between the said artist-cum-CEO’s own album projects. Factor in artists’ other outside ventures—writing/producing other acts, film and TV projects, clothing, shoe and fragrance lines—and something’s usually got to give.

Two recent cases come to mind. Kanye West’s Getting Out Our Dreams (aka G.O.O.D.) joint venture with Sony Music Label Group ended in 2006 after two years in business. And Usher’s much-publicized US Records, distributed through J Records, quietly dissolved after four years. But with Kon Live, Akon is determined to buck the odds. And he’s got a plan to do just that.
THE STRATEGY AND THE STABLE

In terms of selecting acts for Kon Live, Akon places a premium on work ethic in addition to talent. “You can get someone fairly talented,” he says. “But if they’re lazy and don’t want to really work, you can’t sell that.”

So at the center of Kon Live’s strategy is what label VP DeVaYe Stephens—who also heads Konvict—refers to as “a page out of Berry Gordy’s book.” All Kon Live artists are expected to go through the artist development center that’s back at the label’s Atlanta headquarters: what Stephens calls “the complex.” Artists are put through a 30-day training/evaluation process encompassing media training, vocal fitness and stage presence. In talking with several of the acts signed to Kon Live, two recurring threads emerge. One concerns artistic freedom. The other is that Akon didn’t forget to reach back when his own career took off.

Ray Lavender’s association with Akon dates back to the late ’90s. A mutual friend introduced the financially challenged Lavender to Akon when the former was trying to log some studio time in Atlanta. Although the two clicked musically, their collaboration was curtailed by Akon’s jail sentence. “I’ve been on the bench for a minute,” Lavender says with his Southern-drawl laugh. “And I’ve got a million splinters in my butt to prove it. But when Akon got out, he said, ‘Ray, I still got you. I want to get myself out as an artist first and then I’ll have this label.’ He did ‘Locked Up’ and then it started.”

Canadian rapper Kardinal Offishall and Virgin Islands R&B/hip-hop duo Rock City point out that being on Kon Live doesn’t mean simply being an Akon clone. “He lets you do you, and then he sweetens it up,” Rock City’s Theron says. Former MCA artist Offishall, who collaborated on the European B-side to Akon’s “Lonely” single, confirms. “We’re both producers and captains of our own ships. He trusts this ethic and hustle, I have,” he says. “I’m making the music. I want to make whatever is on the label pressure. If you’re able to make music how and with whom you want, you come up with good music.”

Female R&B duo Brick & Lace was signed Akon–by-interscope chairman Jimmy Iovine. “When we met with Geffen, we knew they were who we wanted to work with,” group member Nylah Thorough says. "Iovine’s said we should link with Akon to work on two tracks, but we immediately asked, and [Akon] said he really wanted to be a part of it, so he made us a part of the Kon Live family.”

To date, Kon Live has released singles from Brick & Lace (“Never Never”) and Lavender (“My Girl’s Gotta Girlfriend”). In the wake of “Never Never” not catching fire with the U.S. audience, promotion for Brick & Lace’s follow-up single, “Love Is Wicked,” was launched in the ladies’ native Jamaica. A more extensively promoted single for Lavender was still being determined at press time.

“It’s too hard to sell albums these days, so you have to do it right,” Akon says. “My plan is to put two good looks out before these albums and the other Kon Live projects are released. I’m giving them the same blueprint I had. And it worked for me.”

After focusing initially on the urban side (“where I have the most power at the moment”), Akon intends to release pop and rock projects as well. As he takes the next year to focus on Kon Live, it’s too early to predict what success Akon will experience from the executive side of the desk. But if that doesn’t happen, it won’t be for lack of trying.

“Anyone can go and work with a seasoned act,” he says. “But it’s hard to break a brand-new thing with new music. That’s my challenge—and fun—right now.”

Additional reporting by Mariel Conception.

A LOOK AT WHAT AKON’S KON LIVE LABEL HAS IN STORE FOR 2008

Treated so far to an early taste—thanks to next-seeming singles by Ray Lavender and Brick & Lace—music fans can expect the full Kon Live onslaught in 2008. Joining Lavender and Brick & Lace on the roster are three more acts.

“It will literally be a blitz the first, second and third quarters,” Akon promises. “People will be asking, ‘What the hell is going on?’

BRICK BY BRICK

Sister act Nyanda and Naiyah Thorbourne meld reggae, R&B, hip-hop, pop and country into a sexy mix that sashays between edgy and soft: “Naiyah’s sound is more sexy, R&B harmonizing, and Nyanda’s is the grittier, edgier one, ’cause she uses her accent a lot,” Naiyah says about the act’s name. The Kingston, Jamaica-bred siblings are former backup singers (Roberta Flack, Lauryn Hill) as well as successful songwriters (Janet Jackson, Nicole Scherzinger).

When first single “Never Never”—about keeping up with suitors in check—didn’t click in the United States, Kon Live went back to the drawing board. Starting in Jamaica and moving overseas before working their way back to the States, Brick & Lace are now building word-of-mouth with second single “Love Is Wicked,” the title track from their debut album. In addition to Akon, the set includes production by will.i.am, Geffen chief Ron Fair, Cool & Dre, Full Force and dancehall guru Tony “CD” Kelly.

FLIPSYDE

Though the group hails from the Bay Area, Flipsyde comes across like its own United Nations. Portuguese-speaking MC Piper was born to a Brazilian father. Vocalist/acoustic guitarist Steve Knight grew up in Alabama before doing a stint in the U.S. Coast Guard. And electric/acoustic guitarist Dave Lopez Imigrated from the United States from his native Chile. This trio’s blend of rap/rock paired with razor-sharp socio-political commentary and introspection received a national platform in 2005 after Interscope released the act’s debut album, “We the People.”

When Akon was enlisted as a guest producer on the group’s next album, one or two songs evolved into “changing the whole complex of the album,” Kon Live VP DeVaYe Stephens says. Now sporting the Kon Live banner, Flipsyde’s next album is “urban alternative with a rock feel,” Stephens says. “We call it ‘ghetto rock.’”

RAY LAVENDER

Avowed country boy Ray “Ray Ray” Lavender sets out to make soulfulness reality music. Rooted in his own life experiences (“I was a girl friend, caught her cheating with another girl and joined in”), Lavender’s “My Girl’s Gotta Girl” and sparked chart activity (peaking at No. 70 on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs) as his tour took a torrent of female squeals during its opening. Since then, Lavender’s “Girlfriend” and Colby’s recently wrapped a promo tour.

The Monroe, La.-to-Atlanta transplant is also a hard-edged R&B songwriter who grew up on the deep soul of such artists as B. B. King, Marvin Gaye and Prince. Debut album “X-Rayed” features production by Akon, Corne-Loasis and D-Lil, among others. Whatever you hear on my album is what I’ve been through,” Lavender says. “My CD is a fun reality show.”

KARDINAL OFFISHALL

-R&B aficionados caught wind of Kardinal Offishall’s writing and production prowess with the 2001 MCA album “Firesetter Vol. 1: Guest Fire,” Singles “Bakardi Slang” and “One Time,” not only introduced the United States and Europe to the Toronto (Toronto) sound, but prompted alls for remix collaborations with reggae artist Bounty Killer, rapper Busta Rhymes and production duo the Neptunes.

After splitting with MCA in 2003, Offishall divided his time between performing and studio work with artists ranging from Method Man, Mary J. Blige and singer-songwriter/producer Sean Garrett to Sean Kingston, T-Pain, P-Mo and Rihanna. Offishall’s debut, “Not For Sale,” addresses everything from politics to feminine fatales (“Dangerous” featuring Akon). “One of the blessings of being a MCA ties was rediscovering who I am as an artist,” Offishall says. “My integrity is not for sale. This feels like my first shot and the best so far.”

ROCK CITY

Bear witness to a Rock City performance and you’ll leave just as exhausted as the duo of brothers Theron (aka Da Spokesman) and Timothy (aka Don’t Talk Much). Accompanied by Akon’s DJ Benny D., the pair’s exhilarating stage leaps and towel-twirling take on a revivalist fervor. “People want to be entertained. We’ll do whatever it takes to make sure they get involved and have fun with us,” Theron says.

The brothers’ street-edge themes and melodic flow reflect their upbringing in the Houzin ghetto of St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands, mixing R&B/hip-hop, rock, pop, reggae and calypso. Rock City’s aptly titled debut, “Wake the Neighbors,” includes tracks produced by Akon, Benny D., Mad Scientist, the Hypnotics and D-Dot. As a songwriting team, Rock City has also been busy penning songs for Usher, Sean Kingston, Ashlee Simpson, Nicole Scherzinger, Jesse McCartney and Mary J. Blige.

—GM
Think of the prototypical regional Mexican singer, and you’ll be forgiven if the image that pops into your head is that of a group of men in hats and boots. "One of the advantages of regional Mexican music is you don’t have to be young and beautiful to have a following," says Abel De Luna, CEO of Lma Communications, which includes radio stations and concert promotion, among other ventures. "You need good songs and style." However, the face of regional Mexican music is beginning to change. While there was only a single female act in the top 20 of Billboard’s year-end regional Mexican charts for 2004 and 2005, there were three for the year-end 2006 chart. Year to date, there are also three women in the top 20. From banda star Jenni Rivera, to duranguense singers Diana Reyes and Marisol and Virginia Terrazas (of Los Horoscopos de Durango), to ranchera diva Graciela Beltrán, these artists run the gamut of styles. Young and bilingual, they appeal to a broad audience that relates to their look, their origins as new immigrants or Mexican-Americans, and their contemporary, no-nonsense messages.
Indeed, today's crop of singers has the songs, the style and, as a plus, the looks.

In the case of the Terrazas sisters, Diana Records VP Carlos Ruiz says, "Their success is based on their sound, their quality and an image that makes them different and unique in their genre." Born and raised in the United States, the siblings speak English and Spanish, representing a new generation of regional Mexican singers. Unlike predecessors who tended to wear more traditional garb, they usually wear tight leather pants and busters, and their repertoire spans original material as well as Spanish-language covers of American hits.

Indeed, Ruiz says, the current role of women in regional Mexican music is particularly important because "in general the themes and lyrics of their songs provide a balance for radio programming."

For Rivera, the tipping point came in the early 2000s, when the women in the genre sang romantic fare and the men were into norteños and corridos that dealt with real-life, often touchy issues, from drug-running to immigration concerns.

"I figured, 'I'm not typical at all, so I'm going to do what the guys do, which is sing and write corridos, but in a different voice.'"

Rivera recorded "Las Malandridas," a corrido about Mexican women's lib. She aggressively promoted it to radio, making herself the face of the song, and struck a chord with an audience that saw things her way.

"In this genre, you have to be like your audience—you can't be fabricated," she says. "I know about simple, down-to-earth people, and those are the people who buy my albums."

Even artists like the striking Terrazas sisters and Reyes, who likes to display her trademark navel tattoo of a scorpion (a symbol of duranguense music), are remarkably accessible, playing dances every weekend and always interacting with fans.

"Perhaps before, women weren't perceived as being so real or so from the people," Fonovisa Records GM Alfonso Larriva says. "Someone like (Rivera) is someone you could bump into in the street. She's a natural star."

In the meantime, labels are already looking for other female acts. Disa, in particular, just released LMT, a norteño group with a lead female singer, new sierreño artist Lucero Terrazas (second cousin of Los Horoscopos' Terrazas sisters); and in early 2008 will release a new duranguense singer named Isabela.

"Women are key in determining success at every level, from radio hits to album sales," Larriva says. "And when a female artist is able to connect with a female audience, you have that click, which is what leads people to accept their songs and pay for their music."

"I have definitely seen the market open up to women," says Larriva, whose roster includes Rivera and Yolanda Perez. "And not as a fad, but as something that's lasting, as is the case with pop."
THERE WAS NO FEAR of immigration enforcement in the air at the recent Que Buena outdoor festival in El Monte, Calif. Throngs of families, many dressed in red, white and green, milled about during the all-day fest celebrating Mexican independence, listening to performances by Jenni Rivera, La Arrolladora Banda el Limón and dozens of others. 

By producer Chris del Rey’s calculations, at least 160,000 showed up during the day, equaling and maybe surpassing attendance from the year before. Asking about immigration status at a family event like this one, Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department Lt. Sheila Sanchez says, is “not our mission.” Events such as this one, and the circuit of more underground dances known as bailes, are considered central to the promotion and dissemination of regional Mexican music. And while all was well at Que Buena, the overall health of live regional Mexican music appears to be faltering. In state after state, promoters say that burgeoning Mexican populations in towns little and big have hunkered down, out of sight and out of public events, to avoid an increasingly visible pattern of stepped-up immigration law enforcement.

Their fear has, by all accounts, made a visible dent in the lucrative regional Mexican market, with audiences often leery of attending the weekend shows that are the bread and butter of this music genre. “The same groups that would bring me 4,500 people in Atlanta last year are now bringing 1,500,” promoter Ariel Rivas says. “This is real,” Rivas adds. “I live it every weekend. People are afraid to go out. They are afraid of immigration. I’ve been doing this for 10 years, and I’ve never seen a situation like this before.”

Bailes, which literally translates to “dances,” encompass a broad variety of scenarios, from nightclubs that fit 4,000 and are primarily events to dance in, to rodeos and fairgrounds that fit 15,000 and attract the whole family. Booked by a large network of independent promoters, these events do not generally report ticket sales to Billboard Boxscore, but serve as a powerful marketing tool for labels, who use the shows to promote their acts in specific markets.

All regional Mexican acts, whether new or established, do the baile circuit, typically playing 30-70 dates per year, and in the process, establishing a rapport with audiences that is near impossible to acquire in the more structured realm of pop.

“We have very direct contact with our fans every weekend,” says Tony Meléndez, lead singer of Conjunto Primavera, the most-played act on regional Mexican radio. “We always allow at least one hour to take pictures with fans and chat with them. It’s very important for us to be close to the audience that buys our tickets.”

Like many other acts, Primavera has cultivated its audience literally town by town. As the Mexican population has flourished in even the remotest of states, so has the regional Mexican dance circuit.

Until the recent uptick in immigration enforcement, that is.

According to a paper written by Mai Thi Nguyen, an assistant professor at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, the perception in many small American towns that Hispanic population growth has hit a “critical mass” has led local governments to “take an anti-immigration stance and adopt ordinances that create a hostile living and working environment for immigrants.”

There are now dozens of ordinances in place in at least 18 states. They run the gamut from English-only rules, to landlords requiring proof of legal status to rent homes and businesses, to fines levied toward those who hire illegal immigrants. The ordinances have coincided with an uneven, but stepped-up, pattern of immigration law enforcement in the last two years.

Today, many state and local jurisdictions are permitted to enforce federal immigration law and can ask for proof of legal immigration status if they have detained someone on suspicion of breaking a criminal law. In other words, DUI checkpoints can suddenly represent an even greater risk than an alcohol-related arrest.

“When a local cop has any encounter with what they perceive to be a non-citizen—and
As Immigration Enforcement Steps Up, Attendance At Regional Mexican Events Heads South

BY LEILA COBO AND AYALA BEN-YEHUDA

ILLUSTRATION BY ELLEN WEINSTEIN

that could happen in a traffic arrest, in a fight in the street, people getting drunk, and that could happen at a concert—they can put your name in the FBI national crime database," says Murazoff A. Chishti, a lawyer and director of the Migration Policy Institute at New York University's School of Law.

The database includes those who fail to obey deportation orders, including those who may have an order pending for, say, overstaying a visa.

According to many in the industry, the "crackdowns" are usually not crackdowns at all, but police checkpoints, ostensibly in place to check for drunk drivers. "These people want to know that it is safe to go to work and safe to go to a party," says Esperanza Ebersole, who runs radio station WNSO (Radio Sol) in Hilton Head, S.C.

"Last year, Los Tigres del Norte came to Greenville (N.C.) and played for 2,000 people. Recently, Banda El Recodo played and we barely had 700 people. The problem is not the bands. It's the economy and immigration. People are afraid to go out. Most don't have a driver's license [which they cannot obtain without proof of legal residence] and if the police stop them, they take them to immigration."

Rivas says he has seen DUI checkpoints set up directly in front of nightclubs or in key freeway exits. When word gets out, he says, people simply don't go to the shows.

Ironically, word often gets out via the radio, with listeners calling to report checkpoints or traffic stops.

In these cases, Ebersole says, she can't warn listeners about immigration enforcement, but she can exhort them to have their licenses ready for checkpoint inspections.

At Los Angeles station KBUE (La Que Buena), immigration is the topic that generates the most calls during the daily morning show, hosted by Don Cheto, and here, too, listeners phone in their warnings.

In those cases, "we ask the caller himself to get on the air and talk, so the police don't blame us for interfering," Cheto says. "Or, we make a joke about it. For example, if you have a driver's license and you want the police to see it, go to such and such address.

The blurred lines of where and how immigration law is enforced, and by whom, "breeds paranoia," says Kathleen Walker, an El Paso, Texas, attorney and president of the American Immigration Lawyers' Assn. "Nobody wants to end up in a detention facility because of some concert."

In California, promoter and radio network owner Abel De Luna blames the economy and a lack of new talent for the decline in concert attendance. But immigration enforcement alone, he says, account for 20%-25% of the drop in his concert promotion business.

In Midwestern and Southeastern states, where Mexican immigration is more recent and less established, people like Rivas calculate they can lose up to 30% of their business to fear of immigration crackdowns.

The dent is most visible in small towns where the influx of Mexican immigration has been quick and recent due to economic factors, like the opening of a meatpacking plant. In communities where a significant number of residents don't have their immigration papers in order, the possibility of deportation or arrest is daunting.

"You have towns where you had 10,000 people, and in a couple of years you have 30,000, many of them undocumented immigrants," says De Luna. "If you have a show there and there is any rumor about immigration crackdowns, people will simply not go."

RETAIL AFFECTED?
The effect of immigration crackdowns on sales of regional Mexican music is less clear.

In the past year, sales of regional Mexican music have dipped slightly, according to Nielsen SoundScan, but the genre still accounts for more than 50% of all Latin music sales.

However, the BIAA registered a 26% drop in net shipments of regional Mexican music for 2006, compared with 2005 (midyear numbers for 2007 are still not available), with executives attributing the drop to multiple causes, including a battered economy, high gasoline prices and, naturally, immigration issues.

"It is subtle," Univision Records VP of sales Jeff Young says, noting that multiple factors—not just immigration—are at work. However, he adds, he can't directly attribute a sales drop to specific immigration actions.

A close look at regional Nielsen SoundScan figures was inconclusive. Billboard checked the weeks before, during, and after major immigration raids or busts that occurred in more than 10 top 100 markets. For example, an April 24 raid on a mall in a Latin neighborhood in Chicago did not produce a notable sales decline for the region for the week ending April 29.

But by the following week, overall music sales were up from the previous week 10% in the top 100 markets, and 5% in Chicago, while Latin sales in the city were down 4%. In none of the test cases did a crackdown produce a notable (double-digit) drop in sales.

Still, Mireya Chevarria, regional manager for the Ritmo Latino retail chain, says she has seen sales decline in her West Coast stores after specific immigration-related actions. She cites an episode in June, when radio personality Eddie Polin Soto took 1 million letters asking for immigration reform to congressmen in Washington, D.C.

As a result, she says, checkpoints proliferated in the Los Angeles and Santa Ana areas, and traffic in those stores slowed down considerably.

That anti-immigration actions can affect local businesses was most patently exemplified in the township of Riverside, N.J. On Sept. 17, it became the first municipality in the nation to rescind a local anti-immigration ordinance, responding to a lawsuit brought by a civil rights group on behalf of business owners and landlords.

One resident, Ed Robinson, owner of Scott Street Music, was quoted in The New York Times saying that the ordinance "took $50,000 a week off our streets. That's what was being spent by the Brazilians and Spanish."

However, as the immigration debate continues to simmer unresolved in Congress, many promoters and venue owners have altered the way they do business. In many instances, for example, acts no longer receive a guarantee for their performance, but get paid by promoters according to ticket sales, while venue owners keep the bar tab.

And while attendance may be down, Rivas says, the number of slowdowns has remained stable.

"We are going to wait this out," he says.
ARTISTA EXCLUSIVO

Con la mera mera...

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Spanning Generations Of Fans, Regional Mexican Remains Latin Music's Most Reliable Genre  

BY LEILA COBO

REGIONAL MEXICAN MUSIC, buffeted by a slow economy, immigration crackdowns and the malaise of the music industry in general, has seen sales slide in the past year, along with those of Latin music overall.

Nevertheless, it remains the strongest-selling genre of Latin music in the United States by far, and its appeal seems to be growing way beyond its commonly accepted fan base of first-generation Mexicans.

A three-year analysis of Nielsen SoundScan numbers for Latin music by genre found that in 2005, regional Mexican accounted for 46.4% of all Latin music sales, and in 2006, it accounted for 47%. According to the RIAA, the genre accounts for more than 50% of all Latin music shipments in the States.

For the first seven months of 2007—despite the ill that directly affects its performance—regional Mexican sales rebounded, accounting for a whopping 57% of all Latin music sales. Those numbers should hold for the third and fourth quarters, thanks to a schedule of strong releases that include albums by Los Tenerarios (Fonovisa), Horoscopos de Durango (Disa) and Pesado (Warner).

"It's still very constant," says Alberto Uribe, head buyer for the Ritmo Latino retail chain, who says preorders for Los Tenerarios are particularly strong. "Most first-generation immigrants who arrive here are Mexicans, and obviously, they buy Mexican music. Even in places that wouldn't seem obvious, like Miami, our sales of regional Mexican music and DVDs are growing."

Unlike other genres of Latin music, mainstream media routinely ignores regional Mexican. Even Spanish-language TV—much of it based in Miami—long downplayed regional Mexican importance. But that has changed.

"Ten years ago, you would look at [awards] shows, and there were never any Mexicans in them," says Ricky Munoz, lead singer of norteno group Intocable. "And if there were, they would get their prizes during the commercial breaks."

That has not been the case for years now. Regional Mexican has a constant presence in Spanish-language media, and is even represented in youth-oriented media like mun2, which dedicates several shows to the genre.

Constantly buoyed by immigration, Mexican music enjoys a rare dichotomy. On the one hand, it is purchased by those first-generation arrivals that long for home. On the other, it has become increasingly popular among second- and third-generation Mexicans who may speak little Spanish, but still feel strongly connected to their parents' music.

The end result is a genre that is steadily successful, even as those around it that are more hyped ebb and swell.

It is true that regional Mexican has benefited lately from the fact that many current buyers don't own computers and illegal downloads haven't dented physical sales as much as in other genres. But anticipating an increase in their consumers' technological savviness, leading labels in the genre are gearing up for the inevitable change to digital, and will probably be better-prepared to accommodate it than their pop counterparts when it arrives.

"Every single one of our releases is released digitally, and we provide an extra that is not in the physical album," Fonovisa Records GM Alfonso Larriera says. "From the moment we enter the studio, we are thinking of digital strategy and creating digital product."

"The biggest difference I've seen is in the audience itself," says Abel A. De Luna, COO of Luna Communications, whose holdings include radio stations, management, a record label and concert promotion. De Luna says the demographic for regional Mexican shows continues to be the 18- to 35-year-old crowd, same as it was 20 years ago.

But today, he says, most of that crowd speaks English, not Spanish.

"I remember one time a DJ played an English-language hip-hop track in the middle of a dance and they booted him," he recalls with a laugh. "Now, I see everybody speaking English all the time, everywhere."

The youth appeal of regional Mexican music hasn't escaped the attention of major-label executives.

Earlier this year, urban label Machete Music—which belongs to Universal—launched Machete Regional, a label dedicated exclusively to regional Mexican product.

"Even with the immigration issue affecting it, I believe it's the genre best-suited to develop new talent here," Venemusic VP of music Jorge Pino says. In the past year, the 2-year-old label has actively sought out Mexican acts, both established and new, for its roster. They include Tierra Cali, Dinastía de Tuxantal and La Firma.

Innovation in the genre is not limited to smaller labels. The genre-leading Univision Music Group—which owns Fonovisa, Disa and Univision Music—has also focused on developing up-and-coming talent in the past year, notably Alacrán Musical and such durangueantes as Creadores, Montez de Durango and Horoscopos de Durango.

The conventional wisdom is that because regional Mexican acts tour so much within the genre's fertile and self-sufficient gig circuit, having them on a roster is a less expensive and more fruitful proposal than it is with, say, pop, which requires more label support and promotion to draw a crowd.

This has meant that in the past, labels were often a step removed from their acts' touring. Today, given the loss of record sales, labels are far more meticulous about taking advantage of their artists' tours with local promotional strategies to boost record sales.

Labels are also more careful about who they sign now, and often wait for indices to lay the initial A&R groundwork before signing an act.

Fidel Rueda and Horoscopos de Durango, for example, are handled by Nueva Generación Music Group, the management, promotion and publishing company owned by entrepreneur Martín Fabian.

Fabian says the ground continues to be fertile for new regional Mexican acts, but adds: "It's no secret sales aren't what they used to be. So, we need to work a lot more closely together, with the label and with the artists. Artists have to be willing to cooperate more closely."
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Immigration Issues Fuel Regional Mexican Genre
BY RAMIRO BURR

WITH THE CONTROVERSIAL IMMIGRATION issue heating up in the United States and Mexico in the past year, it was perhaps inevitable that the topic would find its way into regional Mexican music.

Some call it a case of art imitating life, as more artists and groups are not only recording songs on the subject, they are also speaking out on it. Immigration is an issue that affects many people, but it especially resonates among the regional Mexican music fans, many of whom recently came, or have relatives and friends who came, across the U.S./Mexico border.

"It's a sign of the times. It's the first thing on everybody's minds," says Albert "Alege," a DJ on regional Mexican KSAH-AM San Antonio's "La Norteña 720" morning radio show. "All the listeners who call in are worried about what is going to happen. Many are hoping and praying that things work out."

While Congress debates legislation and employers and landlords fret over the implications, artists from various musical stripes produce tunes about the issue from different perspectives.

When one keeps tabs on specialized stats, industry reps say that because the issue is topical and controversial, it stays on the public radar and indirectly, helps promote the music.

"When people talk about something like an immigration song, that helps spread the word," says Carlos Alvarez, A.R.C. Discos promotions rep for the central United States.

In A.R.C. Discos' case, El Guero y la Banda Centenario released the tune "Mojado por Herencia" ("Wetback by Inheritance"), and the timing was extremely helpful in getting the song spun in major radio markets.


Even a hardcore Tejano band like Houston's Fama benefited from a topical tune. "I was in California when the marches were organized and I was singing at a radio station." Fama singer/songwriter Javier Galvan says, "I heard an interview with an activist and he spoke a lot of truth, on how immigrants suffer and all that, and I started to write a song."

In short order, Galvan co-wrote "El Gigante Inmigrante," a noroño corrido that describes the rising of a sleeping giant—all the immigrants and their families who "woke up to the fact that they had rights."

Ranchera king Vicente Fernandez has also recorded several immigration tunes, including "Los Mandados" ("The Errands") and "Lejos de Mi Tierra" ("Far From My Land").

But perhaps the most influential act in the field of political and immigration corridos is Los Tigres del Norte. The band's hits, "El Mojado Acuñadá" ("The Wealthy Wetback"), "Jaula de Oro" ("Golden Cage"), "Sonos Mas Americanos" ("We Are More American") and "Tres Voces Mojado" ("Three-Time Wetback") and others, describe the harsh realities of undocumented workers from various points of view.

Los Tigres, more than any other group, has not been afraid to become an outspoken critic of U.S. immigration policy, especially the proposed border wall.

"We've always been united with the immigrants, and we support them in whatever decision they make," Tigres singer Jorge Hernandez says in Spanish. "We've been producing songs about them and their struggles for years."

Corridos are especially popular among noroño bands because of their storytelling narratives. And immigration and border themes are standards for such veteran bands as Los Huracanes del Norte, Los Cardenales de Nuevo Leon, Los Traileros del Norte and Los Rieleros.

Recently, Los Originales de San Juan took a unique approach in the song "Santo Toribio Romo," which describes a priest in San Juan de Los Lagos, Jalisco, Mexico.

"This corrido is dedicated to a saint in Jalisco that they nicknamed the patron saint of the undocumented," Los Originales' Jesus Chavez says. "Santo Toribio Romo is credited with various miracles. He helps those on the edge of death, without food, without water in the desert."

"In one way or another," Chavez adds, "I think many fans will like the idea that we paid a small homage to the saint with our music."

For more on the immigration issue, see page 24.

NEW FRONTIERS
Regional Mexican Gradually Embraces Ringtones, Mobile Content

The online and ringtone markets represent the new gold rush in the regional Mexican market.

A growing number of indie distributors, aggregators, record labels, artists and songwriters are hotly pursuing sales, licensing and marketing of ringtones, just one of various made-for-mobile content formats.

It is a dynamic field where some, like Univision Movil and 9 Squared, have made great strides, while a host of older, more traditional groups and indie labels are just beginning to tap into the market.

As Billboard reported recently (billboard.com Aug. 23), Univision Movil signed a deal with mobile entertainment firm 9 Squared to distribute its Spanish-language mobile content through various channels. The two will also produce made-for-mobile content that will be distributed via wireless operator partners as well as directly to Univision fans.

Like many young norteño and banda groups, tierra caliente act Los Tremendos de Mexico places a new emphasis on an online presence to promote songs, ringtones and videos. "These media are very important," singer Charly Pimentel says. "These help us reach fans in the U.S. and Mexico, and around the world. All the Web sites, YouTube, MySpace, they are all a way for new fans to check out our music, see our shows."

Yet, these success stories are the minority.

As entertainment attorney David Garcia says, regional Mexican artists by and large have yet to fully exploit the newer technologies. "For the mainstream artists, ringtones and other new sources of revenue have proven to be very healthy," he says. "But for most of the Latin indie labels, they are way behind the curve when it comes to that."

Los Angeles-based indie distributor Hugo Gonzalez, who administers publishing for each regional Mexican acts as Los Alcanes Musical and Koko but says only a few groups are adapting quickly. "The [younger] groups are noticing that this is a new form of income, and they are starting to promote it on their Web sites."

Univision Movil VP of mobile content and services Christopher Brunner says, "With Hispanics having such a high consumption rate of mobile content, we feel that is going to be the right content in the right format for our audience."

According to Brunner, the younger Latino generation is tech-savvy and has a hunger for content that more companies are just beginning to make available.

AT&T Mobility recently teamed up with Tejano/norteño act Intocable, and director of Hispanic marketing operations Marcus Owenby says, "We didn't take a chance with Intocable, and it exceeded our expectations."

He adds that regional Mexican ringtones are "performing significantly better than in previous years. We've grown our inventory a good bit. With a larger amount of options for regional Mexican music, we are driving more demand for the category."

San Antonio indie label A.R.C. Discos has found ringtone success with its roster that includes Aniceto Molina ("Mi Sombrero Sabanero") and El Guero y la Banda Centenario ("Una Vez Mas"). "We have had an average 10% increase in sales each quarter," says Carlos Alvarez, A.R.C. Discos promotions rep for the central United States.

"But what was shocking to us is 'Plumitas,' a children's novelty production that we did not release commercially, but made available as ringtones in 2005. In the fourth quarter, it sold more ringtones than all the others."

Even some artists in the older demographic have begun adapting to the changing landscape. Ranchera singer Yolanda Del Rio has her own Web site and a MySpace account where she makes her music and videos available. "Now that I have MySpace, I feel like I have won over a lot of young fans. I clear with them on the Internets, we have contests and give away T-shirts and caps," Del Rio says. "This is just one more medium. One more way I can get close to fans."

Additional reporting by Ayala Ben-Yehuda.

LOS TIGRES DEL NORTE is among the most influential and prolific acts performing corridos that criticize U.S. immigration policy.

October 6, 2007 www.billboard.com | 31
Summit Preview

The Billboard Regional Mexican Summit's Extensive Panel Lineup Includes Top Artists And Industry Insiders

BY AYALA BEN-YEHUDA

The Billboard Regional Mexican Summit brings together artists and key figures in the industry, from veteran insiders in the genre to experts in digital and mobile communication. Artists will perform showcases throughout the Oct. 1-3 event in Los Angeles and will also be featured speakers on the issues affecting the industry. In addition to the featured "Women of Regional Mexican" panelists (see story, page 24), here's a look at the confirmed performers and presenters as of press time:

Henry Cardenas is CEO of Cardenas Marketing Network, an event marketing, concert promotion and production firm. The company's programs include the Daddy Yankee tour and the promotion of shows by such regional Mexican artists as Ana Gabriel.

Renan Almendarez Coello, "El Cucuy de la Mañana," is heard on stations nationwide and broadcasts from Spanish Broadcasting System's regional Mexican KLAX (La Raza) Los Angeles. A published author and recording artist, he has been active in voter registration and fund-raising for several charities.


Betzaida's "Te Quiero Así," a collection of '80s covers with modern arrangements and new songs by top pop songwriter Carlos Lara, was released this year on Fonovisa.

Christopher Brunner is VP of mobile content and services at Univision Movil. He has orchestrated deals with all U.S. carriers, music labels and top artists in the industry, as well as consumer brands and advertising agencies in the country.

Jose Casanova is marketing manager for MySpace Mexico. The Mexico City native was music editor for Televisa's "Eres" magazine, label manager at indie Suave Records, a promoter and manager, and then did strategic marketing and A&R at EMI Music Mexico before joining MySpace.

Abel De Luna rose from farm worker to a career in politics and government before founding Luna Music, Luna Publishing and Luna Management. He then founded radio chain Luna Communications, which includes La...
Cardenas Marketing Network

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Joan Sebastian
Pepe Aguilar
Juntos en Jarique de Lujo

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Aug. 26 - Toyota Center - Dallas, TX
Sept. 30 - Allstate Arena - Chicago, IL

Ana Gabriel

Aug. 4 - Gibson Amphitheatre - Los Angeles, CA
Aug. 5 - Palomar Casino - Temecula, CA
Aug. 10 - AWA Amphitheatre - Tucson, AZ
Aug. 11 - Dodge Theatre - Phoenix, AZ
Aug. 12 - Santa Barbara Bowl - Santa Barbara, CA
Aug. 17 & 18 - Las Vegas Hilton - Las Vegas, NV
Aug. 19 - HP Pavilion - San Jose, CA
Sept. 14 - Wamu Theatre at MSG - New York, NY
Sept. 15 - Mohegan Sun Casino - Uncasville, CT
Oct. 26 - Quinta Vergara - Vina del Mar, Chile
Oct. 27 - Jatiayu Santiago - Santiago, Chile, Chile
Nov. 2 - Coliseo Jose M. Agrelot - San Juan, Puerto Rico

Marco Antonio Solis

Aug. 24 - American Airlines Arena - Miami, FL
Aug. 25 - Amway Arena - Orlando, FL
Sept. 2 - with Juan Gabriel - Allstate Arena - Chicago, IL
Oct. 5 - Madison Square Garden - New York, NY

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Billboard Regional Mexican Summit Awards Show Boasts The Genre's Top Performers

IN ITS SECOND YEAR. THE BILLBOARD REGIONAL MEXICAN SUMMIT will conclude Oct. 3 with the star-studded Premios Premmusa at Los Angeles' Gibson Amphitheatre, presented by dance promoters' association Promotores Unidos. The awards recognize achievement in regional Mexican music and concert promotion.

The Premios Premmusa are given in 20 categories, including album of the year. The nominees in that category are "El Amor Que Nunca Fue" by Conjunto Primavera, "Detalles y Emociones" by Los Tigres del Norte and "Siempre, Jamás Igualado" by Los Rieleros del Norte.

Artist categories are divided into subgenres including duranguense, norteño, ranchera, romantic, tropical, banda, sierreño and tierra caliente. There are also awards for new artists and groups as well as venues, promoters and radio stations. Winners are voted on by the concert promoters. In addition, Billboard will present a lifetime achievement award to Conjunto Primavera.

Female artist of the year nominee Diana Reyes (see story, page 24) is set to take the stage, along with the following performers:

Conjunto Primavera's romantic norteño, rancheras and ballads have been a consistent smash on the road and the radio. With nearly 30 years of history, the group scored No. 1 singles this year on Billboard's Hot Latin Songs chart with "Estrella," a Latin Rock chart hit and "Basta Ya," both from its latest Fonovisa release, "El Amor Que Nunca Fue." The group is nominated for a Premmusa Award for romantic group, norteño group, album and video of the year.

Grupo Montez de Durango blazed a trail for the duranguense movement all over the United States and Mexico more than 10 years ago. Led by Jose Luis Terrazas, it remains one of the most popular regional Mexican acts, with latest Disa album "Agarrese" hitting No. 1 on Billboard's Top Latin Albums chart. The group is nominated for duranguense group of the year. So is Alacranes Musical. The band's current album on Univision Records, "Ahora y Siempre," hit No. 1 on Billboard's Top Latin Albums chart. The octet, which plays a diverse mix of cumbias, ballads and corridos, has scored four other top 10 albums since 2004 with its energetic duranguense sound and tireless touring.

Alegres de la Sierra is nominated for sierreño group of the year. The song "De Rodillas Te Pido" was No. 1 for 10 weeks on the regional Mexican airplay chart.

Pablo Montero's last ranchera album on Univision Records, "Que Bonita Es Mi Tierra . . . Y Sus Canciones," came out last October. The twice-Latin Grammy Award-nominated singer has also starred in numerous soap operas. Montero is nominated for ranchera artist of the year.

Los Inquietos del Norte released its seventh album, "La Cliqua," on Eagle Music this year. The group divides its time between Jalisco, Mexico, and Fairfield, Calif., and specializes in corridos. The group is nominated for new romantic group and new norteño group of the year.

Techno banda pioneer Banda Machos signed with Sony BMG this year after nearly 17 years as a group. Single "Cuatro Meses" was a top 10 hit on Billboard's Regional Mexican airplay chart.

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Top Regional Mexican Album Artists

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pos.</th>
<th>ARTIST (No. Charted Title/IMPRINT/LABEL)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>VALENTIN ELIZALDE (4) Universal Latino</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>VICENTE FERNANDEZ (1) Discos SONY BMG Norte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>LOS BUKIS (7) Fonovisa/UG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>ALACRANES MUSICAL (5) Univision/UG</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>LOS CREADORES DEL PASITO DURANGUESE DE ALFREDO RAMIREZ (1) Disa</td>
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Top Regional Mexican Albums

<table>
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<th>Pos.</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>VENCEDOR</td>
<td>Valentin Elizalde</td>
<td>Universal Latino</td>
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<td>HISTORIA DE UN IDOLO</td>
<td>Vicente Fernandez-Discos SONY BMG Norte</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>RECO, RECO MIS CREADORES</td>
<td>Los Creadores Del Pasito Durangues</td>
<td>Fonovisa/Disa</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>LOBO DOMESTICADO</td>
<td>Valentin Elizalde-Universal Latino</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>LA REINA CANTA A MEXICO</td>
<td>Ana Gabriela-Sony BMG Norte</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>BBT Bronco/Los Bukis/Los Temperanos-Fonovisa/UG</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>AHORA Y SIEMPRE</td>
<td>Alacranes Musical-Univision/UG</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>LA HISTORIA . . . LO MAS CHULO</td>
<td>CHULO, CHULO Los Caminantes-Sony BMG Norte</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>AGARRESE!</td>
<td>Grupo Montez De Durango-Disa</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>30 RECUERDOS</td>
<td>Los Bukis-Fonovisa/UG</td>
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Top Regional Mexican Imprints

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Fonovisa (23)</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Disa (20)</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Universal Latino (9)</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Sony BMG Norte (7)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Univision (77)</td>
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Top Regional Mexican Songs

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<tr>
<td>DIME QUIEN ES</td>
<td>Los Rieleros Del Norte-Fonovisa</td>
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<tr>
<td>LA NOCHE PERFECTA</td>
<td>El Chapa De Sinaloa-Disa</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESE</td>
<td>Conjunto Primavera-Fonovisa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CADA VEZ QUE PIENSO EN TI</td>
<td>Los Creo Redes Del Pasito Durangues De Alfredo Ramirez-Disa/Edimonsa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAPAS</td>
<td>Censidos-Musart/Balboa</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>DAME UN BESO</td>
<td>Irrecolable-EMI Televisa</td>
<td></td>
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Hot Regional Mxican Imprints

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Hot Regional Mexican Songs Labels

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ARTISTAS EXCLUSIVOS

HUICHOC DOMINGUEZ

¡Y Sus Millionarias!

Julian Gomez

www.NavarroEntertainment.net

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Sheriffs Of Cowboy Town
Brooks & Dunn Keep Pushing The Boundaries

Kicked back comfortably in a meeting room at the Sony BMG Nashville offices, Ronnie Dunn and Kix Brooks exude the same easygoing charm and mischievous sense of camaraderie that characterizes their high-octane stage shows and consistently propels their music up the charts. It’s a winning combination that once again permeates “Cowboy Town,” the duo’s Oct. 2 Arista Nashville set.

“It’s about perseverance and hanging in there and having a good time,” Dunn says. “It’s a cultural thing. We wear cowboy boots and we are country singers, but it’s more about life not getting you down. No matter what happens, you live through it and stick to certain standards.”

High musical standards and a maverick attitude have served the duo extremely well. They’ve won two Grammy Awards and have been named entertainers of the year by the Country Music Assn. and the Academy of Country Music. They have collected the duo of the year honor more than any other twosome in country music history, including 14 trophies from the CMA.

Their previous album, 2005’s “Hillbilly Deluxe,” sold 1.4 million copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan—making it the duo’s best-selling set since their first biggest hits package from 1997. The latter album has moved more than 4 million units. “Musically, they still play the game. They play close to the edges and keep pushing the boundaries,” Sony BMG Nashville chairman Joe Galante says. “They are never bored. It shows on the records.”

With “Cowboy Town,” they recorded 14 tracks before narrowing it to 12 songs. The collection is a diverse mix of barnstorm anthems and more tender fare. The first single, “Proud of the House We Built,” is No. 4 on Billboard’s Hot Country Songs chart. The duo pays homage to their influences in such tracks as “Johnny Cash Junkie” and “Ballad of Jerry Jeff Walker,” with the latter tune featuring an appearance by the legendary Texas singer/songwriter.

One poignant ballad, “God Must Be Busy,” will have to be strategically placed in their concert. Dunn says, “It’s so strong, it will take over our show. We’re a party band and continue to be so. We can barely do the last album’s hit ballad ‘Believe’ in our show. It soars that crowd up. So we do it kind of at the end, but if you throw those two songs in together, it’s going to take a long time to get that energy going again.”

The duo’s energy, though, has yet to let up. In the past year, Brooks & Dunn have performed several stadium dates with Kenny Chesney and are touring with Alan Jackson through the end of October. Morning TV viewers will get a taste of the duo Oct. 4 when they perform on NBC’s “Today.” They are also slated to appear on ABC’s “Live With Regis and Kelly.”

According to Arista Nashville VP of marketing and artist development Jon Elliott, consumers who pre-purchase the CD from iTunes will get a bonus song, while Walmart customers will get three such tracks. “We know that their core audience shops mostly at two or three retail locations and Walmart does the biggest percentage of business,” Elliott says.

Dunn says they also plan to run a contest to find the perfect cowboy town in America. Elliott says details are still being worked out and the promotion will take place in 2008. “We have plans to lay this thing out up until next Christmas, so it’s not about just the next 30 days,” Galante says of the album’s marketing campaign.

In addition to their music, Brooks & Dunn have other endeavors. Brooks hosts ABC Radio’s weekly “American Country Countdown” and recently opened a winery. Dunn is well-known for his collection of Russian art. “They just emptied my house to do shows in Moscow and St. Petersburg,” he says of his museum-quality collection. “It’s good to have other things to keep you stimulated. Things like that don’t necessarily take away from what you do, they add to it. They keep the juices flowing.”

“If you’re staring at the same thing all the time, you have to get away from it,” Brooks adds. “It’s good to have a fun distraction.”

Such distractions sure haven’t hurt so far. “Brooks & Dunn will end their run—whenever that may be—as one of the single most adventurous duos in any genre, period. end of story,” says Brian Smith, VP of store operations for Marietta, Ga.-based Value Music Concepts. “Since bursting on the scene they have never looked back, never played it safe.

“Their fans truly appreciate their choices and genuinely look forward with true anticipation for the next release,” Smith says. “Radio and retail does too. That cannot be said of many acts.”
MUSIC

LATEST BUZZ

.Special Report

EXODUS' RETURNS

Bob Marley's 'Album Of The Century' Targeted To College Market

The enduring importance of Bob Marley's music was recently underscored when Fifty Six Hope Road Music, the Marley family-owned company that holds the rights to his music, announced an impending lawsuit against Universal Music Group and Verizon Wireless.

The Marleys maintain that an exclusive deal reached between those companies, with the objective of turning several Marley hits into ringtones, was not in accordance with Marley's longstanding contract with Universal Music Group. Verizon, for its part, first removed but has since readded the ringtones.

However, the estate and UMG are working in tandem to celebrate the 30th anniversary of Marley & the Wailers' "Exodus," due Oct. 16 via Tuff Gong/Island Records/UMe. The album will be available as a single CD or in a two-disc set with the "Live at the Rainbow" DVD. (A prior "deluxe edition" of the album, supplemented by alternate tracks, was released in 2001.)

College students will be targeted for these releases, and theatrical screenings of "Live at the Rainbow," which documents Marley's June 1977 Exodus tour performances at London's Rainbow Theater, will be held in key college territories.

"The college market is a prime target because that's when people really start discovering new music," UME GM Mike Davis says.

Originally released June 3, 1977, by Island, "Exodus" was designated the album of the century by Time magazine in its Jan. 4, 2000, issue.

Recorded at London's Basing Street Studios during the 14 months Marley spent in exile there following the December 1976 attempt on his life at his Kingston home, "Exodus" is the only Marley album entirely recorded outside of Jamaica. It is more diverse than his previous releases, drawing on dub elements, disco and soul, and R&B balladry as well as Marley's quintessential roots reggae.

"You can hear a percussive African influence," says Marley's son Stephen, whose debut solo album, "Mind Control," debuted at No. 1 on Billboard's Top Reggae Albums chart. "You could tell he really [did] deal with reggae universally; that is how he approached the music and the message."

In Marley's lifetime, "Exodus" was his most successful release. It spent 56 consecutive weeks on the U.K. charts and spawned three top 40 U.K. hits. In the United States, the singles "Exodus" and "Jammin'" reached Nos. 19 and 38, respectively, on Billboard's R&B singles chart.

"Bob was in love and generally happy, and that was expressed on the album," Island Records founder Chris Blackwell says. The label released 10 Marley albums prior to his death in 1981 and they are also being reissued over the next four years. "Legend," which has sold more than 9.2 million copies since 1991, when Nielsen SoundScan began tracking sales data. "Thirty years later, 'Exodus' won't generate the excitement of a new release. But I am hopeful we can sell a good amount and bring recognition to how important an artist Bob Marley is."

Saybia Hits The Highway

Danish rock quintet Saybia is focusing on the road ahead with its third album, "Eyes on the Highway" (EMI).

Released Aug. 24 in Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Switzerland and Norway, and three days later on home turf, "Highway" made the No. 6 slot on the Dutch Mega Album top 100 chart a week after arriving, hitting No. 2 on the Nielsen Music Control chart in its homeland a few days later. The album has also charted in Norway and Switzerland.

EMI Music Denmark product manager Jan Erik Stig says the set will appear Oct. 12 in Germany, Austria and Poland; it is also being issued in Indonesia and Malaysia. Total shipments have passed 40,000, according to EMI, including 18,000 in Denmark. A European tour begins Nov. 23.

EMI Music Publishing-signed Saybia is managed by Silverstone Management, with live shows handled by Scandinavian Booking.

"The band's bassist/co-producer Mark Macalpine says. "They are spearheading the new electro rock scene," says EMI France international development director Laurent Muller. "And—like Daft Punk or Chemical Brothers—they are also very good mood.

U.S. TV viewers have already sampled the album through Pontiac's use of one track, "Pogo," as the soundtrack to an ad campaign that launched Aug. 31. The band's publishing is shared between its German management company Metrobass and Universal Music Publishing.

—Amyric Pichardin

FIRST SECOND: U.K. electronic-jazz fusion trio Second Person is the first British act on the year-old Dutch "fan-financed" online label Sella-band (Billboard, Sept. 30, 2006) to raise the required $50,000 to record an album.

"The Elephants," released as a download Aug. 9, internationally, has already sold more than 7,000 copies, according to the label, and has received coverage in mainstream U.K. media. Sella-band is preparing a CD version for release shortly via online retailers.

The $50,000 came from more than 750 "believers"—Sella-band site visitors who backed featured acts by investing in them via credit card.

"We could never convince record companies to sign us," the band's bassist/co-producer Mark Macalpine says. "Sella-band made it possible to obtain the budget to work on the same level as an established act."

Veteran producer/engineer Tony Platt (AC/DC, Buddy Guy, Paul McCartney) helped the album. Dutch talent agency AT Production is booking European live work.

"If Second Person [now] signs with a label, then power to them," Sella-band co-founder/managing director Johan Vosmeijer says. "We've helped make it possible."

—Juliana Kovanteng

DIGITAL DANCE: German electro duo Digitalism is steadily swimming toward the mainstream—through France. The Hamburg-based act, which has a global licensing deal with Virgin France, launches a 14-date North American tour Oct. 14. Debut album "Idealism" appeared internationally June 12, followed by a June 19 U.S. release. According to Virgin, total shipments have passed 100,000 units internationally, including 33,000 copies in Japan.

"They are spearheading the new electro rock scene," says EMI France international development director Laurent Muller. "And—like Daft Punk or Chemical Brothers—they are also very good mood.

—Amyric Pichardin
Evolve To The Beat
After 14 Years, Debbie Harry Gears Her New Solo Album To Dance Clubs

WHEN SHE RECALLS THAT HER LAST SOLO RECORD was released 14 years ago, Debbie Harry has a note of incredulity in her voice. "I guess time flies, huh?" she says with a laugh. The Blondie frontwoman didn't initially set out to record another album, but describes the process behind "Necessary Evil" (Oct. 9, Eleven Seven Music/Alternative Distribution Alliance) as "an evolution."

"I started working with [production team] Super Buddha whenever I had free time between other commitments," she says. "I was funding the project myself and didn't have a deal, but I really liked the team and wanted to work with them. When I had six or seven tracks done, I played it for my manager, who suggested that I keep going and record an entire album.

The result is a glossy record that veers from rock to girl-group harmonies to tribal beats. Topics range from the tabloid fascination with troubled celebrities like Lil' Kim to the internal monologue of a female suicide bomber about to end her life in pursuit of paradise. Harrowing, sure—but Harry says she wasn't gunning for mass-market approval.

Harry's marketing team hopes the buzz will build from the bottom up. "She's made the record for her fans and wants them to discover it and talk about it," says Allen Kovac, Harry's manager and CEO of 10th Street Entertainment. "We've planned a full-circle approach to getting the word out about the album. She played the 'Today' show in June, and then headed out on the True Colors tour to fully preview her new solo material. We're working on Internet and print media right now, and then she'll head back to the 'Today' show in October to complete the cycle." A fall or winter tour, she says, is a possibility as well.

One audience that has already responded enthusiastically has been dance music fans and DJs, who have propelled her first single "Two Times Blue" to No. 37 on the Hot Dance Club Play chart. Pro Motion president Brad LeBeau was brought onboard to market the record to the dance community. "We produced two sets of remixes, and the first set took all the DJs by storm," he says. Based on the strong response, he plans to release a second set of remixes in October.

Harry is no stranger to dance clubs, with such Blondie songs as "Atomic" and "Rapture" nestled comfortably at the top of many DJ's playlists. Harry also continues to perform with Blondie—in September, at a Tommy Hilfiger party at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the band played a number of its hits. Still, she wants to make a clear distinction between the work she does as a solo artist and her role in the band.

"If I tour for the new record, I won't play any Blondie songs," Harry says. "I don't want to step on any toes." She also admits that, as much as she loves the hits, "I do get tired of them after a certain point." But Blondie fans shouldn't lose hope just yet: U.S. gigs and a new album, she says, are both likely soon.

Until then, Harry is focusing on a number of personal projects. Aside from "Necessary Evil," she is also gearing up for the release of "Elegy," a new film based on a Philip Roth novel in which she has a starring role. She also continues to write and record new material. After all these years, "I just really like to play," she says. "I never get sick of making music."
What's Good Is Good

Recent Chart-Toppers Have Consistency To Thank For Success

Amid the Kanye West vs. 50 Cent sales battle, I started thinking about why fans purchase albums these days. And I've come to the conclusion that while marketing plans are still very important, the focus always returns to the music, the artist's brand and whether consumers believe in it.

That brand can be built on consistent music from artists like UGK or on personalities like Sean "Diddy" Combs, but consumers must have something recognizable to latch on to, or they just won't buy.

For example, UGK recently scored the first No. 1 of its 15-year career on Billboard's Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums chart. Outside of a lead single, "International Players Anthem" featuring OutKast, and a special DVD edition at retail, there were few bells and whistles tacked on to the project.

"UGK has created a fan base," Jive urban marketing director Jason Willey says. "Once you create a brand, fans are going to follow that brand no matter what. It's the same thing as Kleenex—you know exactly what you're going to get."

UGK's Bun B says it's all about keeping your finger on the pulse of your audience. "I think we know our consumer," he says. "A big problem a lot of artists have now is they're trying to latch on to a new fan base and they're losing touch with their core audience. For a group like UGK, to exist after 15 years, that only happens when you serve your core. They're the ones that buy your units, merchandise, concert tickets, check Web sites and go to chat rooms. They represent you in places that you aren't even aware you're being represented. But if you're not making good music for the people that support you, then it's redundant," he adds.

Common's "Finding Forever" recently reached No. 1, and Talib Kweli's "Ear- drum" No. 2, on Top R&B/ Hip-Hop Albums. Neither MC has drastically varied his style during his long career, although both have made missteps.

Common got lost in love with Erykah Badu and dressed in woven clothing for a time, and Kweli bewildered his core underground audience by releasing his mainstream lead single "Never Been in Love Before." from his last album "The Beautiful Struggle." But fans still knew what to expect from "Finding Forever" and "Ear Drum" because both MCs reassured fans that their albums would feature exactly what they had built their brand upon—good music.

As such, I might have to agree with Antonio "L.A." Reid's call that good music is really the bottom line.

"The declining market conditions have forced the industry to examine itself," the Island Def Jam chairman says. "We've got to work hard to create other opportunities and platforms so that we can still sell whether its digitally or through mobile or subscription services."

"The good news is, in some ways, we've looked for love in all the wrong places. As record executives think of diversity, if they leave their core goal behind, which is making great music with great artists, they're going to have to work twice as hard for half the revenue."

"My model is to look for great artists and music," Reid says. "I think everyone is going to wake up and look at Kanye's success and say, 'Maybe we all announced our industry's death, but it's not true.'"

Jazz Notes

Mahavishnu At Montreux

DVD Captures Disparate Performances From Fusion Pioneers

In the midst of John McLaughlin's fall tour with his latest band, the 4th Dimension, the guitarist is upbeat about having returned to the road with jazz-rock rhythms pulsating in his veins.

Supporting last year's plugged-in "Indis- trial Zen," McLaughlin says the time is right for a change after spending the last few years touring with Shakti, a band he co-founded to further explore the improvisational nexus between jazz and Indian classical music. "I'm a Western musician, and my discipline is jazz," he says. "I want to give testimony to my roots. This isn't a retrospective band, but some of the pieces we're playing date back 30 years."

This year, the 63-year-old fusion pioneer returned to the spotlight on several fronts. Columbia/Legacy breathed new life into "The Trio of Doom Live," a volcanic 1979 Havana Jazz Festival set featuring McLaughlin, Jaco Pastorius and Tony Williams that previously existed only in fragments. Legacy also just released Miles Davis' "The Complete On the Corner Sessions," a six-CD boxed set that prominently displays McLaughlin's explosive guitar work from the early '70s.

But the biggest McLaughlin bonanza is Eagle Eye Media's Oct. 2 release of the two-DVD set "Live at Montreux 1974-1984" by the groundbreaking jazz-rock fusion group Mahavishnu Orchestra.

Formed in 1971, Mahavishnu grew through several iterations. This set captures two editions, recorded 10 years apart. "It's a document of my history with the band," McLaughlin says. "It's like being a painter. You go through periods where your instincts change."

Mahavishnu burst onto the scene as a quintet with two artistic and commercial blockbusters, "The Inner Mounting Flame" and "Birds of Fire." However, by 1974, personnel and vision changed. For his 1974 Montreux date, McLaughlin ecstatically led an 11-piece
your creative process? It keeps my perspective fresh, keeps experience fresh, and it really makes me appreciate places that I'm in when I return to them. It's like, Los Angeles can become quite lethargic, the same tone, the same weather. You go, "Well, I'll do it tomorrow." But you come to New York, it sorts of forces you to get things done... to be productive.

3 What songs came together especially well on "Born Into This"?

"Holy Mountain" is probably the pinnacle for me... it involves my girlfriend and... time in life where I felt like that... I didn't say washed up, but I definitely felt drained. I felt frustrated and I felt ungrounded and went on this journey and ended up at Everest. So that song is literally the zenith, the high point, and everything sort of flows down from that song.

4 You organized 1990's Gathering of the Tribes festival, which was the blueprint for Lollapalooza. What would it take to attempt such an event again?

I wouldn't [laugh]. I'm terrible at dropping ideas and leaving ideas around, and I have so many ideas that I don't execute that other people are quite happy to. If you're in a position to help people, if your house is in order, then you're really in a position to help people. If your house isn't in order, then you can't really help anybody because you can't even help yourself.

5 Why re-form the Cult?

I learned so much with [Riders on the Storm]... I learned a lot about performance from these guys. I learned about space, holding the space, being in the space [and] improvisations. And that really led me to think, "Wait a minute. I thought I knew everything about performance. I know squat about performance." I just really felt I had something to say, really had some strong material, and I felt the best possible place for this was the Cult.

6 You described one of the high points of performing with Riders on the Storm. Were there any low points?

The political battle between John [Densmore] and Ray [Manzarek] and Robbie [Krieger] was really sad and unfortunate, that sort of split in the fraternal set. Some of the media reaction... like Jon Pareles from The New York Times saw me on the eighth show and he wrote this review basically saying Dionysus was not present. That one really made me go, "Wait a minute. I'm going to take a step back here and really assess what it is I'm doing."

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Rhythm & Blues

GAIL MITCHELL gmitchell@billboard.com

Practicing What They Preach

Artists Finding Wider Audiences For Inspirational Messages

Artists, songwriters and producers I've interviewed recently have talked about fans desiring more substantive messages in their music. I posed that hypothesis to three journeymen on the gospel hip-hop/inspirational circuit, asking if hip-hop's lyrical backlash was indeed opening more doors for them. Here's what they had to say.

Birmingham, Ala., resident LP answered the question. His skillful, non-preachy rhymes have earned him video airplay on BET for "We Can't Lose," which also scored a Stellar Award nomination for best gospel video. It's the first single from LP's indie debut, "Testimony" (Birmingham Records/Fontana/Universal). Thanks to those two milestones, LP says, he's gaining more exposure on gospel and urban stations. But he's quick to add that he doesn't want to be pigeonholed as a gospel hip-hop artist.

"I'm just a gospel artist," he says. "Others have put me in that subgenre, and I don't like that. I once saw a room empty like someone had passed gas when a gospel hip-hop performer was announced as the next act.

"I'm not what you'd call a rapper's rapper with a lot of complexities," he adds. "My style is simple; a practical message people can understand and embrace.

"Contending that people are seeking out different styles of music more now than five years ago, singer/songwriter Myself is promoting two singles, "God Is So Funky" and "Where We Going?" Both are from his first major release, "Project in Disguise" (Rapvisions/Caroline/Imperial Group).

"Socioculturally lyrics trading time with beats/rhythms drawn from R&B/soul, jazz, blues and rock is Myself's trademark. "It's the rocking energy/angst of a Public Enemy or Rage Against the Machine plus the soulfulness of the Roots or Mos Def sprinkled with some Southern friedness," the New Orleans native says.

Accompanied by a five-piece band, Myself...

―

Musician and producer Young had a clear idea when he started a label in 1997 to highlight the hip-hop artist he saw as his mentor, Common. Talib Kweli and other positive hip-hop artists, he says, "are seeing the barriers being brought down.

An ordained minister at 15, Keite (pro-

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Chart Motion
Epitaph Band Scores Best Sales Week With Third Album

According to lead singer Justin Pierre, Motion City Soundtrack’s success is nothing more than dumb luck. The charismatic frontman utters the expression at least three times during a 20-minute conversation, only grudgingly admitting, “I guess hard work plays a role in it, too. After all, my dad always said that without talent, you can only get so far on luck and good looks alone.”

In an era where emo bands come and go faster than the pimples on their fans’ noses, MCS has managed to outlast and outsell most of its contemporaries during the course of eight years and three albums. Its latest, “Even If It Kills Me” (Epitaph), enters The Billboard 200 at No. 16 this week with 31,000 copies sold, according to Nielsen SoundScan. That more than doubles the band’s previous best week of 16,000 copies with 2005’s “Commit This to Memory,” which peaked at No. 72 on The Billboard 200 and has sold 272,000 units.

Numbers like those suggest the band has come a long way from doing gigs in near-empty ballet studios. “We played that little show, and Brett Gurewitz from Epitaph came to see us and saw potential,” Pierre says with a laugh—then adds, in a rare moment of modesty, “I mean, everybody knows he has great business sense.”

With Epitaph’s lacking, MCS proceeded to tour the country a number of times over and churn out three smart, hooky albums that draw more comparisons to Weezer than My Chemical Romance. But Pierre says the band has no desire to follow Weezer’s search for the scientifically perfect pop song. “I’m interested in randomness,” Pierre says. “Writing to a formula takes all the fun out of music.”

On its new record, the band worked with three producers: Adam Schlesinger (Fountains of Wayne), Eli Janney (Girls Against Boys) and Ric Ocasek of the Cars. “We almost didn’t get Ric, but he called us back at the 11th hour,” Pierre says. “We had committed to working with Adam and Eli, but they were big fans of his, so everything worked out in the end.”

With the new record now on shelves, the band is planning yet another long tour— an integral part of its strategy for building a loyal fan base. Pierre says, “We’re really excited to see all the mohawked 8-year-olds and their parents out on the road.”

Not Single: Reba/Kenny Divorce Duet Garnering Unsolicited Airplay

Reba McEntire’s latest album, “Reba Duets” (MCA Nashville), has set a new personal best in sales, scanning 301,000 units in its first week, according to Nielsen SoundScan (see Over the Counter, page 49). All the album’s cuts, including duets with Justin Timberlake, Don Henley and Ronnie Dunn, are getting scattered country radio airplay. But McEntire’s duet with Kenny Chesney, a touching song about divorce and shared custody called “Every Other Weekend,” garnered 85 spins during the week of Sept. 17-23 at Nielsen BDS-monitored stations, including a half dozen at country KKWF Seattle.

Morning man Fitz, who shares custody of his three children with his ex-wife, is the reason for the airplay. “After he played it on the morning show, it hit up our phones,” assistant PD Rob Walker says. And while he doesn’t plan to put the song into regular rotation just yet, Walker says, “If it’s worked as a single, we’ll be all over it.”

McEntire

This week single will be next for McEntire has yet to be determined, according to her label, but releasing the Chesney duet may be problematic since he has his own new project, “Just Who I Am: Poets & Pirates” (BNA). That album includes a duet with George Strait, “Shiftwork,” which picked up 109 spins last week on monitored country stations—also despite not being released as a single.

—Ken Tucker

Indie Horror-Poppers’ Supply Meets Obsessive Fans’ Demand

When it comes to chart success, a band that calls itself “industrial jungle punk” might seem a long shot. But Philadelphia horror-pop act Mindless Self Indulgence has built a strong enough grass-roots following to notch ink twice in 2007 on Billboard’s Hot Dance Singles Sales chart. Last week, its live DVD, “Our Pain, Your Gain” (UCR/Metropolis Video), entered at No. 5 on the Top Music Video chart after selling 3,400 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan; this week, the DVD sold another 1,000.

Although the band is not a traditional club act, its remixes manage to score well on the dance charts because “genre doesn’t matter,” the band’s manager James Galus says. “Our fans are obsessive, and this is really about demand.”

Mindless Self Indulgence recently connected with fans with an other strategy.

In December 2006, it released an EP that was sold exclusively in Hot Topic stores. Galus attributes the act’s following to a strong DIY ethic. “Even during the time we were on a major label we did everything ourselves. In the end, it comes down to focusing on, caring about and respecting the dollar of the listener. If you release something they want, they’ll happily buy it.”

—Courtney Harding

Smooth Return
Santana Scoring Big at Radio . . . Again

Carlos Santana says, “Radio is a friendly spirit to me.” It would be fair to call that an understatement.

After just a year-and-a-half break, the artist who holds the record for the longest-running Nielsen BDS-based No. 1 in Adult Top 40 history—“Smooth” featuring Rob Thomas—is hitting the charts again, this time with “Into the Night” featuring Nickelback’s Chad Kroeger.

The lead single from new collection “Ultimate Santana,” due Oct. 16 on Arista, is up 39-27 in its second week on Adult Top 40 with the chart’s third-best plays gain (up 269). Additionally, it’s the chart’s Most Added title for the second time in two weeks and is already on 37 of 82 chart reporter stations.

The single is also bubbling under on the CHR/Top 40—where it is on 23 stations and gained 158 spins the week ended Sept. 23—and Adult Contemporary charts.

“Into the Night” looks likely to become another in a long line of chart-topping hits for Santana, which stretch back to 1970’s “Evil Ways,” his band’s first Billboard Hot 100 top 10 and an AC No. 1.

“Ultimate Santana,” the first compilation to span Santana’s entire career, was designed “to bring Santana’s older fans into contact with his newer work and his contemporary fans into contact with his classic hits,” J/Arista VP of marketing Mark Flaherty says. “We want to celebrate his unparalleled career and his continuing relevance.”

Still based in the San Francisco Bay Area, the warm, soft-spoken Santana says of “Into the Night,” “In the ’60s, we needed songs that would transport us into a place of wonderment. This is a song like that. It’s a song about angels and how they constantly translate your inner voice, preventing you from negative thoughts and fear. So it’s got something spiritual to it, but it also has strength. It’s not wishy-washy.”

Santana says he enjoyed reteaming with Kroeger; their first collaboration, 2003’s “Why Don’t You & I,” rode the crest of the Adult Top 40 chart for nine weeks and was a top five hit on the AC and CHR/Top 40 lists.

Besides Kroeger, “Ultimate Santana” also features Jennifer Lopez and Baby Bash on a new track and finds Tina Turner updating Michelle Branch’s vocal on “The Game of Love,” which in 2002 conquered adult top 40 and AC.

Mindless Self Indulgence executive VP of promotion Richard Palmezie believes that “Into the Night” will “appeal across demos, just like ‘Smooth’ did.” And “Ultimate Santana” will be a multisingle album. It must be,” he adds with a chuckle, “or else Clive [Davis] will go tell me to retire.”

—SUSAN VISAKOWITZ
**ROCK**

**MATCHBOX TWENTY**

Exile on Mainstream  
Producer: Steve Lillywhite  
Mediterranean  
Release Date: Oct. 2  

The six new songs on Matchbox Twenty’s first greatest hits collection almost sound like a new band. The frenetic drums that kick off first single “How Far We’ve Come,” the jangly folk of “I’ll Believe You When,” the doo-wop balladry of “Can’t Let You Go” divest the usual Thomas-singing-full-voice-over-guitar-bursts formula that has brought the band its decade of success. That’s not a bad thing: “How Far” is great stuff, a personal narrative about apocalypse with a sunny “It’s the End of the World As We Know It”-type hook that shows new depth in its irony alone. That’s not to say that the re-mastered hits are undeserving: Songs like “3 AM,” “If You’re Gone” and “Unwell” are part of the American radio rock canon. If Matchbox starts diversifying now, it will only get more interesting. —KM

**JOHN FOGERTY**

Revival  
Producer: John Fogerty  
Fantasy  
Release Date: Oct. 2  

From the broad, hopeful tone of opener “Don’t You Wish It Was True” to the brisk closer “Longshot,” John Fogerty at 62 has made his toughest, best-written album since Creedence Clearwater Revival disbanded in 1972. Heck having frozen over, he is back on the Fantasy label after more than 30 years of litigation and torment. On the rousing Little Richard-style “I Can’t Take It No More,” he addresses George W. Bush directly (“You lied about weapons of mass destruction, you lied about 9/11”) and witheringly reduces the president to “another fortunate son.” The message would mean nothing without the serious heft of the music, and Fogerty’s guitar playing has rarely been as blistering as it is on the rockabilly “It Ain’t Right” or the Cream/Hendrix tribute “Summer of Love.” His original band gets its own tribute on “Creedence Song,” a toast to the sound that fed a thousand bar bands.—WR

**PJ HARVEY**

White Lines  
Producers: Flood, John Parish, PJ Harvey  
Island  
Release Date: Sept. 25  

On which PJ Harvey unstraps her guitar, sits down at a piano and completely reinvents her sound, creating a quiet masterpiece in the process. Seven proper albums into her career, she confronts less directly many of the themes that have defined her work—sex, love, betrayal—and instead focuses on what’s left after all the damage has been done: an “empty” and “insignificant” life. This is no warm nostalgia trip down memory lane, but rather an offering to those the narrator has lost, either literally or figuratively, so she may ask “forgiveness.” Essentially one long suicide note, the concept likely would have failed in less accomplished hands. But Harvey’s mostly bare arrangements, stark vocal delivery and razor-sharp lyrics add up to a poignant, haunting rumination on what makes—and breaks—a life.—LV

**BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN**

Magic  
Producer: Brendan O’Brien  
Columbia  
Release Date: Oct. 2  

Somewhere between “The River” and “The Rising” falls “Magic,” Bruce Springsteen’s first rock record since 2002 and a sleek machine that’s practically pleading to be taken out on the highway. Fully resettled on E Street after two solo projects, Springsteen has injected the taut “Magic” with a fierce purpose you can almost taste. The first eight songs play like a joyous E Street history lesson: “Radio Nowhere” is an arena-ready call to arms, the winning “Livin’ in the Future” falls from the “Hungry Heart” school of Clarence Clemons’ sax and “Gypsy Biker” is a wide-open epic-in-waiting about, well, roads. Yet there is more to “Magic” than meets the eye: “Livin’ in the Future” and “Long Walk Home” drop in some sneaky politics, while “Girls in Their Summer Clothes” finds Springsteen indulging an inner “Pet Sounds,” purposefully trying on different vocal styles and keys. In all, a pretty great return to form.—VJ

**RASCAL FLATTS**

Still Feels Good  
Producers: Dann Huff, Rascal Flatts  
Lyric Street  
Release Date: Sept. 25  

The I-want-to-get-to-know-you first single “Take Me There” is vintage Rascal Flatts, but the band also takes some convincing new detours. “Still Feels Good.” “Winner at a Losing Game” is fresh, familiar andconjures ’70s country rock, while actor/singer Jamie Foxx’s duet with Flatts’ Gary LeVox on the soulful “She Goes All the Way” is a marvelous intertwining and a potential Grammy Award moment, “Bob That Head,” a country-meets-rock-meets-rn_logo that is likely to become a Friday night cruising favorite, since that’s exactly what the song is about. But this tremendous album also has its tender moments. “Better Now” is a vulnerable look at mistakes made, while “Help Me Remember” yearns for the better times in a relationship, and “It’s Not Supposed to Go Like That” is a classic country tale of lives that end too soon.—K7

**MERLE HAGGARD**

The Bluegrass Sessions  
Producer: Ronnie Reno  
McCoury Music  
Release Date: Oct. 2  

While a Merle Haggard bluegrass album may be a strange concept to some, it’s not really a stretch at all. Backed an all-star band that includes Marty Stuart, Carl Jackson and Rob Ickes, Haggard sounds right at home as he writes with new friends and familiar material. “Big City” gains fresh breath as a bluegrass tune and the

**KEVIN MICHAEL**

YaDig?  
Producers: various  
Downtown/Atlantic  
Release Date: Oct. 2  

Based solely on some of the company Kevin Michael is keeping, the R&B newcomer is attention-worthy. Wyclef Jean, Lupe Fiasco and Q-Tip guest on “YaDig?,” while the singer/songwriter’s tour credits include opening sets for Maroon 5 and Lily Allen. Michael calls to mind Prince and Rhasaan Patterson with his sweet/smooth falsetto and outside-the-box mix of pop, R&B/soul and funk. Whether dis-covering about Jesus freaks and thugs, wanting something real out of life (“We All Want the Same Thing” featuring Fiasco) or his birecital background (“I Ain’t Make Any Difference To Me” featuring Jean), the Angela Davis-fro’d Michael takes the listener on an energetic romp that swerves from lovelorn R&B (“If I Ain’t Got You”) to playful funk (“Vicki Secrets”). Keep an ear open.—GM

**BROOKS & DUNN**

Cowboy Town  
Producers: Tony Brown, Ronnie Dunn, Kix Brooks  
Arista Nashville  
Release Date: Oct. 2  

Kix Brooks and Ronnie Dunn have it down. That’s not to say their albums all sound alike, but during the last 16 years they’ve built a sound that’s unmistakable even when they’re branching out. While first single “Proud of the House We Built” is classic Brooks & Dunn, “Country Girls Don’t Cry” finds Dunn channeling George Strait, “Drop in the Bucket,” which features Brooks on lead vocals, sounds like a tribute to former labelmates the Tractors. The album’s best moments are when the duo goes retro, “The Ballad of Jerry Jeff Walker,” which features Walker himself and vocals by Brooks, is a fitting homage to the Texas legend and the ’70s Austin country-rock party scene he dominated. Likewise, with its Muscleon organ, “Tequila” sounds like a blast out of the ’60s.—KT
THE BILLBOARD
REVIEWS
SINGLES

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COUNTRY
BILLY JOE SHAYER
Every Brody's Brother
Producer: John Carter Cash
Compadre
Release Date: Sept. 25
A legendary hell-raiser in his time, Billy Joe Shayer presents with absolute authority on this string collection of mostly self-penned gospel that emanates from the honky-tonks. Armed with heavyhanded pickers, brothers-in-arms and a fire-and-brimstone attitude, Shayer is convincing indeed on cuts like the resolute "When I Get My Wings" and the churning "Winning Again." The great John Anderson (of Chimes in twice, most effectively on the fiery boogie "Get Thee Behind Me, Satan," and Kris Kristofferson is a grizzled compadre on Johnny Cash's social commentary "No Earthly Good." But this is uniquely Billy Joe, a man who comes off like he'd kick your ass one minute and save your soul the next.—RW

CHRISTIAN
MARK HARRIS
Windows and Walls
Producers: Nathan Nockels, Pete Kiley
INO Records
Release Date: Sept. 25
When an artist walks away from a successful group after 15 years, the future can be uncertain. But for Mark Harris, the same vocal and songwriting gifts that helped propel him to the top of the Christian charts continue to serve him well as a solo artist. When Harris and his 4Him cohorts parted ways, he made his solo bow with 2005's accliamed "The Line Between the Two." He follows up with an impressive collection of songs about faith and family. Harris has a warm, warm voice that imbues each track with honest emotion. "Writing on the Wall" finds an original way of expressing each parent's feelings about children growing up too soon, while "For the Glory of You" is a passionate, uplifting worship number.—DEP

INGRAM HILL
Why Don't You (3:23)
Producer: Oliver Leiber
Writers: J. Moore, A. Dodd, A. Watts
Publishers: Thor Hill BMI; Ding Ego, ASAP
Hollywood
Pop/rock trio Ingram Hill returned with sophomore "Cold in California" last month, after scoring a pair of hits at AC from 2004's "June's Picture Show." Hop- along launch single "Why Don't You," produced by Oliver Leiber (Paula Abdul, BBM), the Corrs) travels a similar rail as 'Train, with plugged guitars, crackerjack percussion and a crossover chic. Leiber makes the track its own stamp with novel vocal intonation, while guitarist Phil Bogard and drummer Matt Chambless complement with live crackle. Overall impact sound like a hit for AC and adult top 40 stations looking to further the brigade of harder-edged albeit singalong songs at adult radio.—PVW

CHABE KROGER
Into the Night (3:42)
Producers: Chad Kroeger, Joey Ma, Clive Davis, Carlos Santana
Writer: C. Kroeger
Publishers: Anaesthetic Warner/Chappell, SOCAN/BMI
Arista
The last time Chad Kroeger and Carlos Santana got together, the result was 2003/2004 mainstream bubble-gum "Why Don't You & I." Expect history to repeat for reunion track "Into the Night." Kroeger has never shied from affairs of the heart, and this is his most romantic lyrical endeavor yet. Coupled with his raspy voice, it makes for an intriguing contrast of a cool rocker singing a valentine about love at first sight. "Spinning in circles with the moon in our eyes/No room left to move in between you and I," he says of falling for a lady as they dance the night away. The tune is a lively beat filled with exotic flourishes and Carlos Santana's fluid guitar, invoking visions of women twirling in skirts amid the firelight of tiki torches on a far-away island. Clive Davis putting his executive producer stamp on the lite-rock song seals its success.—CLT

MULTIMEDIA
CELINE DION
Taking Chances (4:02)
Producer: John Shanks
Writers: K. DioGuardi, D. Stewart
Publisher: not listed
Columbia
AC radio has evolved dramatically since Celine Dion took up residency at Caesars Palace nearly five years ago—but as she proves on aptly titled "Taking Chances," the globe's best-selling female singer has no interest in repeating history. The title track from new Columbia set (Nov. 13) supplants chest-thumping for fist-pumping amid a bushwhacking midtempo clamar of guitars. Dion's vocals display an appreciably less-polished veneer—an uncontrasted ease among glorious dips and bellow—unshe riffs with revelry at the peak. Written by Dion mainstay Kara DioGuardi with Eurythmics' Dave Stewart and produced by Grammy Award-winning John Shanks, every note wanders in tandem with the greatest instrument of all: the consummate voice of Dion. "Chances" blazed onto AC at No. 23 this week; with a record-setting No. 1 in its format since 1992, the countdown begins to another sure-fire triumph.—CT

STEVIE NICKS
Stand Back (11:26)
Producer: Jimmy Iovene
Writer: S. Nicks
Publisher: Welsh Witch, BMI
Remixers: Tracy Young, Joey Carnello, Ralph Rosario, Morgan Page
Reprise
The great Stevie Nicks is as enduring as a California redwood, so how to add relevance to her timeless catalog? Try handing it off to a bevy of remixers with instructions to invite a new generation of club kids to twirl in unison (flowing robes optional). The Tracy Takes You Home mix of 1983 top five "Stand Back" more or less leaves the original vocal intact amid a psychodelic Qualaupe nuptile—all 11:26 of it. Ralph's Beefy Retro mix is less trippy, maintaining classic synth riffs while injecting bass and blowing up dreamlike vocals. Morgan Page Vex again honors the original, incorporating a rubbery bassline and persistent bop beat. All to draw attention to career retrospective Crystal Visions. The Very Best of Stevie Nicks. It's nice to see an artist secure enough with her place in history to court reinvention.—CT

www.americanradiohistory.com
New Crown For Billboard’s Woman Of The Year

Although it’s become practically old hat for Reba McEntire to lead Top Country Albums, it might surprise you that Billboard’s first Woman of the Year notches her first No. 1 on The Billboard 200.

McEntire

With release-week appearances on ‘The Oprah Winfrey Show,’ "Good Morning America" and ‘The View,’ the singer/TV star’s ‘Reba’ duets’ collects 301,000 copies, her best sales week since Nielsen SoundScan started counting albums in 1991.

That puts her ahead of Kanye West, whose ‘Graduation’ posts 226,000 a week after its eepopping start of 957,000.

McEntire’s ‘Oprah’ episode had the added star power of just n’imberlake and Kelly Clarkson, who both participated on her new album. The songs that each of them performed with her on the show find ink on Hot Digital Songs (a re-entry at No. 51 and a bow at No. 55), but the titles’ combined total of 19,000 suggests that fans were more interested in getting the whole enchilada, rather than splitting for a bite or two.

Her prior biggest week had been 183,000 for ‘Greatest Hits Volume Two’ during Christmas week 1993. McEntire’s best rank on the big chart was a No. 2 showing for 1994 set “Read My Mind,” which, oddly, was not among her nine previous No. 1s on Top-Country Albums.

Although several duets are receiving airplay (see story, page 46), the only one to dent Hot Country Songs thus far has been “Because of You.” McEntire’s duet with Clarkson, which reached No. 2, ‘The Voice’ experience will bring success on whose best career-chart chart, this issue’s big chart at a bit of a come-down from last week’s action, right? Admit it. Were you yearning to hear McEntire threaten to retire if she couldn’t outsell K.T. Tunstall Diana Krall or Gloria Estefan?

SLIDE: Remember how 50 Cent said he would retire if Kanye West’s ‘Graduation’ had a bigger start than his? Well, release “Curtis” 50 later added the caveat that he wouldn’t quit if West’s second week decline surpassed 75%, but he never said what he would do if his own album saw an even larger percentage drop. But, long before any MC pioneered raps, Newton discovered gravity, and that force pulls on both albums. West’s drops by 76%, while 50% saw a 79% evaporation (No. 3, 143,000 copies). Kenny Chesney’s ‘Just Who I Am: Poets & Pirates’ shove 71% off his opening sum (No. 5, 112,000).

With increased emphasis on first-week sales, declines of more than 70% are a more frequent sight these days. Last week’s power trio joins 13 other artists who, since the start of 2005, had seen drops of at least 70% after bowing in the top 10. A list that includes such respected names as Barbra Streisand, Janet Jackson and Tool.

Among those 13, Jay-Z’s ‘Kingdom Come’ was the only one to experience a decay of more than 75%, posting a 79% decline after it arrived with 680,000 first-week sales. While this issue’s Billboard 200 lacks the prizewinner of half-million-plus frames, it does feature a gaudy 31 new entries, the most the chart has seen since last year’s Oct. 21 issue, which also sported 31 bows. So, what’s the rush this time of year?

Aside from artists being lured to the traffic of the holiday selling period like bugs drawn to a porch light, the eligibility period for consideration at the next Grammy Awards requires recordings be released by Sept. 10.

Then, again, how much does bands like “Between the Buried and Me” (No. 36) or Suicide Silence (No. 93) worry about Christmas shoppers or Grammy nods?

DOUBLE FEATURE: Don’t soundtracks seem a little sexy again? Last year’s best-selling album was cut from cable film ‘High School Musical,’ two of this year’s 10-best-selling albums are soundtracks, and 15 film-related projects have reached The Billboard’s 200’s top 10 since 2006 began. Pearl Jam’s Eddie Vedder falls just shy of the penthouse with the No. 11 bow of his album for Sean Penn’s ‘Into the Wild.”

“Across the Universe,” which tells its story through Beatles music, lands two chart awards. The deluxe double-length set scoops the list’s largest unit increase (No. 24, up 12,000 copies), while the single-CD version earns the largest percentage gain (No. 42, up 112%). Combined, the two sell 39,000 copies, a sum that would own No. 12 on the big chart.

Market Watch

Weekly Unit Sales

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Chart</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Albums</th>
<th>Digital Downloads</th>
<th>Catalog Downloads</th>
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<tr>
<td>This Week</td>
<td>2,949,000</td>
<td>1,020,000</td>
<td>14,949,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last Week</td>
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<td>This Week Last Year</td>
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<td>Change</td>
<td>-13.8%</td>
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Weekly Album Sales (Million Units)

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<th>Date</th>
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<th>2007</th>
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<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>358.3 million</td>
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Newspaper SoundScan reports as current only sales within the first 36 weeks of an album’s release. (36 weeks for cassette and poly albums. Total: 36 weeks). Nielsen SoundScan data is compiled from reports of 27,000 retail outlets, including about 100,000 artists and retailers. Nielsen SoundScan estimates are based on scans of sales and not estimates. The Nielsen reports are current only sales within the first 36 weeks of an album’s release. For more information, please visit www.nielsenmusic.com.
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<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<td>Reba Duits</td>
<td>MCA-MM (16.98)</td>
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<td>So-Cent</td>
<td>Cuts</td>
<td>Cuts (19.98)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barry Manilow</td>
<td>The Greatest Songs Of The Seventies</td>
<td>Universal (13.98)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kenny Chesney</td>
<td>Just Who I Am: Poets &amp; Pirates</td>
<td>BNA (18.98)</td>
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<td>High School Musical 2</td>
<td>Buena Vista (13.98)</td>
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<td>All The Lost Souls</td>
<td>Epic (16.98)</td>
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<td>Ultimate Victory</td>
<td>Grand Hustle/Atlantic (11.98)</td>
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<td>Verve DSD (18.98)</td>
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<td>Adrenaline Rush 2007</td>
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<td>Eddie Vedder</td>
<td>Into The Wild (Soundtrack)</td>
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<td>Riot!</td>
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<td>Playlist</td>
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<td>Hannah Montana</td>
<td>Every Second Counts</td>
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The Billboard 200 Artist Index

50 To go to billboard.biz for complete chart data
### Hot 100 Airplay

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<td>DE LA SOUL</td>
<td>R&amp;B/HIP HOP</td>
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<td>CRANK THAT</td>
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<td>URIAH HEELEY</td>
<td>90S MORPH 4000</td>
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<td>HIP HOP/R B</td>
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<td>ROCK</td>
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<td>DANNY BAHRO</td>
<td>HIP HOP/R B</td>
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### Chart Legend

- Pop 100 Airplay
- Hot Singles Sales
- HitPredictor

### Highlights
- **54**

### Pop 100 Airplay

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</tr>
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<td>Puff Daddy</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Potential Breakup Song</td>
<td>Babyface &amp; Puff Daddy</td>
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### Hot Singles Sales

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### HitPredictor

- Pop 100 Airplay
- Hot Singles Sales
- HitPredictor

### Data for week of October 6, 2007

- Chart Legend on Page 64

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**Notes:**
- The Pop 100 singles & tracks, according to minimum 100 radio audience, are among the most listened to in the United States, as measured by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems. The Hot Singles Sales chart tracks the best-selling singles in the United States, as measured by Nielsen SoundScan. The Pop 100 Airplay chart tracks the most-played tracks on U.S. radio stations. Hits are determined by weekly product sales and airplay. Pop 100 Airplay is licensed under the Worldvision Group for use by Billboard and is refreshed weekly. Pop 100 and Hot Singles Sales are included in the Billboard 200 and Top Country Albums charts, respectively. See Chart Legend for more details. 

---

**Related:**
- Billboard 200
- Top Country Albums
- Total Sales
- Top Rock Albums
- Top Pop Albums

---

**External Resources:**
- Billboard.com
- Nielsen SoundScan
- Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems

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**Website:**
- www.americanradiohistory.com
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**BLUES ALBUMS**

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<td>The Red Deal: Greatest Hits Vol. 1</td>
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<td>OMAR KEIT DYEYS &amp; JIMMIE VAUGHAN</td>
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<td>Truth</td>
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**FOUR NEW SETS IN TOP 10**

With a No. 3 start, Chamillionaire’s "Ultimate Victory" leads a pack of four new entries in the top 10 of R&B/Hip-Hop Albums, the most debuts in that region since Fabolous, DJ Khaled, Eddie & Gerald Revert and DMX invaded the June 30 issue. "Ultimate" gente The Billboard 200 at No. 10 on 79,000 scans, down 39% or 130,000 fewer first-week sales that greeted its last album. "The Sound of Revenge." So far nothing has grabbed radio's attention, as first single "Hip Hop Police" didn't crack The Billboard Hot 100 and stalled at No. 6 on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs. Twista's "Adrenaline Rush" starts at No. 4 on this chart, while Rick Ross' compilation of pre-Def Jam material and Babyface's covers album bow at Nos. 6 and 7, respectively. —Robert George
### R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay

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<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>MONEY IN THE BANK</td>
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<td>FUTURE BABY MAMA</td>
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<td><strong>23</strong></td>
<td>BUY A DRANK (SHAWTY SNAPPIN')</td>
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<td><strong>24</strong></td>
<td>PLEASE DON'T LEAVE</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>25</strong></td>
<td>CAN'T TELL ME NOTHING</td>
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<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td>YOU O.R.I.</td>
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<td><strong>27</strong></td>
<td>GOOD LIFE</td>
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<td><strong>28</strong></td>
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<td><strong>2</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>I'M SO HOOD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td>MONEY IN THE BANK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td>GET THE BODIED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td>BAMBINO (IT'S A BUMBINO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
<td>WADYSANAME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td>SHOULD'VE LET YOU GO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td>GET ME 5 O'CLOCK</td>
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<td>BABY I'M BODIED</td>
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### Rhythmic Airplay

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### HOT COUNTRY SONGS

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<td>&quot;Love_Right_Before_It's_Over&quot;</td>
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<td>9/22/06</td>
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<td>Warner Bros. Records</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Kenny Chesney</td>
<td>&quot;Easy_Going_Girl&quot;</td>
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<td>Arista Nashville</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Faith Hill</td>
<td>&quot;That's_My_Girl&quot;</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>George Strait</td>
<td>&quot;Love_Me_Over_Inc&quot;</td>
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**Notes:**
- Data for the chart week ending Oct 6, 2007.
- The chart features the top 40 songs in country music.
- Debuts marked with "**".

### R&B COUNTRY DAILY UPDATE

- Visit www.radioandrecords.com to sign up for your free daily Country Rad o Blast.
- RadioandRecords.com

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**BETWEEN THE BULLETS**

"American Idol" queen Carrie Underwood continues to prove herself at country radio, as "So Small" improves by 1.4 million audience impressions and rises 11-10. The song is a total of 26.1 million impressions in its eighth chart week. "Small" is the third-youngest song in this issue's top 10. This marks Underwood's fifth top 10 on Hot Country Songs, and the lead single from her sophomore set, "Carnival Ride," due Oct. 23.

Underwood's string of country hits includes three chart-toppers that each spent multiple weeks at No. 1, most notably the six weeks logged by "Jesus, Take the Wheel." Each of Underwood's five official radio singles has peaked at the chart's top 10, including "Don't Forget to Remember Me," which peaked at No. 2. The new set will not include her charity single, "Stand By You," which clocked 19 weeks on Hot Country Songs and peaked at No. 41 on the July 14 chart. — Wade Jensen

---

**GREAT SONGS OF FLIRTATION**

No less than 58 artists have scored top 10 hits with songs that seem to flirt. Here are some of the best...

- **Taylor Swift** - "Love Story" (90.8)
- **Lady Gaga** - "Just Dance" (90.8)
- **Jason Aldean** - "Don't Walk Away" (90.8)
- **Patty Loveless** - "You're Gonna Miss This" (90.8)
- **Reba McEntire** - "You Lost Me" (90.8)

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**HOT LATIN SONGS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>&quot;La Pasión&quot;</td>
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<td>Solo Para Ti</td>
<td>Los Creyentes Del Pantano</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>&quot;La Pasión&quot;</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Mi Corazón No</td>
<td>Alejandro Fernández</td>
<td>29</td>
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<td>&quot;El Amor No Tiene Regreso&quot;</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>Pepe Aguilar</td>
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**TOP LATIN ALBUMS**

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<td>1</td>
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<td>Gloria Estefan</td>
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<td>Tito El Bambino</td>
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Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data

**Data for week of October 6, 2007**
### LATIN AIRPLAY

#### POP

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### LATIN ALBUMS

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### RHYTHM

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### REGIONAL MEXICAN

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## Japan
### Singles

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## United Kingdom
### Singles

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## Germany
### Singles

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<td>JAMES BLUNT</td>
<td>WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT JESUS</td>
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<td>DON'T STOP THE MUSIC</td>
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## Italy
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## Spain
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<td>DOS RAPEROS NUNCA NUEVA</td>
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## Argentina
### Albums

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<td>THE WAY I ARE</td>
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## Argentina
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### EUROCHARTS

#### SINGLE SALES

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<tr>
<th>ARTIST</th>
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<th>LABEL</th>
<th>WEEKS ON CHART</th>
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<tr>
<td>CASTING CROWNS</td>
<td><strong>The Altar and the Bridge</strong></td>
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<td>PATRICK FIORI</td>
<td><strong>The Way</strong></td>
<td>ATLANTIC /CUSTARD</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>TIMBERLAND</td>
<td><strong>The Way</strong></td>
<td>WARNER</td>
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<tr>
<td>AKON</td>
<td><strong>I'm Sober</strong></td>
<td>RUMPUS</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>KANYE WEST</td>
<td><strong>Back to Black</strong></td>
<td>4174 /PROVIDENT -INTEGRITY</td>
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<tr>
<td>50 CENT</td>
<td><strong>Born Sinner</strong></td>
<td>CURB</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>RICK ROSS</td>
<td><strong>afia</strong></td>
<td>DREZ</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 PAC</td>
<td><strong>American Rose</strong></td>
<td>лоу INTEGRITY</td>
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<tr>
<td>50 CENT</td>
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<tr>
<td>RICK ROSS</td>
<td><strong>Wild Thoughts</strong></td>
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<td>2 PAC</td>
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<td>RICHARD BRANT</td>
<td><strong>American Rose</strong></td>
<td>DREZ</td>
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<td>2 PAC</td>
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<td>RICK ROSS</td>
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#### ALBUMS

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<tr>
<td>JAMES BLUNT</td>
<td><strong>The Afternoon Before</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>MARK KNOPFLER</td>
<td><strong>Get On With It</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>THE KASEY CAGE</td>
<td><strong>Live at the Apollo: The Proclamation Gospel Choir</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>TIMBALAND</td>
<td><strong>It's Not Over</strong></td>
<td>POSSIBILITIES</td>
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<tr>
<td>KT TUNSTALL</td>
<td><strong>Klavierstunde: The Essential KT Tunstall</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>BARLOW GIRL</td>
<td><strong>A Thousand Foot Krutch</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>MONK &amp; NEAGLE</td>
<td><strong>It's Not Over</strong></td>
<td>POSSIBILITIES</td>
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<tr>
<td>STEVE SHARP</td>
<td><strong>A Thousand Foot Krutch</strong></td>
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<td>CADEMSON'S CALL</td>
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#### RADIO AIRPLAY

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For complete information, please visit [Billboard](http://www.billboard.com).
ALBUM CHARTS

Sales data compiled from a comprehensive pool of U.S. music retailers by Nielsen SoundScan. Sales data for R&B/Hip-Hop albums is compiled by Nielsen SoundScan from a nation-wide sample of core R&B/Hip-Hot stores by Nielsen SoundScan.

SINGLE CHARTS

Compiled from a national sample of databases supplied by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems. Charts are ranked by number of gross audience impressions, compiled by cross-referencing point times of airing with Arbitron listener data. The exceptions are the Rhythmic, Adult Top 40, Adult Contemporary, Modern Rock and Adult R&B charts, which are ranked by detections.

Singles sales charts: The top selling songs compiled from a national sample of retail stores, mass-merchant, and Internet sales reports collected, compiled, and provided by Nielsen SoundScan. For R&B/Hip-Hop Singles charts, sales data is drawn from a national subset panel of core R&B/Hip-Hot stores by Nielsen SoundScan.

TOP WORLD

1 MANU CHAO / BANDA DEL SOL

2 CELTIC NATION / THE AMERICAN CELTIC NATION

3 STEVIE RAY GABRIELA / ROBERTO RAMOS

4 JAMES BLUNT / THE HOURS

5 MANU CHAO / BANDA DEL SOL

6 MANU CHAO / BANDA DEL SOL

7 MANU CHAO / BANDA DEL SOL

8 MANU CHAO / BANDA DEL SOL

9 MANU CHAO / BANDA DEL SOL

10 MANU CHAO / BANDA DEL SOL

AWARD CERT LEVELS

ALBUM CHARTS

Recording Industry of America (RIAA) certification for net shipment of 500,000 albums (Gold). RIAA certification for net shipment of 1 million units (Platinum). RIAA certification for net shipment of 10 million units (Diamond). Numerical within Platinum or Diamond format indicates album's multiplatinum level. For boxed sets, and double albums with a running time of 100 minutes or more, the RIAA multiplies shipments by the number of albums/sets/lp's per box. Certification for net shipments of 50 million units (Diamond). Certification for shipments of 200,000 units (Platinum). Certification for shipments of 1 million units (Platinum).

SINGLES CHARTS

RIAA certification for 50,000 paid one-time downloads (Gold). RIAA certification for 1 million paid one-time downloads (Platinum). Numerical within platinum symbol indicates song's multiplatinum level. RIAA certification for net shipment of 500,000 singles (Gold).

MUSIC VIDEO SALES CHARTS

RIAA gold certification for net shipment of 25,000 units for video singles. RIAA gold certification for net shipment of 75,000 units for short-form music videos. RIAA platinum certification for net shipment of 50,000 units for video singles. RIAA double platinum certification for sales of 100,000 units for short-form or long-form videos.

DVD SALES/VIDEOS/VIDEO RENTALS

RIAA gold certification for net shipment of 50,000 units or $1 million in sales at suggested retail price. RIAA platinum certification for net shipment of 100,000 units or $2 million in sales at suggested retail price. RIAA gold certification for a minimum sale of 125,000 units or a total volume of 19 million at retail for theatrically released programs; or at least 25,000 units and $1 million at suggested retail for non-theatrical at lines. RIAA platinum certification for a minimum sale of 250,000 units or a dollar volume of $1.8 million at retail for theatrically released programs, and at least 500,000 units and $2 million at suggested retail for non-theatrical titles.
### Top Music Videos

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Principal Performers</th>
<th>Label &amp; Distributor</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td>POP SMART, LIVE FROM MEXICO CITY</td>
<td>U2</td>
<td>Universal</td>
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<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>TRAPPED IN THE CLOSET: CHAPTERS 13-22</td>
<td>R. Kelly</td>
<td>Volkerball</td>
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<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>NEW KISS</td>
<td>Vanessa Williams</td>
<td>Universal</td>
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<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td>HIP-MOVIE</td>
<td>John Cena</td>
<td>Universal</td>
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<td>Johnny Cash</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
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<td>EVERY SECOND COUNTS: DELUXE EDITION</td>
<td>Plain White T's</td>
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<td><strong>7</strong></td>
<td>FAREWELL I TOUR: LIVE FROM MELBOURNE</td>
<td>Eagles</td>
<td>Masterpiece / Hollywood Video</td>
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<td>LIVE FROM RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL</td>
<td>Tony Bennett</td>
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<td>Elvis Presley</td>
<td>RCA</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td>PAST. PRESENT &amp; FUTURE</td>
<td>Rod Stewart</td>
<td>MCA</td>
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<td>L peter peter city</td>
<td>Dave Matthews &amp; Tim Reynolds</td>
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<td>The Temptations</td>
<td>Motown</td>
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<td>Pink Floyd</td>
<td>EMI</td>
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<td>RCA</td>
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<td>Mike Greenway</td>
<td>Universal</td>
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<td>The Notorious B.I.G.</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
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<td><strong>29</strong></td>
<td>YOU KNOW WHAT IT IS</td>
<td>Kelis Featuring A Tribe Called Quest</td>
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<td>Kanye West Featuring Cam’ron &amp; Freeway</td>
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<td>Mac Dre</td>
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<td>Plies Featuring Felix</td>
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<td>Cyndi Lauper</td>
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<td>Parmalee</td>
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<td><strong>42</strong></td>
<td>1973</td>
<td>The Who</td>
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<td>WHATSOEVER U LIKE</td>
<td>Nelly Featuring Lalah Hathaway</td>
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### Hot Video Clips

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td>THE PRETENDER</td>
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<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>CRANK THAT (Soulja Boy)</td>
<td>Universal Pictures &amp; PolyGram Music Publishing</td>
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<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>I GET MONEY</td>
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<td>SO SMALL</td>
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<td>KISS KISS</td>
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<td>LET IT GO</td>
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<td><strong>7</strong></td>
<td>ROCKSTAR</td>
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<td>BED</td>
<td>Universal Pictures &amp; PolyGram Music Publishing</td>
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<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td>YOU KNOW WHAT IT IS</td>
<td>Universal Pictures &amp; PolyGram Music Publishing</td>
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<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td>DO IT</td>
<td>Universal Pictures &amp; PolyGram Music Publishing</td>
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<td><strong>11</strong></td>
<td>GOOD LIFE</td>
<td>Universal Pictures &amp; PolyGram Music Publishing</td>
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<td>PROMISE RING</td>
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<td>DRIVEN ME WILD</td>
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<td>WHEN YOU’RE GONE</td>
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<td>WAKE UP CALL</td>
<td>Universal Pictures &amp; PolyGram Music Publishing</td>
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<td><strong>16</strong></td>
<td>LOVE TECHNOLOGY</td>
<td>Universal Pictures &amp; PolyGram Music Publishing</td>
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<td>MONEY IN THE BANK</td>
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<td>DUFFEL BAG BOY</td>
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<td>BIG GIRLS DON'T CRY</td>
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<td><strong>22</strong></td>
<td>1973</td>
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<td><strong>23</strong></td>
<td>WHATSOEVER U LIKE</td>
<td>Universal Pictures &amp; PolyGram Music Publishing</td>
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</table>

### Launch Pad

**OCT 6 2007**

**Title**

**ARTIST**

**1** Broken Social Scene Presents: Kevin Drew

**Spirit II**

**2** Monarch"s at Sea

**3** The Twenty-First Time

**4** Thirsty Tea's 04

**5** Winter's Black

**6** The Poson

**7** Immortal Verses

**8** Countoured

**9** Robbers & Cowboys

**10** Furgo Nuevo

**11** The Heart Of Everything

**12** In Between

**13** Speak For Yourself

**14** St. Karen

**15** Mr. Sane

**16** Breaking Silence

**17** Walking with Strangers

**18** Gideon's Bar

**19** Not So Easy

**20** Good Bad Not Evil

### This Week On...

**Breaking & Entering**

It's a raptrooper day for singer/producer Matt White, as his rookie album "Best Days" enters The Nextkeepers at #1. Discover developing albums with the help of our Heatseekers & Breakout Albums. "Best Days" is the go-to album for the next generation of music enthusiasts. It's the perfect soundtrack for the era of modern pop. © 2007 Nielsen Business Media, Inc. and Nielsen SoundScan, Inc. All rights reserved.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
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<tr>
<td>Crying Out For Me</td>
<td>My Clothes Off!</td>
<td>BMV, ASCAP, WB Music</td>
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<td>My Friend</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>ASCAP, BMI</td>
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<td>Rainbow Machine</td>
<td>Chill</td>
<td>BMV, ASCAP</td>
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<td>Raising Hell And Amazing Grace</td>
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<td>Heaven, Heartache</td>
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<td>BMV, ASCAP</td>
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<td>Pretty Girls</td>
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<td>Tomorrow</td>
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<td>The Pretender</td>
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<td>Kiss Kiss</td>
<td>On the Run</td>
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<td>Last Train Running</td>
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<tr>
<td>Never Again</td>
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<td>BMV, ASCAP</td>
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</table>

**Notes:**
- BMV stands for BMG Music Publishing.
- ASCAP stands for American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers.
- EMI Virgin is a subsidiary of EMI Group.
- BMI stands for Broadcast Music, Inc.
- SESAC stands for Performing Rights Organization.
- ASCAP represents composers, songwriters, and publishers of original music.
- BMI is a membership organization that represents composers, songwriters, and music publishers.
- BMG Music Publishing is a subsidiary of Bertelsmann AG.

**Additional Information:**
- Billboard is a weekly music trade magazine that provides data on the popularity of songs across various genres.
- The list includes songs with their respective publishers and labels.
- The data is accurate as of October 6, 2007, for the week ending September 29, 2007.
OCT 4-10, 2007 - PALMS CASINO RESORT - LAS VEGAS

BY DAY...

OCTOBER 9 & 10. Now in its 14th year, the Billboard Dance Music Summit attracts an elite group of international and domestic attendees to discuss the latest trends impacting today's dance music industry. Be a part of the industry's most important business-to-business event!

JUST ANNOUNCED...
THE BILLBOARD Q&A WITH THE CRYSTAL METHOD!
TCM bandmates Ken Jordan & Scott Kirkland will take attendees on a journey into the past, present and future. Along the way, we'll celebrate the 10th anniversary of the duo's groundbreaking album, "Vegas," which has been re-released as a two-disc deluxe edition set via Geffen/UMe.

BY NIGHT...

OCTOBER 4-10. Enjoy the Vegas Music Experience! All attendees will receive VIP access to one week of incredible nighttime events featuring the world's best DJs, hot nightclubs and concerts as well as can't miss pool parties.

LIVE PERFORMANCES BY
(SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

Benny Benassi
Chris Marsol
Dave Navarro & DJ Skribble
Dirty Vegas
Kaskade
Planet B featuring Bishop
Sasha
Tommy Lee & D.J. Aero
Ultra Nute

PLUS...
Carlos Sanchez
Crystal Method
Dj:FUSE
DJ AM
Dónald Glaude
Eddie Amador
Jackmaster Farley
Jimmy Van M
Jody Watley
John O0 Flemming

Keoki
Noel Sanger
Samantha James
Thelma Houston
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card! combine to make one strong,
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The news surrounding the real estate business isn't pretty these days. Record numbers of foreclosures. Mortgage company bust-ups. Vanishing loan options. The luxury market has been less bludgeoned than others—and entertainment-strong New York, Los Angeles, Nashville and Miami are more insulated than most cities. But all buyers and sellers find themselves in unfamiliar territory. "It's safe to say everyone's being affected," says Thomas Carroll, managing director of the sports and entertainment banking division at SunTrust Banks. The main issue, of course, is tighter credit. Simply put, lenders are reluctant to take hefty sums on their balance sheets, whether the client is a million-selling recording artist or a starving artist. "There's probably even more of a credit issue with the [luxury] buyers," Carroll says. "The clients we deal with are buying very high-end properties and a lot of them have special features that limit the resale of the home."

Carroll recalls a recent meeting with a well-established recording artist seeking to purchase a new home. "She is a very successful artist, with a great career. But the lender still wanted to get 10% more equity to close the deal," he says. "That's a conversation that just would not have taken place a few months ago. But this is the new reality."

Carroll advises his clients to seek good, unbiased guidance about whether a real estate decision really fits into their overall financial plan. "Clearly there's a lifestyle these clients lead. But there's a way to do it that's smart and fiscally responsible," he says. He also suggests buyers not view their homes as their primary investment and set up other assets they can rely upon down the road.

Lastly, he advises they not get too ruffled when they inevitably come under more scrutiny from lenders. As Carroll puts it, "A $5 million bad loan is equal to 10 or more smaller loans that go wrong."

Those ready to purchase will find the squeeze on credit has not stopped construction of new grand-scale options. Luxury buildings are rising anchored by four-star restaurants, hotels and exercise clubs, and loaded with high-tech amenities that make it easy to work—in some cases even record music—without ever leaving home.

"People today don't just look at residences as financial investments. They look at the whole lifestyle and [ask], 'What will the experience be like living in this building?'" says..."
Susan de Franca, president of sales at the Related Cos., the principal developer of New York’s Time Warner Center and the Century in Los Angeles, among other coveted addresses.

For Related and other high-end developers, it’s all about accommodating residents’ specific needs and busy schedules. “We always try to anticipate for future expansion and provide additional wiring for all apartments knowing people might have elaborate stereo or recording systems or a computer system that facilitates them working from home,” she says.

Many new high-rises, including the posh Residences at the Plaza in New York, include Concierge Direct, a computerized system that enables touch-pad access to audio/video, lighting, security cameras, valet and more. Private elevators, one-way security windows, nightly turndown service and access to catering from a restaurant in the building are becoming must-haves for the high-end buyers. “People want all of the amenities, but they also want the comfort and state of mind that their needs are being taken care of immediately,” de Franca says.

For the trendsetting music industry crowd in New York, the development of so many new modern buildings has created a housing nirvana.

“These folks are out there even stronger than ever,” says Pam Liebman, president/CEO of the Corcoran Group. “They love the new buildings, the great architecture of condos coming up in Chelsea and SoHo, for example, and they are flocking to them.” Hot new addresses include 40 Bond, 40 Mercer and One Jackson Square.

Entertainers generally are still moving from more established uptown neighborhoods in search of edgier, tech-laden downtown digs. “This group is not particularly interested in the old world, pre-war buildings,” Liebman says.

Moby, for one, recently put on the market his four-story, two-bedroom apartment in the south tower of the Eldorado on Central Park West for $7.5 million in favor of a downtown pad. In fact, Liebman says that though housing prices are not as inflated as they’ve been in recent memory, they show no signs of dipping in Manhattan’s luxe market. “There’s a lot of talk about what’s going to happen and that’s putting fear into the market,” she says. “But the big deals are still getting done.”

“I just finished a round of fall meetings and I wish reporters could have come with me,” Liebman adds. “The biggest problem is there’s still no inventory.”

On the contrary, Miami is awash in inventory as the city continues to experience a scale-tipping oversupply of condos. There currently are 22,000 such properties on the market, and that number is expected to more than double to 50,000 during the next 18 months due to new construction, according to Michael Valdes, director of sales at SO Sotheby’s International Realty in Miami.

“It’s happening on a national scale, but definitely happening a little more for us than in many other markets,” Valdes says of the oversupply. “There have been more condos on the market in Miami during the last three years than have been for the prior three decades.”

This, of course, is good news for buyers looking for the fun-in-the-sun lifestyle that consistently draws its share of entertainers and industry notables. New options like the residences at the W and Viceroy in South Beach are loaded with amenities and access to the downtown club scene. “The newer the building, the higher-tech they are,” Valdes says.

Newer, more spacious buildings also allow more room for customization. A music producer who requests anonymity combined two apartments to form a 4,378-square-foot condo in South Beach’s posh Continuum that contains a four-bedroom living space and fully equipped recording studio and media room. That property is now on the market for $7.3 million.

Of course, higher-profile celebrities still opt for privacy above all else. Valdes says, “What resonates most is still a sense of privacy and security.” Because Miami has only three totally private communities—Indian Creek, Bal Harbour Island and Bay Point—properties there remain hard to come by and still carry premium price tags, as do communities like Fisher Island that are accessible only via ferry or helicopter.

In Los Angeles, particularly in established neighborhoods like Beverly Hills and the Sunset Strip where entertainment industry types like to hang their hat, the market has been little swayed by the mortgage bust.

“We really don’t find it affecting the big rollers,” says Renee Avedon, a broker at Prudential California Realty. “It’s affecting the people who shouldn’t have been in those markets to begin with.”

What’s different today, even in some of the most coveted areas, is pricing. Whereas up until recently über-inflated prices for prime homes still garnered bidding wars, those situations are fewer and farther between. Avedon notes properties where the sellers are still “getting a little ahead of themselves” are sitting for months and going into escrow, while those priced more “realistically” for today’s market are moving as quickly as they were a year ago.

What does the entertainment crowd seek in an L.A. home? Smart homes that are automated to the hilt, with full-blown media rooms and the latest entertainment systems. “They also like their homes to have exterior glass that can turn smoky on the outside for privacy,” Avedon says. “Security is absolutely key to this client base.”

In Nashville, where sales of $1 million homes have consistently risen during the past three years, realtors expect a banner 2007, according to Richard Courtney, a principal broker at Fidrich & Clark. “We are really having success this year in the upper-end market, and the entertainment business is playing a big part in that,” he says.

High-end clients here are also seeking “smart houses where everything is controlled by a touch pad,” Courtney says. But for Music City, the key technology for entertainers is the ability to record and mix music at home.

“Almost everyone has a recording studio of some sort in their home now,” he says. While Courtney says the advent of systems like Pro Tools has enabled the rise of home studios that require very little space, some players inevitably want a more formal recording atmosphere. Recording artist Big Kenny of Big & Rich just purchased a home and plans to construct a studio on the property. Courtney says the key, he notes, is to check zoning regulations before buying as “some lots here will not allow an outbuilding with plumbing and electrical.”

Those looking for a studio without having to build or renovate are directed to Darkhorse Studios, located in rural Williamson County and available for $4.25 million. The compound offers a truly private getaway complete with spacious grounds and living quarters, and a state-of-the-art recording studio.

Clockwise, from top, Miami nice: four-bedroom apartment with recording studio; Nashville sound: Dark Horse Recording; New York style: One Jackson Square, with 35 loft condominiums.
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**MILEPOSTS**

**COMPILED BY KRISTINA TUNZI**  ktunzi@billboard.com

**Bob Altshuler, 84**

Bob Altshuler, 84, former CBS Records senior VP of corporate publicity, died Sept. 17.

Altshuler began his music career at the age of 16 when he convinced a local radio station in his hometown of Lawrence, Mass., to allow him and his twin brother, Bill, to host a jazz program called “Hot Jazz,” according to information provided by the family for a death notice that ran in the New York Times.

Starting in the mid-’50s he worked for small independent record labels—Prestige, Riverside and Atlantic. In 1965, Altshuler went to work for CBS Records as director of publicity.

IrV Lichtman, who worked at Billboard for more than 20 years and handled the Inside Track column for many of them, said of Altshuler, “He was very knowledgeable, an avid collector and a good PR man. He saw his role as protecting his company, and he did his job well, that’s for sure.”

Altshuler is also fondly recalled for his extremely large record collection, estimated to include 110,000 rare jazz and blues 78s and LPs. That collection became one of the largest private collections to be donated to the Library of Congress, according to the Times.

Altshuler is survived by his wife, Barbara; sons Michael and Jonathan; daughters-in-law Amelia and Carol; and four grandchildren.

**DEATHS**

**Ailin Hely, 80**, grandfather of the Australian music industry, died July 26 from motor neurone disease.

Hely, one-time financial adviser to Rupert Murdoch, managed Festival Records in its heyday between the late 1960s and the 1990s. Festival fostered the success of Olivia Newton-John, the Bee Gees, Split Enz and Paul Kelly, and Hely was the force behind the recording of Paul Allen’s “I Still Call Australia Home.”

“He was a father figure to me and opened up tremendous opportunities for Australian acts,” says Michael Gudinski. Melbourne-based founder of Mushroom Records and now chairman of the Mushroom Group of Cos. “He was an essential part of the growth of this industry.”

Hely propelled Festival into the music industry as one of Australia’s biggest record labels, successfully and aggressively competing with major U.S. record companies. Even nearing his retirement he continued to work with Murdoch’s son, James, when he was appointed Festival’s chairman.

Hely is survived by his wife, Ann.

**Tommy Makem**, 74, Irish folk musician, died Aug. 1 from lung cancer at his home in New Hampshire.

Makem performed with the Clancy Brothers, who were signed to Columbia Records, to sold-out crowds and made TV appearances on such influential programs as “The Ed Sullivan Show” and “The Tonight Show.”

Leaving the group in 1969, Makem embarked on his solo career but reunited with Liam Clancy in 1975, performing as the duo Makem & Clancy. In 1999, he received the World Folk Music Assn.’s Lifetime Achievement Award.

He is survived by his wife, Mary; two daughters; and sons Shane, Conor and Rory.

**Art Davis**, 73, double bassist, psychologist and activist, died July 29 of a heart attack at his home in Long Beach, Calif.

Davis played the piano, tuba and later took up double bass. He played with the Harrisburg Symphony Orchestra at 17, and later studied at the Manhattan and Juilliard Schools of Music and received a doctorate in psychology from New York University. At one point, he filed and lost a lawsuit challenging what he claimed was racial discrimination at the New York Philharmonic, with whom he played classical music.

Davis performed for NBC and CBS orchestras, Broadway shows and alongside John Coltrane and a long list of jazz greats. He also outlined his bass finger technique in the book “The Arthur Davis System for Double Bass.”

Davis is survived by his two sons and his daughter.

**Mike O’Donnell**, 46, GM of the Honda Center in Anaheim, Calif., died Aug. 19 after a three-year battle with cancer at his home in Yorba Linda, Calif.

O’Donnell’s career in public facilities, professional sports and arena management spanned 22 years. He spent the last 15 years at the Honda Center (formerly Arrowhead Pond of Anaheim), where he was hired in 1993 as the point person for the arena’s final construction phases. During his first 10 years at the venue, O’Donnell held such titles as OM, director of operations and assistant GM. In 2003, he was named VPC/OO.

Along with overseeing concerts at the Honda Center, O’Donnell assisted in a number of events at the venue, including multiple NCAA events, the 2003 World Gymnastics Championships, the 2004 U.S. Olympic Team Trials for gymnastics and the 2005 World Badminton Championship.

Prior to joining the Honda Center, O’Donnell worked at Los Angeles’ Forum (then known as the Great Western Forum), which at the time hosted the NBA’s Lakers and the NHL’s Kings.

O’Donnell is survived by his wife, Paige.

**Janis Martin**, 67, rockabilly singer known as the “Female Elvis,” died Sept. 3 from cancer.

At just 13 years old in 1956, Martin released her first record and best-known song, “Will You Willyum,” on RCA Victor, also home to Elvis Presley. Touring with such artists as Johnny Cash and appearing on shows including “The Tonight Show” and “American Bandstand,” Martin became an international rockabilly icon. She soon formed her own group, the Marteens.

After leaving the business after the ’50s, she returned as rockabilly was revived in the ’70s.

Martin is survived by her husband, Bradley Whitt, and sister, Geraldine Connor.

**Wilson Turbinton**, 61, funk/soul keyboardist and singer/songwriter/producer, died Sept. 11 in New Orleans of colon cancer.

Known as “Willie Tee,” Turbinton was born in 1944 in New Orleans. By 1965, he released the R&B hit “Teasin’ You” on Atlantic Records.

As songwriter/arranger of the 1973 debut album by Mardi Gras Indian band the Wild Magnolias, Turbinton was part of a vanguard of New Orleans funk and soul acts whose work has been sampled by numerous hip-hop artists. In addition to his contributions to local clubs, running a studio and producing jingles, Turbinton was a jazz resident at Princeton University.

Turbinton is survived by his wife, Marilyn; sister, Joyce; daughter, Rachel; and two grandchildren.

**Generoso Jimenez**, 90, trombonist, died Sept. 15 in Miami of renal failure.

Jimenez redefined the role of the trombone in Cuban music and Latin jazz, and the prolific and tireless artist worked nearly to the day of his death. He is heard on Gloria Estefan’s newest release, “90 Millas” (Bunbury), on which he is a featured guest.

With his trombone, Jimenez literally lived Cuba’s golden age of music. He was a member of the original lineup of Orquesta Aragón and later joined Chico O’Farrill’s band.

His greatest success came as trombonist for the great singer Benny Moré. Moré reworked the lyrics of his famous song “Qué Bueno Baila Usted” and turned them into “Generoso, qué bueno toca usted” (Generoso, how well you play), effectively immortalizing Jimenez’s name among legions of Cuban music fans.

In 2002, Jimenez released the album “Generoso, Qué Bueno Toca Usted,” which was nominated for a Latin Grammy Award. He left Cuba for Miami in 2001 and remained singularly active. One of his last public appearances was June 23, when he played with Cuban singer Isaac Delgado in Miami. Jimenez is survived by six children. He was buried Sept. 18 in Miami.

**Marcel Marceau**, 84, French mime artist best-known for his character “Bip,” a mime clown with white face paint, striped shirt and flower-bearing tattered hat, died Sept. 22 in Paris.

Born Marcel Mangel, Marceau drew inspiration from such screen legends as Buster Keaton and Charlie Chaplin to revive the art of mime. Marceau performed for nearly 60 years, formed his own mime company in 1948. In 1970, he released an album called “The Best of Marcel Marceau,” featuring 18 minutes of silence that ended in applause. Marceau is survived by two sons and two daughters.
EXECUTIVE TURNTABLE

Send submissions to: exec@billboard.com

RECORD COMPANIES: Razor & Tie Entertainment promotes Aaron Brotherton to VP of creative development, Dean Babin to associate director and Sally Bunnell to associate producer. Brotherton was senior director of project development, Babin was manager of project development and Bunnell was coordinator of project development.

Universal Music Enterprises ups Sujata Murthy to senior VP of public relations. She was VP.

Sony BNG Nashville elevates Caryl Healey to associate director of sales. She was manager.

TOURING: The Viper Room in Los Angeles elevates Melissa Renee Hernandez to co-talent buyer. She was assistant talent buyer.

International Creative Management taps Laurence Leader as an international booking agent for the firm’s concerts department. He previously served as an independent consultant in London.

PUBLISHING: Peermusic promotes Neville Quinan to managing director of its Canadian operations. He was GM at the publisher’s Toronto office.

Universal Music Belgium appoints Patrick Busschots managing director. He was founder/managing director of independent Belgian entertainment company ARS.

EMI Music Publishing Continental Europe names Oliver Schweizer senior VP of legal and business affairs. He was head of legal and business affairs at Arista Mobile/Bertelsmann.

DISTRIBUTION: RED Distribution taps Haley Jones as senior director of artist development and promotion. She was assistant PD/music director at KMIT-FM Seattle.

MEDIA: Music TV network Fuse names Carol Goll senior VP of marketing. She was GM of brand experience marketing at Mercedes-Benz USA.

FOR THE RECORD: In the Sept. 29 Executive Turntable, David Fitzgerald’s recent promotion at Sony BNG Nashville should have been identified as senior director of sales.

ROCKERS CLIMB EVEREST, RAISE FUNDS FOR CANCER CENTERS

On Oct. 13, members of international charity Love Hope Strength Foundation, co-founded by Mike Peters of U.K. band the Alarm, will embark on a 13-day trek up Mount Everest. The climb, dubbed Everest Rocks, will raise funds for cancer centers worldwide; it will culminate in the first concert at Mount Everest Base Camp. To view videos of the trek, download music that will be recorded along the way and read blogs from the climbers, go to lovehopestrength.org.

GOING GREEN WITH MORISSETTE, REEVES

Critically acclaimed environmental film “The Great Warming” is now available as a special-edition National Wildlife Federation DVD. The disc features downloadable documents, an NWF featurette and the original film, narrated by Alanis Morissette and Keanu Reeves, who present climate change as a moral, ethical and spiritual issue. To order online, go to thegreatwarming.com.

GOOD WORKS

INSIDE TRACK

‘X-FACTOR’ STAR LEWIS’ MOMENT ARRIVES AT LAST

All eyes were on Leona Lewis at the long-awaited Sept. 24 launch of the U.K. diva-in-waiting’s second single, “Bleeding Love” (Syco Music). In contrast to the usual reality TV star “career” trajectory, it’s been nine months since she won the third season of ITV’s “The X-Factor” and went straight to the top of the U.K.’s singles chart with her debut release, “A Moment Like This.” But despite the time lag, the hype has actually intensified—with no less than four heavyweight introductions before waiting execs clapped eyes on her.

After Syco managing director Simon Cowell and Lucie Yeomans—editor-in-chief of fashion magazine Harper’s Bazaar, who co-hosted the party at the Mandarin Oriental in Knightsbridge, London—had their say, it was time for Clive Davis and Simon Cowell to share their thoughts on the night. Both sent video messages, with BMG chairman/CEO Davis hailing Lewis as “a true star” and Cowell declaring her “the best competitor we’ve had in any of these competitions.” After all that, it was a wonder Lewis could sing a note. But, in fact, she gave a commanding performance, previewing tracks from her as-yet-un-titled debut album, due Nov. 3 in the United Kingdom and July 2008 in the United States. Whether she did enough to justify the billing as a new Mariah Carey-style superstar remains to be seen.
INSIDE TRACK

WINDY CITY BOWLING
Being in the same town on Sept. 24 gave the Beastie Boys and Mandy Moore a chance to spend some quality time together—at a bowling alley. Moore and her entourage attended the first of two Beastie Boys shows at the Fillmore Detroit; she played the following night at Saint Andrews Hall. After the concert, the Beastie and Moore posed repaired to the nearby Garden Bowl, where they enjoyed a couple of low-key hours of kegling, pizza and genial hanging out. Moore’s tour to support her “Wild Hope” album continues through Oct. 8, while the Beasties just wrapped up their tour for “The Mix-Up” with shows in the Windy City.

ESTELLE, THIEVES STEAL THE NIGHT
Track has been out and about during Advertising Week 2007 in New York (Sept. 24-28), and we’ve been seeing and hearing many things. But two performances stand head and shoulders above all else: U.K. hip-pop sensation Estelle and Chicago rock band Company of Thieves. Both acts—the former signed to HomeSchool/Atlantic, the latter unsigned—were on the Sept. 25 bill of the Yahoo Billboard Live showcase at B.B. King Blues Club & Grill.


Stars of the new Broadway musical production of “Grease” Max Crumm and Laura Oakes sign autographs for Tiger Electronics at the opening party for the Beastie Boys’ show at the Fillmore Detroit.

From left: Billboard group editorial director Tamara Conlin, Red 7 Mylinc president/CEO Kerry Kinnick, Billboard associate art director Carbine Bower and Billboard executive editor B.B. Word. The duo celebrate the 2007 Gold Eddy Award for business-to-business story and the media/entertainment publishing category. Billboard’s editors celebrate the win for ‘07 Gold Eddy Award for art feature design for a feature story on Chris Shanks, Aquila. From left are associate art director Christine Bower creative director, Jose Llano VP of integrated sales/associate publisher Brian Komnick and group editorial director Tamara Conlin.

FOLIO & OMMA AWARDS

Billboard took home both an Eddie and an Ozzie Award for excellence in magazine editorial and design at Folio magazine’s annual Eddie and Ozzie Awards gala, held Sept. 23 at the Marriott Marquis in New York.

1. From left: Billboard group editorial director Tamara Conlin, Red 7 Mylinc president/CEO Kerry Kinnick, Billboard associate art director Carbine Bower and Billboard executive editor B.B. Word. The duo celebrate the 2007 Gold Eddy Award for business-to-business story and the media/entertainment publishing category. Billboard’s editors celebrate the win for ‘07 Gold Eddy Award for art feature design for a feature story on Chris Shanks, Aquila. From left are associate art director Christine Bower creative director, Jose Llano VP of integrated sales/associate publisher Brian Komnick and group editorial director Tamara Conlin.

2. At the On the Media, Marketing & Advertising Awards held Sept. 25 at the Hilton New York, Billboard and LG Electronics shared the award for best use of user-generated content by an advertiser for the Billboard/LG Hubble blog. The OMMA Awards honor those brand marketers, agencies and content providers that demonstrate innovation and creativity in the online arena. From left: Billboard associate director of interactive Gwynne Conniff, Billboard creative director Hillary Evans, LG Electronics senior marketing manager Nissi Alladad, Billboard marketing director Stacey Gross and Billboard digital brand manager Eric Wadner.

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REGISTRATION & EXHIBITS

HOW TO REVIVE THE LATIN TOURING INDUSTRY
MODERATOR:
Abel De Luna, CEO/Chairman, Latin Communications
SPEAKERS:
Henry Cardenas, CEO, Curtis
Ariel Rosas, President, Planet Entertainment/Tall
Emily Simonetti, Vice President, Special Markets, Live Nation
David Yaklevic, President, Various Marketing Group

BDS: YOUR IRREPLACEABLE TOOL
PRESENTED BY
Diego Alegre, Senior Vice President, Nielsen Entertainment Media

GETTING THE MOST OUT OF RETAIL
MODERATOR:
Geoff Mayfield, Executive Director, Senior Analyst, Billboard
SPEAKERS:
Daniel Fernandez Garcia, Director of Retail, Three Sound Records
David Markey, President, Retail Latino
Sandra Ramirez, Latin Product Manager, Hardiman
Jeff Trump, VP Sales, Universal Music Group

LICENSE THE BAND
MODERATOR:
Richard Bull, Executive VP, Regus
SPEAKERS:
Jim Bello, Executive VP, Guitar Entertainment
Walter klein, Sr VP A&R/Mktg Mgr, Universal Music Latino
Eddie Ortega, President, Ortega Entertainment
Jose Luis Terrazas, Artist, Disa Records
Adolfo and Omar Jumazuela, Twins Enterprises

THE NEW GENERATION OF REGIONAL MEXICAN MUSIC
SPONSORED BY mun2
MODERATOR:
Roberto Isaac, Manager of Music Scheduling, mun2
SPEAKERS:
Erik Garza, "La Puertorriqueña" 93.9 FM, La Raza
El Gringo, Artist
Alex Ramos, Musical Artist, Universal Records
Martin Fabian, President/Founder Grupo Nuevos Generaciones
Abel De Luna, EVP, Latina Communications
Manuel Prado, National Promotions Director, Sony BMG
Voces Del Rastreado, Artist, Universal

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 3
8:30AM - 5:30PM
REGISTRATION & EXHIBITS

THE DIGITAL CONNECTION
MODERATOR:
Aydal Ben-Yehuda, Latin Communications, Billboard
SPEAKERS:
Christopher Brunner, VP, Mobile Content & Services, Univision Movil
Jose Cisneros, Marketing Manager, MySpace.com Mexico
Arturo Jimenez, Marketing Manager, MusicLatino Regional Music
Bruno Lopez, VP/GM, Univision.com
Hernando Rodriguez-Espinosa, Latin Music Outreach Consultant, SoundExchange

LUNCH & SHOWCASES
LIVE PERFORMANCES BY:

DJ POWER
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MODERATOR:
Raham Madrigal, Senior Formats Editor, Radio & Records
SPEAKERS:
Jeff David Massry, Daniel Fernandez Garcia, Director of Product Management, Nielsen
Geoff Mayfield, EVP, Various Marketing Group

THE BILLBOARD Q&A
WITH CONJUNTO PRIMAVERA

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PRESENTED BY
Kathy Spanberger, President, Premus Music's Anglo-American Region

THE NEW REGIONAL MEXICAN BUSINESS MODEL
MODERATOR:
Lisa Colbo, Executive Director, Content & Programming, Latin Music and Entertainment, Billboard
SPEAKERS:
John Beeler, VP, President, Universal Music Latino
Cecilia Lopez, President, Music & Marketing
Jorge Diaz, VP, Universal Music International
Carlos Ruiz Diaz, WPPC, Disc Records
Adriana Risk, SVP, Latinas Records

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THE CRITICS ARE RAVING!

"HAVING PRODUCED AMY WINEHOUSE AND LILY ALLEN, MARK RONSON IS ON A REAL ROLL IN 2007. FEATURING GUEST VOCALISTS LIKE ALLEN, WINEHOUSE AND ROBBIE WILLIAMS, THE WHOLE THING PLAYS LIKE THE ULTIMATE HIPSTER PARTY MIXTAPE. BEST OF ALL? 'STOP ME,' THE MOST SOULFUL RAVE SINCE GNARLS BARKLEY'S 'CRAZY.'" PEOPLE MAGAZINE

"RONSON JOYOUSLY TWISTS POPULAR TUNES BY EVERYONE FROM RADIOHEAD TO COLDPLAY TO BRITNEY SPEARS, AND — WHAT DO YOU KNOW! — IT TURNS OUT TO BE THE MONSTER JAM OF THE SEASON! REGARDLESS OF WHO'S ON THE MIC, VERSION SUCCEEDS. GRADE A" ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

"THE EMERGING RONSON SOUND IS MOTOWN MEETS HIP-HOP MEETS RETRO BRIT-Pop. IN BRITAIN, 'STOP ME,' THE COVER OF THE SMITHS' 'STOP ME IF YOU THINK YOU'VE HEARD THIS ONE BEFORE,' IS #1 AND THE ALBUM SOARED TO #2! COULD THIS ROCK STAR DJ ACTUALLY BECOME A ROCK STAR?" NEW YORK TIMES

"RONSON UNITES TWO ANTITHETICAL WORLDS — RECENT AND CLASSIC BRITPOP WITH VINTAGE AMERICAN R&B. LILY ALLEN, AMY WINEHOUSE, ROBBIE WILLIAMS COVER KAISER CHIEFS, COLDPLAY, AND THE SMITHS OVER BLARING HORNS, AND ORGANIC BEATS. SHARP ARRANGING SKILLS AND SUITABLY ANGULAR PERFORMANCES! ★★★★★" SPIN

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by Nabil Elderkin.

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Winner’s Circle
In A Challenging Time, Successes And Solutions Still Make For Good Stories

One bit of feedback I suspect most journalists cringe to hear is probably one we hear often: “All you guys print is bad news.”

I laugh sometimes when I hear this, imagining the dialogue in our weekly editing meetings was this mandate real.

“Warner Music Group’s market share is up.”

“Too cheap. What else you got?”

“A trend story on new revenue models for artists and labels?”

“C’mon, we all know everything is doomed to failure.”

And finally, a pitch: in a small voice, from the back of the room, "Billy Ray Cyrus is back up to the top 20 for the first time in years—and he’s re-emerged because of his daughter’s cute TV show.”

“You’re fired. Let’s plan an all-out issue.”

In reality, our Tuesday meetings are far less contentious. The challenges of today’s music business provide as much change to capture opportunity as it does to report setbacks. While this week’s issue is set against a bottom-line back-drop of album sales that are still hovering around a 15% decline from last year, there’s plenty of evidence that folks from every part of the business are working to solve challenges.

Want good news? Make some.

Kanye West continues to succeed, and our cover story (page 22) makes the point that it may just be because he refuses to do what’s expected. The Doo Doo Chicks hurt their own bottom line criticizing George Bush, but West made himself a folk hero, cementing his reputation as hip-hop’s true rock star.

Elsewhere, Paradigm (page 25) vaulted into major music agency status with the acquisition of boutiques Little Big Man and Monterey Paradigm Artists; this more means opportunity for acquisitors looking to extend their brand into other media platforms. Verizon even dragged AC/DC into the digital age (page 8) as both Verizon and AT&T further committed to music.

My favorite story of the week, though, broke on our business news site, billboard.biz. Our longtime touring expert Ray Waddell started out breaking one story—that e-rock music was ramping up its direct-to-fan online artist initiatives—and ended up breaking an even bigger one: that Dolly Parton was going to get her first Web site, around the time she releases her first mainstream country album in nearly 20 years.

The report became the little story that could. Other media outlets include USA Today can with it, and Waddell and Dolly’s manager, Danny Nossell, started getting calls from a major festival wanting to book her, from a major label wanting to distribute her upcoming album next year.

My point here isn’t to crow about our 24/7 news operation billboard biz, which breaks important stories almost daily. Rather, I mean to address those who say Billboard is focused on the negative. And to you I say, “Create some good news.”

Well be all over it. It’s our way to make a living.

Feedback

IT TAKES TWO TO TANGO
This past week, members of the Latin Recording Academy were mailed voting instructions for the 2007 Latin Grammy Awards.

In the tango category, voters will take the pick from a list of 19 releases. Unfortunately, the list does not include my most recent recording, “Buenos Aires Tangos Standards” (Zoho Music). This CD, a collection of traditional tangos performed by a group of Argentine musicians, was denied outside the category by the Latin Recording Academy.

According to an e-mail from the academy: “During the screening meeting, the Pablo Añan recording was carefully screened by experts in both Jazz and Tango. The committee listened to the recording did not have enough Tango elements to remain in the Tango category and therefore it remained in the Jazz category.”

Furthermore: “Our rule is: Genre-specific albums must consist of 75% or more playing time of the specific genre.”

I am left wondering about this committee of experts in tango and jazz, who carefully tallied up the percentage of tango in my CD and decided I came up short. In “Buenos Aires Tangos Standards,” I assembled a group of Argentine musicians who are equally versed and experienced in tango and jazz. For the repertoire, I chose from among the most traditional instrumental tangos written by Ardaus, Bu ñi, Lucero, Maffia and Salgan. The rhythm that we play are all traditional maracas, snip-cpas and milongas—the essence of tango.

Who are these experts who passed judgment on my brand of tango and consid- ered it not “tango” enough? What else do they consider not “tango”? Recent Latin Grammy nominations of recordings by Pablo Ziegler and Adrián Iaías, artists whom I consider to be very close to my aesthetic and clearly not tango traditional, make it even more confusing to understand where they draw the line.

Pablo Añan
Brooklyn, N.Y.

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Frankly Speaking
An Amy Winehouse Album Reignites An Old Debate Over Imports

In the mid-1980s through the mid-1990s, major labels cracked down on retailers carrying import albums as a matter of course—at one point, CBS Records even sued Tower Records over the practice.

For the most part, such import battles have since receded into the background. But a controversy over an Amy Winehouse album is, at least temporarily, here in the U.S., says Eric Levin.

Most merchants Billboard surveyed are saying they’ll comply with a letter from Universal Republic that threatens to sue retailers and merchandisers that continue importing and selling import copies of Winehouse’s 2003 debut album, “Frank.”

But other retailers are arguing that, in the age of downloading, it’s absurd for a record label to take Universal’s approach.

“We are selling physical product that the customers want, and they are trying to stop us,” one merchant says. “In the meantime, it is flowing freely throughout the world over the Internet through the peer-to-peer sites.”

Universal Republic, which has enjoyed great success in the United States with Winehouse’s “Back to Black” album, plans to issue her earlier album “Frank” Nov. 7 statewide and wants to prevent imports from cannibalizing potential sales.

“Frank,” which came out in Europe on Island, has scanned some 18,000 copies in the United States as an import, according to Nielsen SoundScan; meanwhile, since its Dec. 19, 2006, release. “Back to Black” has sold 950,000. Universal insiders say that since the label’s goal for the latter is 1.5 million-2 million copies, Universal is holding up the release of “Frank” to get the most mileage out of “Back to Black.”

“We have been selling ‘Frank’ long before [Winehouse] became hot here,” says Jeremiah S. Laird, owner of Criminal Records in Atlanta and the head of the Alliance for Independent Media Stores. “We can certainly wait as we have been asked to do.”

“Universal is just trying to protect their business,” says Michael Kurtz, who heads indie coalition Monitor Store Network. “We get the message, we won’t carry it anymore.”

In general, merchants—who foresee being confronted with weightier vendor issues with the major down the line—are saying the stakes of the “Frank” album are not high enough to justify taking a stand or risk getting sued.

Still, some merchants and wholesalers say, the tone of Universal’s letter left a lot to be desired. “There didn’t seem to be a lot of thought behind it besides bullying and greed,” one music merchandiser says.

In one passage, the July 24 letter says, “Republic hereby demands that you cease and desist with any and all distribution and/or exploitation of the album in the U.S., because it constitutes an infringement of Republic’s exclusive right to exploit and distribute the artist’s recordings.”

The letter, signed by Universal Republic director of business and legal affairs Jeffrey Koenig, furthermore asks that all accounts respond within two days of receiving the letter with a written acknowledgement that they have ceased selling the import version of the album.

Though such lengthy letters were a hot topic around the turn of the century, the import issue receded as the U.S. dollar’s decline against most other major currencies made imports from most foreign markets unfeasible.

Until recently, European counterparts of U.S. major labels often used import wholesalers for U.S. distribution, after their own sister labels passed on signing their artists. In addition to incremental sales, they used the tactic to build a story so U.S. affiliates would sign those albums for domestic release.

At one point, importation of records from abroad became so formalized that U.S. importers used to confer with the international arms of major labels to single out European product ripe for U.S. exploitation.

“That’s what indie retailers and wholesalers do,” one indie store owner says. “By carrying import versions of albums that labels have passed on, we are serving as A&R for the major labels here.”

In fact, one wholesaler claims the primary reason Universal Republic is now issuing Winehouse’s “Frank” is because importers first proved the album commercially viable in the United States.

On the contrary, a source at Universal Republic says, “The only reason the import album has scanned 18,000 units is because of all the press, effort and money that we put into ‘Back to Black.’

One wholesaler puts yet another spin on the Universal letter. “What’s happening is the whole music industry is suffering,” that executive says. “Everyone is looking for sales, no matter how small, wherever they can.”

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Will Radio Pay Artists And Labels?

Artist Groups, Radio Broadcasters Take Performance Right To Congress

Folk singer Judy Collins sat before a dozen members of Congress, at times breaking into song as she testified. Performers should be paid for their recordings that radio stations broadcast over the air, she said—just as songwriters and publishers are paid for their songs. A few seats away, African-American radio executive Charles Lewis,settled that matter for the small, local broadcasters that would be forced out of business if they had to pay a new performance “tax” to artists and record companies. What’s at stake is a fraction of the estimated $30 billion radio earned in ad revenue last year. And the selection of these particular witnesses, along with R&B legendarian Sam Moore, illustrates how artist, label and broadcaster groups are tugging on the heart strings of legislators and the public in a copyright fight expected to reach every corner of the country during the next couple of years.

The move to change U.S. copyright law had its official kickoff July 31, when the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Courts, Internet and Intellectual Property held the first hearing on Capitol Hill to explore whether terrestrial radio should remain exempt from paying royalties to broadcast sound recordings. In every other developed country worldwide, copyright law grant performers (artists, musicians and vocalists) and producers (copyright owners such as record companies) as well as songwriters and publishers the right to receive royalties for the public performance of their recordings and compositions. And in most countries, those that broadcast sound recordings via digital and analog transmissions are required to license and pay to play that music. But in the United States, only digital broadcasters have that requirement.

Now, the MusicFIRST coalition has been formed by more than 150 recording artists and nearly a dozen groups (including the American Assn. of Independent Music, unions AFM and AFTRA, the Recording Artists’ Coalition, the Recording Academy. Music Managers’ Forum and SoundExchange) in an attempt to convince Congress to eliminate the exemption for terrestrial radio broadcasters. Meanwhile, the National Assn. of Broadcasters (representing about 7,000 U.S. radio stations and five broadcast networks) is vigorously opposing any change. The lobbying power of broadcasters, U.S. Copyright Office chief Marybeth Peters testified during the hearing, is the main reason that U.S. law does not fall in line with the rest of the world.

Comments offered during the hearing by the subcommittee chairman, Rep. Howard Berman, D-Calif., and other members suggest that most of them agree performers and labels should be compensated as long as the change in law doesn’t harm songwriters and publishers. But when Rep. Ric Keller, R-Fla., returned to the hearing after a brief recess and announced that he had just called his local broadcaster, who talked about record companies’ persistence in pursuing radio airplay for its promotional value, he demonstrated how constituents in radio can influence elected officials.

The next congressional action has yet to be scheduled. But as the groups begin their campaigns in earnest, the primary issues in the performance-right debate are breaking down as follows:

**COMPENSATION VS. PROMOTION**

Performers: Since recordings bring songs to life, songwriters and publishers should not be the only copyright holders paid for the broadcasts.

Broadcasters: For nearly 80 years, artists and the record industry have acknowledged how essential radio airplay is to sell records, concert tickets and merchandise. Songwriters and publishers receive royalties; artists and labels benefit from promotion.

**FUTURE LIVELIHOODS**

Performers: Performers who do not write songs but help make them hits should not have to tour into old age to support their families while radio is still playing their music. Many such performers and their heirs may not live long enough.

Broadcasters: Imposing a “tax” to pay to performers and labels would force many small, local broadcasters that provide essential community services out of business. (The Copyright Office says that there could be certain exemptions or scaled-down royalties for small broadcasters written into legislation.)

**AD REVENUE**

Performers: Broadcasters select music that will sell ads, not music that will promote artists. U.S. advertising revenue was estimated at $20 billion for 2006. Broadcasters: Since 2001, ad revenue is flat, no longer growing. Meanwhile, the continued promotional value of airplay is clear when one considers how far record companies go to get records played on radio.

**LEVEL PLAYING FIELD WITH DIGITAL**

Performers: Now that digital services provide exposure to a wider variety of artists, terrestrial radio’s promotional power is diminished. Digital broadcasters pay royalties to play recordings, so it’s only fair that terrestrial radio also pays. Broadcasters: Only terrestrial broadcasters are licensed by the FCC, which means they are required to provide a certain amount of local programming like weather, news, public service announcements and emergency information for free.

**BALANCE WITH REST OF THE WORLD**

Performers: Performers lose earning when their music is played overseas because most foreign licensing groups that collect performance royalties will not pay American performers, since foreign performers do not have reciprocal rights in the United States. Broadcasters: Since the U.S. music market is much larger than the overseas markets, domestic and foreign performers benefit from the greater promotional value and related sales.
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- Madison 2.0: New Strategies To Drive Marketing And Increase ROI
- Brand Case Study: Introducing The Axe "Gamekillers"
- Using Research To Help Guide Multimedia Marketing Strategies
- Bright Ideas Panel: Featuring Arnold Worldwide, BBDO, Ogilvy and Publicis New York

FEATURED SPEAKERS:
Dan Courtemanche, SVP, Marketing & Communications, Major League Soccer & Soccer United Marketing
Rob Feakins, President, Chief Creative Officer, Publicis New York
Peter Geary, EVP/Senior Account Director, BBDO New York
Irene Gustafits, VP Television Research, Nielsen Entertainment
Peter Leimbach, VP Multimedia Ad Sales Research, ESPN
Chris Lighty, CEO, Brand Asset Group and Violator Management
Mike Mohamad, SVP New Business Development & Partnerships, A&E Television Networks
Peter O'Reilly, Director of Marketing and Fan Development, National Football League
David Rubin, Axe - Director of Brand Development, Unilever
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TWO MOBILE MODELS

AT&T’s And Verizon’s Latest Music Initiatives Exemplify Contrasting Strategies

The newest deals out by wireless operators AT&T and Verizon don’t merely up the ante in the ongoing mobile music wars—they also illustrate just how different the companies’ music strategies are.

AT&T’s decision to use a mobile version of eMusic as its first over-the-air, full-songdownload offering—rather than building its own store like rivals Sprint and Verizon—illustrates the company’s plan to work with digital music services as partners. Verizon’s exclusive licensing deal for the entire AC/DC catalog, meanwhile, takes a more competitive approach.

While AT&T’s eMusic deal is the first to support over-the-air music downloads, it’s only the latest example of the company’s partnership philosophy. The news closely follows the much-hyped launch of the iPhone—a device that, while it does not provide wireless access to the iTunes music store, does allow users to transfer iTunes files, a capability other phones lack. And last fall, AT&T introduced phones compatible with portable music subscription plans from services such as Napster and Yahoo.

“We want to wirelessly enable existing consumer relationships,” AT&T VP of consumer data Mark Collins says. “Are we good at building music stores? No. Are we good at selling wireless devices that provide access to content and information? Yes.”

For services like eMusic, struggling to compete in a market dominated by iTunes, AT&T offers an unprecedented exposure to a massive customer base. eMusic CEO David Pakman says that while he expects a number of his existing customers will pay extra for the mobile version of the service, the partnership with AT&T was designed to attract newcomers. “We only have 300,000 subscribers,” he says. “AT&T has more than 63 million.”

Verizon meanwhile built and manages the VCast Music store—with WiderThan providing the back-end technology. The company wants to drive more traffic to the PC version of the service to compete with the likes of iTunes. That goal is at the heart of the AC/DC licensing deal. Partly because AC/DC insists on selling only full-album downloads, not individual tracks, the band’s music has remained notably missing from digital music services to date.

Verizon scored a major coup by securing the content, but it can’t sell albums on the mobile version of its music service because the files are too large. So the only place to buy the AC/DC fare is a via a computer.

It’s easy to forget that the VCast Music store is accessible on computers as well. To date, 5% of VCast Music sales originate on a PC. The rest take place exclusively on the company’s phones. Verizon would like to see that change.

“One of the things that our customers haven’t begun to utilize is our PC environment, which is where we can push the albums,” says Ed Ruth, associate director of music, programming and sponsorships at Verizon. “We want to show off the value of our online store.”

Both strategies have their pros and cons. By controlling the music service, Verizon can take a greater cut of each sale after paying off record labels than AT&T, which must pay a cut to eMusic as well.

However, Gartner analyst Michael McGuire estimates those costs even out, as Verizon incurs more expenses in managing the service while AT&T simply leaves it to eMusic to handle.

On the other hand, Verizon’s offering is simple: Customers looking for digital music on their phone have one easy-to-find option. AT&T, in contrast, plans to add wireless versions of Napster, Yahoo and other services in addition to the eMusic service, which may prove confusing for customers unfamiliar with the options.

At least early on, however, the smart money appears to be on AT&T’s partnership approach. In Verizon’s case, McGuire says, “The notion that merely having a relationship with a consumer for their mobile phone contract means you can then create a walled garden music service is a stretch. You’re not competing with just other mobile phone service providers,” he says. “You’re fighting the entire Web.”

EMI declined to comment, but changes could clearly be in store in three key sectors of the company’s business.

RECORDED MUSIC

In May, EMI’s recorded-music arm reported a 15% decline in full-year revenue. The division—home to the Beatles, Robbie Williams and Kylie Minogue—requires serious investment, something the deep pockets of Terra Firma could provide. Terra Firma has previously pledged to “build on EMI’s current position as one of the world’s leading music companies.”

“They need to beef up their artist roster, invest in A&R and take on better-selling artists from other labels, which means paying advances,” Bridgewell Securities analyst Patrick Yue says.

Although perennial suitor Warner Music Group dropped out of the EMI race, many believe long-term plans still involve the U.S. music giant. “Terra Firma’s view is to flip off the recorded-music side to Warner anyway,” says another analyst with close links to EMI, who asked not to be identified. “It would be very much against their plan if in three years’ time they were still holding the recorded-music business.”

PUBLISHING

For the year ending March 31, EMI Music Publishing generated profit of $105.6 million ($214 million), up 4.3%. The division runs with an operating margin of 26.3% and is likely to be retained by Terra Firma.

“At [finance group] Nomura, Hands was Mr. Securitization,” says Yau, a former colleague of Hands. “Securitization of music publishing will probably be forefront in his mind. The cash being thrown at that business will prove irresistible to him.”

MANAGEMENT

Terra Firma’s next goal is to purchase the remaining shares, before paying out EMI’s shareholders at the start of September.

Then EMI Group CEO Eric Nicoli—who assumed total control in January when he ousted EMI Music CEO Alain Levy and vice chairman David Munns—and his board members will learn their fate.

“Nicoli is exposed because he’s sacked all the people who know something about music, and his track record outside music hasn’t been particularly good,” Yau says. “Terra Firma might look to parachute an alternative in.”

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GLOBAL BY LARS BRANDLE

What Next For EMI?

After The Buyout, Terra Firma Focuses In

LONDON—Having beaten the clock on its audacious £2.4 billion ($4.89 billion) buyout of EMI Group, venture capitalist firm Terra Firma plans to waste little time in getting the business back on track.

“We will probably take the keys to EMI by the start of September,” Terra Firma spokesman says. “We will be doing evaluations, get our feet under the table and talk to the key people.”

With the long-running saga of EMI’s sale finally concluded when Terra Firma, led by CEO Guy Hands, passed the required 90% shareholder acceptance level less than an hour before the final deadline (billboard.biz, Aug. 1), attention now turns to what it will do with the business.
What A Way To Make A Living

Parton Web Site Leads Star-Studded List Of New Echomusic Deals

In the 18 weeks since Ticketmaster acquired a majority stake in echomusic, the direct-to-fan Web platform has made a number of significant moves—not the least of which is bringing country legend Dolly Parton into the digital world with her first official Web site.

In addition to Parton, Billboard has learned, echomusic has also signed new deals with Kanye West, Korn, Faith Hill, Brooks & Dunn and the Jonas Brothers—joining a list of 300 clients that includes such acts as Rascal Flatts, Keith Urban, Dierks Bentley and Kelly Clarkson and such brands as General Motors and Best Buy. The company has expanded as well, building staff and forging partnerships with other crucial Internet concerns.

"We've been busy," echomusic CEO Mark Montgomery says. "We've been hiring a little bit and improving our platform, rolling out our Facebook applications and working with I LIKE. Dollypartonmusic.net, for its part, will launch Sept. 25, powered by echomusic and heralding a new Parton album and world tour (Billboard.biz, Aug. 1)." I was looking for a company that had Internet marketing capabilities," Parton manager Danny Nozell says, "because I knew Dolly had no Web presence, and right now the industry is all going to digital."

After "months of research," Nozell's assistant found echomusic via its representation of such artists as Clarkson and Urban.

The deal with Parton finally gives one of country music's most popular performers worldwide an online presence. "We're looking to help her expand her business opportunities [and] sponsorship relationships, and create a multifaceted marketing campaign," Montgomery says. "We're running a street team for her, managing her digital assets, working with her on ticketing."

Research is a big component, according to Nozell. "Echomusic is like the CIA," he says. "Everything that comes in, they track."

Much of the company's flurry of activity can be attributed to the new alliance with Ticketmaster (Billboard, March 31), which has helped echomusic "get a lot done in a short period of time," Montgomery says. "Both organizations are really focused on. 'How do we make this work better for the clients?'" He adds that echomusic has hired some 20 staffers since the Ticketmaster deal was closed. The new employees work in technology, user-interface, marketing and client support.

"Primarily right now what [integrating with Ticketmaster] is about is planning our next five moves in terms of scale," Montgomery says. "Since this whole thing took place we've actually rolled out two versions of our platform—the first in eight weeks, the second in six. As the technology improves, he explains, the pace quickens.

"Most of that is happening in-house, so [Ticketmaster] isn't having a lot of impact on that," Montgomery says. "But what they are having an impact on is our ability to scale and handle the levels of traffic we're going to be seeing as these things start to get legs."

The relationship between echomusic and I LIKE, the music-driven social networking site in which Ticketmaster acquired a 25% stake last year, has been "very interesting," Montgomery says. Ticketmaster "made that strategic investment a while back, and now I LIKE is on fire," he says. "It's a music discovery platform, very much a social network, with lots of functionality around bands on tour."

The book on what a direct-to-fan site like echomusic can provide fans and artists is still being written, much of it driven by a ticketing business undergoing a revolution. "Every time you turn around the model changes," Montgomery says. "It's exciting, and I'm sure it is frightening for lots of people. My hope is we're going to help define what the business looks like."

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Latin pop format Super Estrella's new bilingual mix may be the most ambitious test to date of whether young radio listeners want to hear music in English and Spanish without turning the dial.

Following flagship KSSE Los Angeles' lead, Envision Radio's Spanish-language CHR network adjusted its music mix in July to 70% Spanish/30% English across 11 other Western U.S. markets, including Phoenix, Las Vegas and Denver. The sprinkling of mainstream top 40 songs became a regular helping of Maroon 5, Justin Timberlake and Rihanna in addition to Latin pop hits.

Envision programming VP Nestor Rocha, whose KSSE made the switch July 13, says his station is targeting an untapped niche of bilingual and Spanish-dominant Hispanic women ages 18-34, who have been increasingly tuning in to mainstream LA stations — and who responded strongly to top 40 hits in audience research.

"We felt, why not just eliminate the pop that's not that strong from Spanish, keep the ones that are strong, and also put more of the English pop into the mix?" Rocha says, adding that reggaetón's decline presented an opportunity to re-capture listeners. "We know that we need to start focusing and growing with our own community, knowing that they love English music."

Prior to its programming change, in the industry standard 12-plus demo, KSSE had a ratings share of 1.3 in Arbitron's spring 2007 survey — down from 1.8 in winter 2007. (Its competitors had mixed results in the demo in the same time period: Pop KLVE dropped from 4.4 to 4.1, while bilingual urban KXOL increased its audience share from 2.6 to 3.2.)

More specifically, KSSE's ratings in the 18-34 L.A. demo dwindled dropped, with a 2.4 share in spring 2007 compared with a 3.4 share in winter 2007, according to Arbitron. (Pop competitor KLVE stayed essentially flat at 5.2 for spring 2007, from 5.1 in winter 2007; and bilingual urban KXOL climbed to 6.5 for spring 2007, up from 4.9 in winter 2007.) And now another Envision-owned Latin station, KXNO McAllen, Texas, has tipped its English content to 70% as it tinker with its language mix.

"It's probably true that some of the songs they're playing in English are liked by their core audience," radio consultant Bill Tanner says. "The big question is whether or not they want to hear them on the same station.

"Experience suggests they might not: In 2004 and 2005, Clear Channel converted Latin stations in Houston, Denver, Miami and Albuquerque, N.M., to a 20%-25% English mix, with the remainder mostly reggaetón. Two of the stations have since gone back to all-English, and the other two have gone back to almost completely Spanish pop.

"We were going after that younger Latino, the bicultural, bilingual Latino," says Alfredo Alonso, senior VP of Hispanic radio for Clear Channel. "We did a good job in pulling that audience in, but it tended to be younger than the advertisers were interested in."

Sony BMG VP of marketing/ A&R Nir Seroussi wonders how Super Estrella's adding top 40 acts will affect sales for the Latin artists it champions on-air and brands itself with at shows.

"As Latin labels, we're losing a third of the space to [mainstream] top 40," Seroussi says. "On the flip side, if we're able to double his numbers with his demo by changing the playlist, at the end of the day, the artists who are still there ... [are] going to get twice the exposure."

Executives at several Latin labels say the shrinking Spanish playlist will make it even more crucial for their artists to have a proven hit in Mexico first.

"We are going to have a problem with newcomers ... from the Puerto Rico side or Miami or maybe from South America," EMi Televisa VP of marketing/promotions Pietro Carlos says.

"But I still believe that if you have a hit track, if you have the right artist, there's always going to be a chance to get airplay."

English hits on Latin radio go back to at least Celine Dion's "My Heart Will Go On," and some Latin stations, particularly in Puerto Rico, regularly play English music. (Some pop stations in Mexico do as well.)

With Latin rhythm radio's thirst for English content in mind, U.S. urban Latin label Machete Music is releasing Chino XL, a Puerto Rican rapper who performs in English.

"Today we are targeting a much bigger audience, if we don't pigeonhole our artists into just Spanish," Machete president Gustavo Lopez says. Clear Channel's Alonso says he's now addressing the young Latin demo by emphasizing text messaging, online presentation and announcers speaking English and Spanish, as well as a more uptempo Latin sound.

"If you deliver a product that the younger Latino feels represents their lifestyle, you don't have to rely on English music to execute that."...
SCENES FROM THE MOBILE BEAT CONCERT BLOG

In late June, Billboard teamed with cell phone company LG for our Mobile Beat blog (billboard.com/mobilebeat), turning two dozen music-fan bloggers loose on venues across the country to document the concert season live via mobile phone. Far from the dark, grainy images usually associated with camera phones, the bloggers have captured close, clear front-row and candid photos of a wide spectrum of acts that includes Incubus, Dave Matthews Band, the Decemberists, T.I., Willie Nelson, 311, Linkin Park and Mavis Staples. The accompanying reviews have been entertaining as well. Dave Chung has been particularly adept at spiking his posts with chuckle-worthy bits (summing up traffic to a show: “Mapquest, you lying wretch”), while Frances Landaverde managed to interview five American Idols. Every coup counts, too. At summer’s end, the blogger whose posts have proved the most popular will win passes to a Billboard awards show and a next-generation LG phone.

NEW CANADIAN CORRESPONDENT

Billboard has appointed a new Canadian correspondent, Robert Thompson, who replaced Larry LeBlanc effective Aug. 1.

An award-winning business writer and best-selling author, Thompson has been writing about music and the evolution of the industry since 1990.

As a staff reporter at Canadian national newspaper the National Post, from 2000 to 2006, Thompson covered technology and the business of entertainment and sports.

During his time at the Post, where he remains a sports columnist, Thompson broke key music industry stories relating to legal action against downloaders, as well as copyright issues that remain unresolved in Canada. He wrote extensively about the emergence of new music technologies and followed trends that have resulted in the changing business landscape for music in Canada today.

He has also interviewed many key musicians in the Canadian industry, including the Barenaked Ladies, Blue Rodeo and Sloan, and considers an interview he conducted with Joe Strummer, only a few months prior to the Clash singer/guitarist’s untimely death, to be one of the key features he’s written. He has also interviewed some of the world’s most successful entrepreneurs, including Bill Gates, Michael Dell and Carly Fiorina. He has contributed to Billboard magazine since 2006.


A self-confessed “failed musician,” Thompson now plays guitar for his own enjoyment. He lives in Toronto with his wife and daughter.

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**On The Road**

Ray Wadell rwadell@billboard.com

Firebrand Fred Rosen Returns With A New Vision

He's baaback.

Fred Rosen, the maestro who built up Ticketmaster in the 1980s to become by far the largest ticketing company in the world, has stepped into a new man of Audience View, a 4-year-old upstart Toronto-based ticketing company that has now officially separated itself from the pack.

In the mid-'80s, Rosen, armed with a better mousetrap, a savvy business model and a great white shark demeanor, turned ticketing from a cost center for venues, teams and promoters to a revenue producer by instituting service charges. He aggressively acquired other ticketing companies and soon amplified the resident ticketing king, Ticketron, which he bought in 1991 for all practical purposes, gone. Along the way, the firebrand Rosen shrugged off the Justice Department, Pearl Jam and other competitors and detractors: by the mid-'90s, he'd become the most dominant figure in the concert industry. Rosen stepped down as CEO in 1997 after Barry Diller, now chairman of IAC, purchased the company, and bided his time by easily consolidating the carnival business.

But now Rosen has rechristened with an equity stake in Audience View, partnering with founder/CEO Kevin Kimsa. Rosen was ubiquitous on the trade show floor at the recent annual convention of the International Assn. of Assembly Managers in Salt Lake City. He was actually happy, clearly enjoying a return to the realm where he made his legend. Hell, at some points he even looked like he was ready to break into a song and dance routine. But though Rosen is still cracks wise and will never be accused of lacking self-confidence, the 2007 model indeed seems a kinder, gentler version. And my keyboard didn't go up in flames as I typed that.

As was typical in his Ticketmaster days, Rosen has plenty of opinions but zero to say for publication. Still, based on conversations with longtime Rosen associates Ann Mooney and Charlotte Allison — executive VP and senior VP, respectively, for Audience View — a picture of the AV vision begins to emerge. Rosen's view for Audience View is that all ticketing is local, and the venue Web site should be the Internet box-office window for all ticket sales.

Also, and most important, in the Audience View/Rosen model, the building has complete control of service charges, secondary market sales. VIP sales, presales, on-sales, etc. And the Audience View brain trust believes that consumers will adjust to buying tickets somewhere other than another ticketing company Web site.

"The truth of the matter is when people want to go to an event they'll only make a mistake once," Mooney says. "If they go to one site and can't find a show, they will go to Google or Yahoo and find the event there. Once you know every event is at the peacockcenter.com, for example, they'll go there forward."

In short, the Audience View model has the ticketing company provide the software and hardware, there's a revenue sharing arrangement between the building and the ticketing company, and the building is empowered.

"Fred sees that there's a paradigm shift for the buildings and the economic model. Buildings want to be empowered." —Charlotte Allison, Audience View

Fred sees that there's a paradigm shift for the buildings and the economic model," Allison says. "Buildings want to be empowered. They want to set their own service charges. They want to control their own data. They want to go on sale when they want. They don't want to answer to their own parties. We have the application to provide the technology to do that and because of Fred we have the expertise and knowledge of the industry."

Audience View ticket sales will come primarily over the Internet, with some phone centers. How aggressive will Rosen be this time around? That's a tough one to figure. He's clearly less confrontational these days, and he seems to be having more fun. But he's still Fred Rosen.

Whether Rosen can turn the live entertainment industry upside down again, or if he even wants to, is a matter of debate. But this much is true: The ticketing business is in the midst of a revolution, and one should not underestimate Fred Rosen.
Merching Orders

RED Distribution Expands Its Business

At a time when record labels, distributors and other music-related companies are looking for additional income sources, it’s no surprise that RED Distribution is getting into the merch business.

And RED isn’t alone, either. Universal Music Group’s attempt to acquire Sanctuary—the publicly traded company’s stockholders had ownership of the merch company as part of the deal to acquire UMG’s manufacturing and distribution facilities.

In this latest go-around, in addition to traditional music industry companies, sources suggest that mega-concert promoters like LiveNation and AEG Live are also interested in merch companies. So it will be interesting to see how this new round of merch infatuation plays out.

RED, for its part, has already lined up 50 T-shirts from the labels and bands it distributes. Band T-shirts include one by Bad Brains, Coheed and Cambria, Gomez, Primus, Cartel, Chiodos, Insane Clown Posse and Dave Matthews Band. Label shirts include Ferret Music, Komado, Rawkus and Oh Ke. This basic T-shirt line, referred internally by the company as the Redline, is wholesale-priced at about $8.50-$10. Also, RED says it will soon offer classic-album T-shirts.

In addition, RED is offering its bands and labels a custom premium shirt, dubbed Red 79, that will feature a designer look and feel and a higher price. And RED will make both lines available in high-quality organic shirts, also at a higher price.

Some bands already have merch deals for concert halls and the Web, and maybe even certain accounts like Hot Topic, but RED will concentrate on the traditional music retail account base, RED executive VP/GM Lynn Hazan-DeVaul says. “In some cases, we have even got the merchandising companies themselves to give us the right to make and sell T-shirts of their artists,” she says.

Hazan-DeVaul says the company also is planning on selling T-shirts with digital premiums, including ringtones, ringbacks and even digital tracks. And while Red is starting out with T-shirts, it will eventually get into hoodies and other merchandise, but the company doesn’t want to go too fast until it gets it right.

So RED is starting out small with one dedicated staffer, Liz Snair, who will spearhead the initiative and look to bring in licensing properties. But since it’s a pet project of RED senior management, RED merch is a priority for the company.

Most existing merchandising companies also sell to music retail. And while their sales staff may not be as big as RED’s 40-person sales staff, they typically use an extensive network of independent reps who represent multiple lines. The biggest merch companies might have as many as 100 sales reps hawking their goods.

RED wants its line to set itself apart from the pack, though. “This is not schlock stuff that didn’t sell on the road,” Hazan-DeVaul says. “It’s very much to do with marketing and branding our artists, which enhances the artist-development process.”

---

LYNN HAZAN-DEVUIL in a premium Red 79 T-shirt. Inset: Band shirts include ones by Gomez and Dave Matthews Band.

Until Aug. 2 to tender their shares—as inspired in part by its ownership of the Bravado merchandising company. As one UMG insider puts it, “Bravado is one of the most attractive aspects of Sanctuary.”

As for RED, the independent distribution company owned by Sony BMG Music Entertainment hired a promotion staff and expanded marketing personnel to offer label services a few years back. Now it’s launching RED Merch, which will specialize in selling to retail stores, but which plans to distinguish itself from other merchandising companies with a bigger sales force and with shirts specifically created for its product line or featuring rare, out-of-print designs.

This isn’t the first time traditional elements of the recording industry have become infatuated with merch companies. It happened in the late ’80s/early ’90s.

Back then, PolyGram bought Southern Merchandising, changed its name twice before selling it to World Online Merchandising, which eventually became part of Bravado. In the early ’90s, Sony started Signatures and then divested it, and MCA bought Winterland and then sold it to Signatures. Also, back in the day, BMG bought Nicemans and then sold off its music roster to Giant, which eventually was bought by Warner Music Group. But Time Warner unloaded Giant to Cinram, which agreed to take
LETHAL RIP?

Pinpointing The Risks—And Myths—Of Stream Ripping

The latest monkey wrench thrown into the ongoing royalty dispute between SoundExchange and Internet radio companies is a disagreement over stream ripping.

Stream ripping is the practice of diverting an Internet radio feed meant to stream through a computer's sound card and speakers to the hard drive instead. Stream ripping programs also identify the beginning and end of a song—either by listening for gaps of silence between songs or by waiting for the metadata changes to a new artist—and saves each as an individual file.

SoundExchange has made the prevention of stream ripping a priority, at least the attempt to do so—a requirement of any offer to cap the $500-per-channel minimum fee webcasters owe under the current Copyright Royalty Board (CRB) licensing scheme.

Webcasters, in turn, have protested, despite the fact that many of them already attempt to limit stream ripping on a daily basis. Under normal circumstances, the issue could be discussed rationally—maybe. But inserting it into the already very public debate over royalty payments has turned it into a war of words played out in the press, with both sides making grand statements.

Let's examine the points raised.

Stream ripping is a problem. It's difficult, if not impossible, to assess the level of the stream ripping threat. While there are literally hundreds of stream ripping programs freely available online today, with millions of copies downloaded through the years, there's no way to tell how often they're used.

Even the music industry concedes that the impact of stream ripping is minimal. It's simply pursuing the prevention of it in a proactive desire to nip future threats in the bud.

As a form of piracy, stream ripping is extremely inefficient and will likely remain so for some time because of the inherent limitations of Internet radio. Unlike peer-to-peer networks, Internet radio is not an on-demand medium. Users can't search for the music they want and download it on the spot. Stream rippers have to sift through hours of recorded music to find the tracks they want and certainly can't do such things as download entire albums.

Of the potential threats to music industry revenue, stream ripping is far down on the list.

Implementing digital rights management (DRM) will be burdensome. Depending on the service, yes. The 10,000 webcasters using Live365 to stream in MP3 format for instance would have to find encrypted versions of the music they play and reload it onto Live365's servers. Additionally, many Internet radio listeners will have to install new software. And if webcasters choose different DRM software, listeners would need different players for each one.

A clumsy implementation of DRM can easily ruin the experience of Internet radio, which webcasters fear almost as much as the new royalty rates.

DRM won't work. What's unique about stream ripping is that the process takes place within the user's computer, not the webcasting service. The best way to stop it would be to insert a layer of DRM inside the user's operating system that would prevent diverting the stream from the sound card to the hard drive.

Webcasters don't want anything to do with that. Just ask Sony BMG how consumers respond when you install DRM software into their operating system.

SoundExchange and its allies acknowledge there's no foolproof solution, stressing they simply want to make it harder to accomplish.

"There's a great deal you can do with any of the proprietary providers out there to discourage stream ripping," says Jim Griffin, a digital music consultant who testified on behalf of SoundExchange during the CRB hearings. "When you're dealing with an open MP3 format, there's not.

But whatever the solution, Pandora CEO Joe Kennedy says it would be a "disaster in a fix at best. It would be hacked within an hour after being implemented," he says.

BITES & BRIEFS

GAMELOFT'S 'GUITAR' Mobile game developer Gameloft has introduced a "Guitar Hero"-like music simulation game for mobile phones called "Guitar Legend: Get On Stage." Lacking a guitar controller, gamers must press the appropriate phone keys in rhythm with the music to score points. Songs include versions of "Smoke on the Water," "Message in a Bottle" and "Banquet."

NICE DAMN CHANNEL Artists, filmmakers and actors are invited to the produc-duce, distribute and poten-tially make money off their own Web videos via a new portal called mydamchain-

HOT RINGMASTERS

Barbie Goes MP3

The iconic Barbie Doll is now an MP3 player. The 4.5-inch Barbie Girl device is a portable music player that users can customize through fashion accessories, holds 512 MB of memory and can play MP3s or any Windows Media-encrypted files.

The device acts as a "key" to unlock additional content in the barbieland virtual world—such as virtual pets, games, hangout spots, fashion accessor-ies, furniture and other things that involve giggling and ponies.

The device retails for $60. Accessory packs are sold separately for $10 each. —Antony Bruno

For 24/7 digital music news and analysis, see billboard.biz/digital.

Illustration by Thomas Fuchs

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Illustration by Thomas Fuchs

BIZ

www.americanradiohistory.com
We talked about this coming some months ago, and now the British government has rejected all attempts at reason and decided not to extend copyright laws for sound recordings beyond 50 years. The law apparently has always been there, but the fact that Cliff Richard's "Move It," considered by many to be the first home-grown English rock 'n' roll record, is suddenly facing royalty extinction has brought the issue to everyone's attention.

This completely arbitrary bit of insanity doesn't seem to apply to songwriters, thank God, but it does stop all U.K. royalties to performers, producers and record companies once the 50-year period is up.

Knowing Europe, the law could originally have been enacted in the 11th century when life expectancy was about 45 and no one cared about the estates of those first goth bands. But that still doesn't excuse it.

The British government's reasoning, and I use the term loosely, is that the law doesn't affect the majority of performers and could lead to increased costs. Who? Er, yeah, it affects each record separately as the 50 years end so it will obviously never affect the majority all at once. And yes, giving away the records for free is a decreased cost for the consumer, alright. No doubt about that.

Nothing to fear but fear itself, eh? Surely stupidity itself should get second-place money at least.

The last time I looked, I'd thought we'd won the Cold War, but maybe those sneaky Commies lost the battle and won the war after all? I know England has a new leader—who's his hero, Chairman Mao?

Who says 50 years should be the limit one can own one's work?

Why should a copyright ever run out?

Or maybe after 100 years or so all copyrights should be donated to a fund to pay living and medical expenses for older artists, musicians, arrangers, producers and engineers.

And why especially should the copyright run out just as downloading might earn some of our elders a few extra shekels?

And the company's investment? Too bad, clumps.

Yes, bureaucrats, paying for a record is more expensive than not paying, you've got me there. But stealing someone's work and giving it away is still called theft in New Jersey.

I just want to know when exactly everyone seems to have lost their freaking minds.

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The Immigration X-Factor: Crackdowns On Citizenship May Be Hurting Latin Music Biz

In July 2006, the town of Hazleton, Pa., passed a strict illegal immigration ordinance that imposes fines on landlords who rent to illegal immigrants. In addition, businesses that hire illegal immigrants would be denied licenses. Since then, some 86 towns in 27 states have proposed similar ordinances. So far, at least 26 have been approved.

It's impossible to say for certain that these ordinances have influenced the decline of Latin CD sales in the United States, but it's dangerous to think that they don't.

For years, Latin has been the only genre to register consistent sales growth, according to Nielsen SoundScan. The numbers have only declined in the past six months, coinciding with the passage of such laws. Since last year, many in the industry have said that immigrants' fear of being deported—or worse—has kept consumers from visiting stores (who wants to be stopped and arrested?), while uncertainty about the immediate future has necessarily curtailed spending habits.

Of course, this is all conjecture. But in more tangible terms, concert promoters nation-wide—specifically those of regional Mexican dances and shows—have seen a marked decline in attendance. Overwhelmingly, they blame anti-immigration ordinances. "There are entire cities that are passing such ordinances and cities where there is a big Mexican population," says Iván Fernández, president of Aragon Entertainment in Chicago. "If you're caught driving, they impound your car, and they can deport you. And of course, there are more roadblocks," he says, referring to the organized traffic stops politicians set up to check for drunk driving or expired licenses; they are now allowed to also request immigration papers.

"I handle venues that hold 5,000-6,000 people," says Detroit-based promoter Paolo Zamora, who works 30 midsize venues in the Midwest and on the East Coast. "I always had sellouts several times a year. Now, I no longer do. People are afraid to go out." Zamora agrees that secondary markets for Latin music in general and regional Mexican music in particular have quickly grown in the past few years, and concert venues have opened in states like Wisconsin, North and South Carolina and Ohio. But attendance has slacked in the past 12 months. Some say promoters can shoulder some of the blame for the situation. "They bring the same groups to the same venues twice and three times a year," one label executive says. "They've also squeezed the market dry."

In the past year, several prominent personalities from the Latin music industry have advocated for immigration reform. Most recently, in a highly publicized move, radio host Eduardo "Piolin" Sotelo went to Washington, D.C., armed with 1 million letters supporting reform. As we know by now, that didn't sway representatives. Now, as the fate of illegal immigrants remains in limbo, promoters and artists have little choice but to hang on tight.

"There's really not much we can do," Zamora says. "I think people will simply get used to this."

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Marketing Via Muzak

Latin Sounds in the Background

With a playlist that dares to combine Paulina Rubio, the Púrker Tones, Jorge Drexler and Belinda, Muzak—the company most associated with "elevator music"—is licensing an array of original Latin content for play in stores and restaurants.

Of the programs Muzak offers its clients via satellite and on-disc, Latin is one of the largest categories, with 10 specialized programs from upbeat pop to ballads, mariachi to tejano and salsa.

"We've always reflected pop culture," Muzak industry relations manager Jason McCormick says. With retailers seeing their Latino customer base grow and music becoming a bigger part of lifestyle marketing, "the Latin feel is falling into elements of pro-

grams where it didn't before."

To meet the demand of clients like Sprint stores, Chevys Fresh Mex and Ross clothing stores, Muzak has begun approaching artists and labels to get a steady supply of new music.

Latin audio archivist Alex Espinosa also customizes mood-specific mixes for larger chains based on what brand they are looking for music-wise.

"We actually got to a restaurant or client and visualize . . . what the wallpaper looks like or what posters are up, the clientele, what furniture they have," Espinosa says.

Espinosa isn't usually serviced like a radio programmer, so he scour restaurants in Tijuana, explores music online and approaches bands at shows for new material.

Muzak sponsored a showcase competition at the Latin Alternative Music Conference last month in New York in which music from the winning independent band, Venezuelan hip-hop act Cuarto Poder, will be added to Muzak's lineup.

—Ayala Ben-Yehuda
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A&R RIP.

Labels’ Lack Of In-House Scouts Worries Italian Industry

MILAN—The Italian biz is mourning the decline of traditional A&R as the major labels increasingly outsource their talent-spotting operations to independent producers.

At the end of June, Fabrizio Giannini, deputy managing director/GM/head of A&R at EMI Italy, announced that he was leaving the company.

The man who signed soul singer Tiziano Ferro and launched pop superstar Laura Pausini in his previous job at Warner was generally considered Italy’s leading A&R man.

“I quit primarily because the A&R mission was getting distorted,” says Giannini, now considering a career in artist management. “In the current crisis, it’s understandable that A&R is the first thing that gets cut in the budget, but it saddens me that there is no longer a relationship with artists.”

Giannini’s counterparts at other labels acknowledge the A&R problem. “This has been the case for 15 years now and is recognized abroad,” Universal Italy domestic division director Marco Zischka says. “Italy is seen as a country where very few new acts are coming through.”

Zischka cites the lack of “radio and TV space for new acts” as a key factor, despite Italy’s traditionally strong local repertoire. The majors’ representative body FIMI reports an 80% home-grown share of album sales in 2006, but most records were by established acts. In 2007 to date, only one debut artist (jazz star Mario Biondi) has achieved gold status (40,000 units).

“Since the late 1990s there has been a tendency to take prepackaged acts from outside,” the company, admits Rudy Zerbi, GM of Sony Label Group Italy A&R and incoming head of Sony BMG Italy. “There’s been a lack of individual attention to artists.”

Zerbi and Zischka say their companies are now trying to rectify the situation. Universal says it has expanded its A&R department and, after a period of stagnation, is once again signing more local artists. Although the other majors claim they are working on their repertoires.

“EMI, Giannini, says, is “the one talent-spotting unit in Italy.”

In the country that produced international multi-platinum acts like U2, the Cranberries and Westlife, this has come as a shock to the industry, which cites lack of support at radio as a prime factor.

“It’s rare for an Irish act to make the top 10 of the airplay chart, unless they’re U2 or Westlife,” says Feidhlim Byrne of Nielsen Music Control, which monitors airplay across Ireland. “R&B is so prevalent these days, and we don’t have a tradition of home-grown acts in this genre in Ireland.”

John Clarke, head of national youth station 2FM, defends his policy of playing mostly international chart music, pointing out the station’s schedule of late-night, new-music shows.

But he adds, “We’re up against all the other commercial radio stations, and we have to look at the bottom line. We play what sells. We’re not here to develop young Irish talent.”

Industry experts maintain that talent is still out there, it just has more trouble breaking through these days.

“When we started, we were lucky enough to have a...
THE NEW U2?
Three Acts Most Likely To Revive Irish Music's Fortunes

FIONN REGAN
Hometown: Bray, County Wicklow
Current release: "The End of History," out now
Labels: Heffa (Ireland), Bella Union (rest of Europe), Lost Highway (United States)
Management: Coalition Management, London

Fionn Regan, whose delicate acoustic guitar-picking and intimate vocals have been likened to Nick Drake's, was nominated for Ireland's Choice Music Prize in February, and is also shortlisted for the United Kingdom's Nationwide Mercury Prize.

JULIE FEENEY
Hometown: Athlone, County Galway
Current release: "13 Songs," out now
Label: Sony BMG (worldwide)
Management: Unsigned

Classically trained Julie Feeney quit her job singing in Ireland's National Chamber Choir to pursue her pop career. "13 Songs" has been compared to the work of Kate Bush and Björk, and won the 2006 Choice Music Prize despite Feeney's lack of a record deal, manager or publishing deal. Sony BMG snapped her up soon after.

DIRECTOR
Hometown: Malahide, County Dublin
Current release: "We Thrive on Big Cities," out now
Label: Atlantic (worldwide)
Management: Lupus Music, Dublin/London

These post-punk guitar aficionados are billed as Ireland's answer to Franz Ferdinand. Their debut album sold more than 22,000 copies in Ireland and reached No. 2 on the IRMA chart. The band plans to move to London in September, with Atlantic due to issue its debut in October in the United Kingdom. Director has toured with Razorlight, Snow Patrol and the Fratellis, and also won a 2007 Meteor Award for best new act.

PPL and VPL chairman/CEO Fran Nenvrka describes the pact as "a very significant moment for featured performers of both countries."

Nenvrka adds, "Increasingly in today's music market, enabled by ever-expanding technology, music made in one country gets played all around the world, and it is critical that musicians and performers get paid as their music gets played globally."

Lars Brande

>>> ZERBI TO SUCCED CABRINI AT SONY BMG ITALY

Sony BMG Italy is preparing to overhaul its top management. Effective Jan. 1, president/managing director Franco Cabrini will leave the company. He will be succeeded by Sony Label Group GM of A&R Rudy Zerbi.

Zerbi says, "I am convinced that by working with our colleagues abroad, we can find new and effective business models and strategies. Indeed we have already been discussing these, as this change of guard has been planned for quite some time."

Cabrini became head of Sony BMG Italy in 1991. He took the helm of Sony BMG Following the 2004 merger.

Sony Label Group GM Massimo Bonelli and Antonio Di Dio, senior VP of human resources, legal and business affairs, are also expected to exit.

All four executives are based at Sony BMG Italy's Milan headquarters.

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

3,000
Number of retailers whose sales data has been factored into the German chart, compiled by Media Control

Heavy Revenue
Change To Money-Based Tabulation Method Helps German Chart Rock Harder

HAMBURG—Heavy metal acts are the first beneficiaries of the German chart's switch from a unit sales model to a revenue-based method.

The first chart under the new system, published July 26, showed few changes on the Top 100 Singles list, but saw a number of albums post big chart climbs.

Maximilian Schütz, owner/CEO of Hanover-based independent label SPV, home to many hard rock acts, says it will increase the profile of Germany's burgeoning metal scene, where fans' loyalty means artists regularly release albums on a variety of multidisc formats that attract premium pricing at retail.

"Metal fans [aged] between 14 and 40 are faithful and spend their money immediately for new product," he says.

Those benefiting from the move include Rammstein, which moved 66-59 with "Völkerball" (Universal), available on four different CD/DVD formats priced at €22-€62 (S$30-S$85); and German-hard rock group Bonfire, which returned to the charts at No. 48 with its four DVD boxed set "Viva Con Tino" (SPV), retailing at €110 ($160), despite unit sales remaining steady in the previous week.

Double-compilation albums by rockers Motorhead and Alice also returned to the chart after long absences.

The changes came when German antitrust authorities demanded the removal of the minimum dealer price—previously €1.90 ($2.60) for singles and €8.50 ($11.65) for albums—for inclusion in the chart, saying such a limit was in contravention of fair trade law. Germany is believed to be the first music market in the world to introduce the value-based model for its official charts.

Unlike Atilor, managing director of chart compiler Media Control, which has produced the chart from sales data from 3,000 retailers since 1997, hailed the move as "a milestone in the history of the German music charts."

He claims the chart will now highlight the importance of premium products in the marketplace, a claim backed up by the performance of double albums and special editions on the new charts. Gainers included the Traveling Wilburys’ "Collection" ( Warner Music, 45-21), Red Hot Chili Peppers “Stadium Arcadium” ( Warner Music, 94-60), Katie Melua’s "Piece by Piece" (Parlophone, 63-59) and Norah Jones "Not Too Late" (Capitol, 81-65).

Many executives from the recorded music industry declined to comment on the changes, with sources indicating most labels had agreed to a vow of silence on the issue.

But Peter Zombik, managing director of Berlin-based FPI affiliate German Phonographic Assn., says his 350 members endorse the new system.

"The adoption of a revenue-based method ensures that trends are not distorted by cheap product containing old repertoire," he says.

Heinz Ganibol, managing director of Hamburg-based independent label 105 Music, is also satisfied. "This will have a healthy disciplining effect on prices," he says. "New releases will be offered to the big stores at reasonable prices and not discounted from the very beginning."

But one marketing manager at a major, who declined to be named, says labels are waiting for the charts to settle down, with no initial plans to increase dealer prices in search of better chart positions.

"It is just a question of arithmetic," he says. "Whether we try to improve our chart performance by drastically cutting prices to keep revenues steady via large volumes, or keep prices high for premium products to reach a higher placement more quickly remains to be seen."

Retailers, meanwhile, accept that the new system’s implementation was smoother than expected, but are yet to be convinced of its merits.

"Volume-based charts are far more precise," says purchaser Beatle Buchholz of Uelzen-based independent retailer Mega. "As it is possible to see what has really been sold."

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An Agency Audience

Increasingly, Bands Are Playing For Ad Clients And Creatives

On a recent summer day, Greg Kurstin and Inara George, who record as the Bird & the Bee, walked onstage, took their positions and ripped into “Fucking Boyfriend,” one of many high-lights on their self-titled debut album. A handful of songs followed, including the positively buoyant focus track “Again & Again.” Upon hitting their last note and chord, George and Kurstin took a bow and began the meet-and-greet.

But this performance was not in some hip, downtown lights on the left coast where the Bird & the Bee recently showcased their most recent release, New Door Records/Universal Music Enterprises newcomer William Tell. “It was the first time that most people at the agency were hearing his music,” Grey music supervisor/director of licensing Amy Rosen. “I wouldn’t be surprised if, six to 12 months from now, he winds up in a campaign.” Presenting live showcases is new for most agencies,” EMU Music Resources director Kelly Kandler says. “Agencies are taking hold of the idea that they can help launch careers.”

Perhaps, Rosen sees it differently. “It’s not that we want to be part of the music industry,” she says. “We’re simply trying to create an environment that allows our executives to discover, to pick and choose cool music.”

In the case of AM60 and French band the Film, they may soon find themselves with U.S. labels to call home. This two groups were recently featured in spots for Payless Shoes and Peugeot, respectively. Their publisher, Sony/ATV Music Publishing—specifically senior director of advertising, film and TV John Campanelli—has aggressively courting U.S. labels for both acts.

Ultimately, the idea of an agency as a live venue is about deepening the relationship among band, client and agency. Deutsch/hunter/chief creative officer Peter Nicholson says, “If you have someone like Nicholson and his creative team get to know the act on a more personal level, which helps build a better partnership between band and brand.”

“We’re not asking bands to sell out their music,” Nicholson adds. “We want them to be who they are. The key is to not tell a band what to do, but to let them do what they do.”

THE BIRD & THE BEE performing at Yerg.  

For the last several years, many music lawyers have grumbled that they’ve been handling more matters for executives losing their jobs than artists landing lucrative business deals. One way some firms keep their books in the black is to expand their reach into the worlds of film, theater and fashion. And even though most film work is handled by lawyers in Los Angeles, two firms in particular are successfully creating synergies between their entertainment clients far away from the palm trees and glitterati.

In the urban music capital of Atlanta, Donald Woodard and Tony Mulrain merged their practices last year to head the entertainment department at Lord Bissell & Brook. The duo met briefly before Mulrain moved from New York to Los Angeles, where he learned the ropes of the film and TV world. When Mulrain decided to move his family to Atlanta, it just made sense for his film/TV practice to connect with Woodard’s music practice.

Woodard handles music contracts for a variety of clients like Big Boi, Young Jeezy, Tauren “Adonis” Sharpecies and Harold Lilly. Mulrain is working with Big Boi for the film “Who’s Your Daddy?” Ciara for “Mamma I Want To Sing,” Hill Harper for “CSI:NY,” Ticcha Arnold for “Everybody Hates Chris” and others.

The trend in the entertainment business is that they’re looking for opportunities to cross-market more than ever before,” Woodard says. “You have to have the talent that allows you to do that, like Big Boi, who is still relevant in music but is building in film.”

Sometimes the lawyers make the important introductions as well. Woodard and Mulrain set up meetings for Jeezy in Los Angeles, and he’s now represented by the William Morris Agency, Woodard says.

Mulrain is also representing investors who want to get into film/TV, like one that invested in the Los Angeles Story” to be shot in Georgia. Up the coast in New York, Grubman Indusry & Shire expanded even beyond music, film and TV. In a rare interview with the press-shy lawyers, Allen Grubman and Larry Shire explain how the synergy works. “About 10 years ago, I came to the realization that the entertainment industry was no longer going to be different divisions—music, television, movies, legitimate theaters,” Grubman says. “I sensed there was going to be an integration, with music used in all these different areas, including fashion.”

Since Shire first came onboard 15 years ago with his film, TV, theater and book publishing expertise, the firm has grown to 32 lawyers with clients in every aspect of show business and media.

Whether Madonna is performing for an HBO concert or writing a book, Elton John is composing feature songs for “The Lion King,” Sean “Diddy” Combs is starting the Sean John clothing line or Robert De Niro is doing an American Express ad, the firm handles the legal work. And it has branched out to represent the leaders in the worlds of fashion (Calvin Klein, Versace, Vera Wang, Tommy Hilfiger, Stella McCartney), TV (journalism [Barbara Walters, Diane Sawyer, Charlie Rose] and, in its corporate department, new media (Amazon, eBay, Barry Diller’s InterActive Corp.).

When one of the lawyers meets with a client, they often brainstorm on the various opportunities, Grubman says. Then the firm brings in all the lawyers from the different areas of expertise to discuss the possibilities. Still, the lawyers act as lawyers rather than agents, Shire says.

“What a traditional, old-time entertainment lawyer did was really serve as just a scribe and write down the deal that was made [by an agent] and put it on paper,” Shire says. “What we do is get involved from minute one with the agent to help shape and make that deal.”

As specialized attorneys, they understand the nuances, Shire says. For example, in theater deals, “the writer is God,” Shire says. The author controls rights in the written word. In movies, the writer’s inspiration and writer’s work is a work-for-hire, so the producer can “cut it up and dice it any which way,” he adds. In book publishing and music, control by the writer is a hybrid—they keep some control and give up some control over use. One of the most important points in all deals, Shire says, is to protect the client’s control over the brand name.

Often a contract states that if there’s a disagreement on how to use the brand name, the licensee’s decision controls. “That’s not good enough,” Shire says. “It’s a tough point to win, but when you have a brand, you simply have to win that point.”
Irv Gotti

Acquitted of money laundering and racketeering, Gotti now has a new lease on life, a new label partnership with Universal Motown and a VH1 reality TV show.

Humble may not be a personality trait some would associate with Irving “Gotti” Lorenzo. Even Gotti, founder/CEO of the Inc. (formerly Murder Inc.), is quick to admit that. But he deems it the chief lesson he learned after the FBI indicted he and his brother Chris for money laundering and racketeering.

Acquitted in 2005, Gotti is busy bringing the Inc. back to the prominence drum-rolled by early hitmakers. Ja Rule and Ashanti. Having signed a three-year joint venture last year with Universal Motown, he scored chart success early this year with Lloyd (“Street Love”). Now the Inc. is ramping up fourth-quarter albums from Ja Rule (“The Mirror”), Ashanti (“The Declaration”) and pop singer/songwriter Vanessa Carlton (“Heroes & Thieves”). And stay tuned for a new Gotti persona: reality TV star. VH1 will begin broadcasting the eight-episode run of his reality series in October.

While he can’t recoup lost time, Gotti—who frequently uses the word “blessed”—hasn’t lost his drive or sense of humor. “No, I can’t lose that,” he says. “You’ve got to take the hand that’s dealt you and figure out a way to take it in stride. I’m back to square one and focusing on bringing the Inc. back to the powerhouse it was.”

Before your acquittal, many people were counting you out. Thoughts?

Oh, yeah, I know that all too well. That’s why it’s a blessing for me just to be back in the game and not having this conversation from the federal pen saying, “When I get out in another 15 years, I’m going to reclaim the throne.” I’m not back on top of the world yet. I’m back in the game, though, that’s for damn sure. [laughs]

When you were going through your legal problems, did you consider getting out of music? Never. The music thing goes deep with me. I want to be like Doug Morris and Clive Davis. Until he died, Ahmet Ertegun was still going to the office. I’m in that mode.

What prompted you to sign back under Universal Music Group via Universal Motown? I never envisioned myself signing back with the company. But I got a call and took a meeting with [chairman] Doug and [president/COO] Zane [Brown], and it was one of the best I’ve ever had because of the honesty.

Doug explained the complexity of what I was putting him and the Universal Music Group through by having this indictment on me. He was like, “You put everybody in harm’s way.” That was a moment of clarity for me. Until he said it, it’s like that, I hadn’t seen all of that shit. All I could see was that I was innocent, so why is everybody flipping on me? I hollered at him; he hollered at me. It was a real meeting. It needed to happen in order for us to move on and re-bond. I have a tremendous amount of respect for Doug and Zach and feel blessed to have them steering me so I don’t make anymore mistakes.

Do you regret the label’s initial moniker, Murder Inc.? [Def. founder] Russell Simmons suggested change the name to take of any pressure from it and people would then focus on the music. But even when I changed the name, people still called it Murder Inc. It was a creative play on words [back in the day: The original Mur- der Inc. was about contracting hit men. And in the music business we strive to be hit men. I have no shame in Murder Inc. I thought it was the coolest name and still think so.

Besides Lloyd, albums are coming from R&B/hip-hop vets Ja Rule and Ashanti. So where does pop singer/songwriter Vanessa Carlton fit in? My signing Vanessa threw everybody for a curve. But she totally captivates people. I call her music “forever music”; it’s timeless. What I hope with her signing is that people recognize I’m a music guy and not put limitations on me. I’m not just R&B and hip-hop. I love all forms of music and can work with different artists.

I’ve also signed another group about to open up for Third Eye Blind called the ThunderCats. It’s a full band, a multi-tracial group that raps, sings and does rock/pop as well. This is what it is with me. No tricks, no games. It’s always about the music; the music is what draws me in.

Nearly four years have elapsed since Ja Rule and Ashanti released albums. In today’s fickle climate, are they still relevant musically? It’s funny when I hear people counting them out. I don’t buy into it; I’ve never bought into it. I get that as time goes by, people like to move on to other acts. But musically I don’t see any reason why because with both acts we’ve never dropped a bad record.

Look at Ja Rule’s career. Every single was a success; some bigger than others. From his last album “R.U.L.E.,” we put out “New York” and “Wonderful,” which were very successful. The guy has never really dropped a wack record. The same goes for Ashanti. The last record she dropped from “Concrete Rose” was “Only U,” another pretty big single.

Your VH1 reality show is by the same producers behind “Flavor of Love.” Knowing the charges of buffoonery leveled at that program, are you signing up? At first I was skeptical. It took me two months to say “cool.” “Flavor” is kind of clowny. And I said, “Yo, I’m not down with that.” The deciding factor was Chris Abrego of 51 Minds Entertainment. They know what they’re doing on the reality front. He promised me the show wouldn’t be like “Flavor,” and said I could have creative control with him. So I’m a co-owner of the show with 51 Minds.

The series is about the label, my interaction with the artists, my family, my life. It came out hot, and I think people will enjoy it. But I told them this is a one-time thing. I don’t want to be a reality star doing season after season. What’s funny is they’re already pressuring me to do a season two. [laughs]

With your legal problems behind you and the resurrection of the Inc., ahead of you, what lessons have you learned? To be more humble. That’s a hard battle. I’m not going to lie and you can print this, I don’t care. Sometimes my mouth can get me into trouble. I have to fight the demons within myself because I’m so passionate and say what’s on my mind. But sometimes it’s better to be quiet. I’m not going to say I’ll be perfect at it; I may make an occasional mistake or two. It’s something I have to work at. But even when I’m making mistakes, there’s no denying my love and passion for music.
KANYE WEST HAS BECOME A POP ICON BY MARCHING TO HIS OWN BEATS. BUT WILL HIS RISKS PAY OFF AGAIN?

BY HILLARY CROSLEY
PHOTOGRAPH BY NABIL ELDERKIN
SQUASHED INSIDE NEW YORK CLUB
S.O.B.'s fans are reliving the 1992 cult hip-hop flick "Juice." The film centers around a DJ named Q, who uses a DJ competition as an alibi to rob the neighborhood bodega. Tonight, three sets of turntables, three mics and numerous established DJs fill the small space, with Kanye West, Just Blaze and Swizz Beatz sitting in to judge a winner. West, decked out in a multicolored hoodie, a neon-green shirt and a chunky plastic yellow watch, is especially poker-faced as he surveys the contestants. But after the winner, Jack the Ripper, is announced, an impromptu all-star concert breaks out, with a smiling West joining Mos Def, Talib Kweli, Common, Q-Tip and Queen Latifah on the tiny stage. And before the crowd trails out, sweaty and happy, Channel Live rapper Hakim announces, to screaming agreement: "The biggest thing that happened in hip-hop in the last 10 years was when Kanye put George Bush in his motherfucking place." Tonight's fans aren't the only ones who appreciate the kind of candor West demonstrated when he made his comments during a live Hurricane Katrina telethon in 2005. West takes big risks, and those risks have generally paid off. Indeed, he has made himself an eminently marketable commodity in music by going against the conventional wisdom of how a star should behave: calling out world leaders on national TV, complaining about his lack of respect or collaborating with decidedly un-hip-hop names like John Mayer and producer Jon Brion. The first official single from his third Def Jam album, "Graduation," due Sept. 11, is case in point. While contemporary urban music has lately dabbled in electronic sounds, West has taken it a step further by choosing to introduce his latest project with the synth-heavy single "Stronger," which samples Daft Punk's "Harder, Better, Faster, Stronger" and slows down the beat. The track is the top debut on The Billboard Hot 100 this week at No. 42. "That melody just hit me so hard," West says when asked for the song's inspiration. "I mean, it's the music. It wasn't a gimmick thing."
Effective Aug. 13, Billboard has learned, MPA will operate as Paradigm divisions in Monterey, Calif., and Nashville; MPA’s roster includes Aerosmith, says “Matthews Band, Toby Keith, the Black Crowes, Gov’t Mule and the Black Eyed Peas. Meanwhile, LBM, whose roster includes such acts as Coldplay, Franz Ferdinand, the Fra, Avril Lavigne and Arctic Monkeys, will operate as Paradigm New York. The home office as always for Paradigm is in Los Angeles, where the company was founded in 1992 as an independent film, TV and literary agency by chairman Sam Gores. Or for both boutique, the proverbial—and for LBM, the literal—ping pong table remains. That is to say the two boutiques will maintain their independent spirit and unique approaches to business. Such as the messaging coming from both sides of the recreated Manhattan office (all except September) and MPA (in January 2005) into the Paradigm fold. Since setting up operations in the former MCA headquarters in 1994, Paradigm has expanded through a series of strategic acquisitions, starting with its purchase of boutique agencies Genesis and Writers & Artists. The company now has a music division of the depth and breadth of any of the major full-service agencies, with major headliners like Aerosmith, Dave Matthews Band, Toby Keith and Coldplay and a packed stable of up-and-comers that can keep the turnstiles spinning for years to come. "Basically what this [acquisition] does is really put us in this league of the big six agencies," Gores says. "In terms of live performance, we have a world-class list now that really is second to nobody." Gores’ philosophy of allowing LBM and MPA to keep their respective business cultures, however, effectively creates an agency with the leverage and clout of a major but the heart and soul of a boutique. As far as a real cultural thing, there will be no change whatsoever, in how LBM and MPA operate, Gores says. "We’re already doing really well synergistically," he says. "It has worked beyond my expectations." Gores and MPA co-founder Dan Weiner believe that the resources Paradigm offers were instrumental in his and Paradigm’s recent signing of Robert Plant and Alison Krauss, who will tour together. (See story on page 6.) "That happened Oct. 7," October 2005 release on Rounder. "This is a perfect example of what this can mean," Weiner says. "This is the first time in my life I had artists who really wanted all this and...the resources of the agency to make it happen." Weiner is a long-time client of the agency and has been a fixture at the label for years. Weiner agrees that on the surface little has changed. "We have other services we can offer to our artists now, and now we’re sharing ideas and information and pursuing business together," Hooper says. "We’re still handling artists the same way with the same passion we’ve always had. Now we just have more support to offer them." FACING THE MUSIC Gores entered the music space by acquiring MPA in 2005. He says he had long considered taking Paradigm into the music world, but needed the right situation to move forward. "When we had acquired enough mass and were legitimately a big enough company, I always knew that the next step was to be music," Gores says, adding that acquiring a respected, established agency would be the plan. "I’ve never been somebody that was comfortable in settling for either a second-rate group you have to improve or starting out with one individual and expanding from there," Gores says. "My philosophy has always been, ‘You make progress through some patience and wait until you can get the best.’" Weiner says that Gores’ perspective is what made the deal possible. "We were always willing to be part of an agency that represented clients in other areas besides music, and we never could find any agency or personal one that we felt really fit us, the other people that worked here and our clients," Weiner says. "We had pretty much given up that that person would appear when we were introduced to Sam Gores at Paradigm. We immediately felt that he was the guy, that was the agency and that was the place." Gores says that he wanted an East Coast music presence, but wasn’t in a rush to quickly acquire another boutique in the wake of closing the MPA deal. "I’ve learned something, actually, from my colleagues at Monterey," he says. "They believe that in the service business you have to grow and evolve around people, and you can’t force good people to become available." But in LBM founder Marty Diamond, Gores says he found a kindred spirit for MPA. "Marty was their kind of guy. The philosophy and the integrity and the way he works is similar but complemented by our new partners at Monterey," Gores says. Gores says, "When Chip and the guys at Monterey said [LBM] was a perfect fit, I didn’t question it. I put 100% of my faith in it and put our strategic business development team on it to go make it happen." Diamond says LBM has been counted by virtually all the majors during the past decade, but he and partner Larry Weinman felt other agencies weren’t the right fit. "To us it wasn’t about, ‘Let’s take our bands, put them on your roster and we’ll adapt to your culture.’ I wanted someone to let us exist in our culture," he says. After speaking with the Monterey crew and meeting Gores, Diamond says the "ethical" felt right. "It wasn’t about changing the culture, or the way we book things," he says. "Even within this deal, [Paradigm Monterey] work differently than we do. We all are the same company but we are operating without cannibalizing each other’s culture and that is attractive to me...I didn’t want, nor did anyone in this office want, to compromise the artist-development spirit of this company. I didn’t want to just sign some shit to book it to make money." At the same time, Diamond recognized a changing artist landscape. "It became glaringly obvious that our clients had other skill sets, whether it was Ed [Robertson] from the Bare-Naked Ladies as a writer or Avril Lavigne as an actress," he says. "The clients we represented wanted to do other stuff, they wanted to have genuine access, as did we." The former LBM agents now have a "big-ass toolbox," Diamond says. "It’s good to say you want to build a house, but if you open the toolbox and there’s just a hammer and a screwdriver, you might be able to get some of the frame up, but that’s about all," he says. "For us, we have a toolbox now. Sometimes it’s, ‘I have no idea what this tool does.’ But I’m going to figure it out."
BIGGER TOOLBOX

Having an alliance with an established film/TV/literary agency like Paradigm gives a music agency a broader palette, Gores believes. Artists now are brands more than ever. A singer is not just a singer, an actor is not just an actor," he says. "A lot of our Monterey and LBM clients have different aspirations. Some of them want to write music for movies and television, some of them want to act. We can help them do that." Gores cites Fergie and Will.I.Am from the Black Eyed Peas as artists who have branched into the film world. "The reason why these artists embraced the idea is they recognized me hopefully as somebody that felt similar to them philosophically. But besides the fact that we just liked each other, I think they were realizing they couldn’t be as competitive without saying they had access to this part of the business," he says. "A number of years ago it wasn’t as necessary, now they were feeling like it was more necessary."

Diamond adds, "You can’t go to every act and say, ‘We can get you on TV, we can get you in movies.’ But we’re trying to do some things that take the right shots."

By way of example Diamond cites Interpol’s Carlos Dengler. "He wants to do some scoring work, he wants to do some acting. These are things he can at least now say to Carlos, ‘I can get you the meetings,’" he says. "There are a lot of balls in the air, and one or two of them are going to get caught."

Dengler’s manager, Dave Holmes, confirms that the Paradigm opportunities have been positive. "So far as I’m concerned, it’s been a great experience," says Holmes, who also manages Paradigm acts Coldplay and Scissor Sisters. "We’ve had a few requests from some of our clients that were film- and TV-related, and Marty [Diamond] has been able to recruit people within that Paradigm organization to investigate those opportunities ... Interpol in particular is an artist where Paradigm has been very helpful in getting those opportunities."

Indeed, managers Billie Jean contacted seem warm to the concept of the agencies they signed their acts to realizing broader platforms. Terry McBride at Nettwerk, which has acts Avril Lavigne and the Pipettes signed to LBM, says the LBM association with Paradigm has "great potential on many levels."

The key, according to Hooper, is access to bring other business and artistic opportunities to offer artists. "When appropriate and when an artist has the desire and the ability to do other things, or when other things can enhance an artist’s career, then we have the ability to provide those services now," he says.

Meanwhile, the boutique approach offers some lessons for the larger agency world. Gores says agents and agencies can be considered "heartless" at times. "Sometimes I think they can forget that there are human beings involved, that this is not a product you’re selling," he continues. "Sometimes the smaller, more boutique agencies may recognize this a little bit more."

Gores says he sees this approach in MPA and LBM. "These guys are meticulous in the way they make deals, the way they handle clients," he says. "Clients don’t stick around for that many years if you’re not doing the right thing by them."

As a 30-year veteran of the business, Gores says his greatest challenge "has always been to be a decent enough person, but not a motherfucker when I have to, and never compromise integrity. You can be strong, but you can be considerate, too."

In the pre-fax, pre-internet era, not being in Los Angeles or New York could mean being out of touch. "But the commitment we made to people was we chose to be here, so if there’s a meeting or anything else, we’ll be where you want us to be," Weiner says. "We did a lot of traveling to compensate for being here [in Monterey]."

Monterey eventually expanded to open a country division in Nashville and formed an alliance in Chicago with Monterey International that booked a lot of jazz and blues. All the while, the Monterey office kept booking successful touring artists and adding acts to a diverse roster.

"Dan and I both like all types of music. We went with what our heart felt was going to be good," Bohlander says. "There was no particular trend or music area we were after. If we enjoyed the music and felt we could help them take the next level, that’s what we wanted to do."

Chip Hooper joined the company in 1988 and was instrumental in building the touring careers of such acts as Phish and Dave Matthews Band.

Meanwhile, in 1994, Marty D’Amont, who had a background in the label, promoter and agency worlds, formed Little Big Man with a vision and broad perspective of his own—but not much space. Diamond booked about a dozen clients out of Living Colour guitarist’s Vernon Reid’s guitar closet at manager Jim Grant’s business office.

"It was literally about eight feet by six feet, with no windows," Diamond recalls. "It may have been a closet, but it was my office." Among the original clients still with the company are David Gray, Sarah McLachlan, the Verve and Richard Ashcroft. (Today’s roster also includes such acts as Coldplay, Franz Ferdinand, the Fray, Avril Lavigne and Arctic Monkeys.)

Diamond was soon joined by partner Larry Webman, and by the time Paradigm acquired LBM last September, the roster had grown to about 200 acts, backed by a hard-working staff of five.

"We built a company, and continue to build, with this team that has been recognized within the industry as a strong service company, a creative boutique that is about artist development," Diamond says. "It has not been about chasing things at the top, but more about building things up. That’s the way we’ve built Sarah [McLachlan], the way we built Barenaked Ladies back up, David Gray, or Damien Rice, or Snow Patrol."

—RW

From left: Aerosmith’s STEVEN TYLER and JOE PERRY; TOSY KEITH; and DAVE MATTHEWS are all acts from Monterey Peninsula Artists now under the Paradigm agency banner.

NUTS AND BOLTS

MPA and LBM had already publicly added the Paradigm addendum to their names since the acquisition, easing the Paradigm shift. "We just needed an easy transition because Paradigm wasn’t really that well-known in that part of the business. We didn’t want to shock everybody by just changing the name," Gores says.

Hooper will oversee the music division out of Monterey, supported by veteran agent Jonathan Levine. Diamond and Webman will continue running what was LBM out of New York, and both offices, along with the busy Nashville office, will collaborate on projects with Paradigm L.A.

"We’re going to sign artists together and work on projects together as appropriate," Hooper says. "The exciting thing is Monterey Peninsula and Little Big Man were two pretty damn special companies that are now one special company because you have some pretty gifted people working together."

Paradigm will combine four different offices in joining forces with the former LBM in New York. "We are moving, and [LBM] is moving, but the interesting compromise is we’re duplicating the exact [LBM] environment in a high-rise on Park Avenue South," Gores says. "When you go to the Paradigm music division it looks like the Little Big Man offices in SoHo, with the ping-pong table, the picnic tables, that kind of eccentric way they do things."

It certainly doesn’t sound like the home office will be heavy-handed in overseeing the music division. "In this day and age it’s a disaster if you think you can force people you’re asking to be creative, if you suck up every bit of autonomy they have," Gores says. "I’ve never believed you could pay somebody to be creative or loyal. The only way somebody will be creative or loyal is when they show up because they feel like it."
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This summer, Bedingfield
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BRUCE ALMIGHTY
Hornsby makes an
instrumental jazz move
MARKETING MANDISA
Sparrow Records backs
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LIVING ART
MUOES
WHINE
High hopes for 1st
DuLuna's debut album
GRACE IS THE WORD
Potter and Nocturnals
stay on the road
BRUCE ALMIGHTY
MUSIC
with Natasha Bedingfield's "Unwritten" wrapping up #1 in the year-end top-five on the AC, adult top 40 and Hot Digital Songs charts, the last thing the hot singer/songwriter was worried about was putting out a second album. "People have asked me about that second-album syndrome, but I haven't concerned myself with it," Bedingfield admits. "There's a confidence that comes when your work does well. I think it's really the perfect title for my first album because it's something that I knew I had a lot more in me. No, I'm not nervous." On "N.B.," released in Europe at the end of April and aiming for an Oct. 30 U.S. street date via Epic, she is turning the page to a new life chapter. "This time, it's about the need we have for relationships and the fact that all involve us and downs—you can't have one without the other—and the questions that come up in sharing your life," she says.

As Bedingfield promotes the project overseas first, Epic has the luxury of a deliberate setup for release in the United States. According to Epic senior VP of marketing Lee Stimmel, "It's going to be fun to go through this again. Natasha wrote an amazing first album with songs that translated to this market, we were able to build a new artist in the pop/rock world that people now know—and she made a lot of friends in radio. TV, media and fashion. Her down-to-earth nature comes across, and people gave her a shot that paid off.

Overseas, the first two singles from "N.B." have already achieved robust success: The album launched with "I Wanna Have Your Babies," which reached No. 7 on the U.K. singles chart, followed by "Soulmate," which went to No. 6 on the U.K. airplay chart. In America, a new track not on the European version of "N.B." will likely be released as the first radio single; at press time, Bedingfield was in the studio working on new material.

Both overseas singles demonstrate Bedingfield's versatility as a songwriter. "I Wanna Have Your Babies" has little to do with what its title might imply to the casual listener; it's actually a tongue-in-cheek observation that it's natural enough to project far into the future when meeting potential suitors, wondering if or when she could be the one. The video clearly puts the message across.

"It's not serious at all," Bedingfield says. "Girls tend to get too full-on too quick. I'm not like that personally. I like to make the guy work a bit, but it's fun to sing about something everyone can relate to—trying to gauge where the other person is.

Epic VP of marketing Scott Greer adds. "When you see the video, you realize the humor and catch on to what she's trying to say. It's funny as hell and shows the innocence at the beginning of a relationship."

For U.S. radio, "Unwritten" makes Bedingfield a priority return. Last year, the song reached No. 1 on the AC chart during an unprecedented five separate stints for a total of 11 weeks at the top. It set a second record at the format, revisiting the summit in its 51st week, the latest in chart life a title has ever led at AC.

Bedingfield says, "Music in America is so beat-driven, and 'Unwritten' doesn't fit that mold. But it connected." Mike Nelson, PD of adult top 40 WMXY (The Mix) Milwaukee, notes that "Unwritten" was "exactly what the adult format needed at exactly the right time—that pure pop to balance out Nickelback. Without "Unwritten" panning the way, I think we would have been less likely to play Jojo or Nelly Furtado."

This summer, Bedingfield is touring overseas with Justin Timberlake, before returning to the States this fall—where she recorded the majority of the new album—to promote "N.B."

"When 1 first came here, after already having a No. 1 album in the U.K., I was performing at radio stations and singing for crowds of 20 winners eating pizza. I could never be sure if they were more interested in the pizza or me," Bedingfield recounts. "But even though I had to prove myself all over again, in America, people respect your dream as long as you believe in yourself."

W
POP
BY CHUCK TAYLOR
Bedingfield Steers Stateside Return
With Sophomore Set Already Out In Europe, Epic Gets Busy In J.S.

BEDINGFIELD

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Dance Fever

DeLuna Turning Heads At Multiple Formats With Debut Hit

On a recent summer day in New York, newcomer Kat DeLuna would not let a little heat or humidity dampen her spirits. In fact, it appeared to only heighten her overall positivity. Of course, it doesn’t hurt that DeLuna’s debut single, “Whine Up” (featuring Elephant Man), is being championed across a handful of radio formats, including top 40, rhythmic, Latin rhythmic and rap. The techno-fueled track has even spawned the Whine Up dance, which DeLuna created while she was recording the song in the studio. In this issue, “Whine Up” ascends the Billboard Hot 100 and Pop 100 to No. 35 and 23, respectively.

“We’ve been playing [the track] since May, and we immediately got a reaction from the audience,” says Sharon Stevens, productions manager of top 40 WHTZ (Z100) New York. “It quickly became the most requested song – we’ve played it over 600 times.”

“The single is going crazy,” says DeLuna, a 19-year-old native New Yorker whose family roots can be traced to the Dominican Republic. “And I’m the very first Dominican crossover artist. I couldn’t be more excited.”

In the coming days, DeLuna is scheduled to return to her family’s homeland to shoot the video for her next single, the lasca- fueled “Am I Dreaming.” In reference to her label, she adds, “I’m Eric’s Caribbean girl.”

Indeed, Epic has high hopes for DeLuna and her debut album, “I Live.” Due Aug. 7, the Red One-produced collection finds DeLuna co-writing all but two songs.

Taking cues from Sony BMG artists Shakira and Jennifer Lopez, the label is promoting and marketing DeLuna to English- and Spanish-speaking markets. Epic’s partner, Sony BMG Latin, is helping with the latter. (Spanish versions of “Whine Up,” “Am I Dreaming” and third single “Run the Show” are included on the album.)

“A major component of our campaign is shining the light on Kat’s Latin-Caribbean roots,” Epic VP of marketing Karim Karsi says, citing a July 10 performance on Univision’s “Despierta America.”

Surrounding the album’s release, DeLuna is confirmed to appear on “Late Late Show With Craig Ferguson,” CW31’s “Morning Show in New York,” MTV’s “TRL” and numerous Spanish programs. These appearances will coincide with a performance at the Mall of America in Bloomington, Minn., for a back-to-school event.

Additionally, DeLuna is MTV Ti’s “Descubre & Download” artist and will receive much exposure on “MTL,” MTV Ti’s Radio, MTV Ti’s Mobile and other related platforms. Free downloads of “Whine Up” and its Spanish version are available at mtvtr3s.com until Sept. 2.

On Aug. 26, DeLuna will participate in the WWE’s SummerSlam event. The sports entertainment company has selected “Whine Up” as its theme song for SummerSlam, held at New Jersey’s Continental Airlines Arena. She’ll perform three songs during the pay-per-view.

DeLuna’s performance, as well as an interview, will be televised as part of a WWE package with heavy promotion. WWE.com is also setting up links to preorder the singer’s album.

And then there is the Whine Up dance, which has become a fan favorite on YouTube. For those in need of lessons, there is whineup.com. Visitors to the site can enter a contest to win a one-on-one dance with DeLuna.

WHTZ, meanwhile, took the lead, launching a Whine Up contest and inviting listeners to send in videos of themselves performing the dance. The winners—a mother and daughter from Westchester, N.Y.—appear in the official video for “Whine Up.” Due to the dance’s growing popularity, Epic has formed Whine Up street teams in 10 markets. In addition to this activity, DeLuna stays connected with her fans via her MySpace page, which she launched shortly after being signed to Epic in November. Epic senior director of A&R Brandon Creed recalls DeLuna’s November audition well. “She sang an a cappella version of ‘I Will Always Love You.’”

“If you perform a song and then play a couple of songs she recorded,” he says. “While she didn’t come in with any real hits, she had that certain something…that X factor.”
Breaking Hart
Singing Waitress Serves Up Hot Debut

Victoria Hart should never have to wait on tables again. The teenage jazz chanteuse grabbed her chance at fame in May when she performed for Hollywood stars George Clooney and Brad Pitt during the Cannes Film Festival. Shortly after, the 18-year-old student—now dubbed “the singing waitress”—scored a contract with UCI/Decca worth £1.5 million ($3.1 million). The integrated deal includes a share of touring and merchandise income.

Hart’s first album, “Whatever Happened to Romance?” opened at No. 61 on the Official U.K. Charts Co.’s albums list in July, and is scheduled for a U.S. release this fall. “Victoria represents a very 21st-century artist, who records original songs but in a style that harks back to the 1940s—in much the same way that Amy Winehouse has recorded an album that is completely original, in a Motown style,” Decca head of business affairs Mark Cavell says.

Hart, represented by talent agency giant William Morris, recorded the album through Discreet Recordings, which she co-owns with manager Lynne Pearson and producer Geoffrey Gurd.

“I’ve always wanted a career in singing,” Hart says. “I was always saying, ‘I’m going to be a star. I am a hard worker, but I’m also a hard player.’” Hart is published by DeMiX Music and booked by Beat Markwalder at Panagency.

—Juliana Koranteng

CASSETTE CASE: South Africa’s Cassette has pressed play on global plans for its debut, “Welcome Back to Earth.” The retro indie rock act cut the album on its imprint Kryptonite Records, and has licensed it to Sony BMG for South Africa. Sheer Sound’s Johanesburg-based 2Fest label has struck an arrangement to release the set for 35-plus territories, with Rykodisc distributing.

Spawning two radio hits at home and nabbing a 2007 South African Music Award, the album is set for release in Germany and the Netherlands (through Rough Trade) Aug. 31, with the rest of Europe slated for Oct. 1.

Sheer managing director Damon Forbes reports a buzz from Japan, where the band is due to tour in September. A month of European live dates is being lined up beginning Aug. 25, with bookings made through Johannesburg-based Roadshow Promotions. “We’re under no illusions about the hard work needed to make an impact,” frontman/chief songwriter Jon Savage says, “but if the response to our first set of U.K. and European gigs was anything to go by, there is an audience out there for us.”

The band is published by Sheer Publishing.

—Diane Coetzee

MALAY DAY: Malaysian stage actor Sean Ghazi is taking his “big band” sound into the Asian arena.

Ghazi’s November 2006 recording debut, “Seselam,” has already proved a critical success at home, where it won three categories at the 2007 Anugerah Industri Muzik Awards on April 28. Universal Music has since extended the release into Singapore and Indonesia.

“Although Sean’s album has a niche appeal, we’re casting our net wide in terms of distribution,” Universal Music South East Asia senior VP Sandy Monteiro says. “Seselam” combines re-arrangements of ‘60s/’70s Malay works with English-language standards. Ghazi co-wrote the title song, the album’s sole original track, with local composer Izlyn Raml. Publishing credits on the album are numerous.

“We reworked these classic Malay gems with a big band sound, hopeful that a new generation of music fans will rediscover them,” Ghazi’s manager and business partner Deborah Michael says.

Universal Music plans to take Ghazi on the road for mini-concerts and meet-and-greets, while Ghazi is putting together a command performance with full orchestral backing. Ghazi is booked through his management company Baby Grand.

—Christie Leo

Dance-Pop Divas
Samantha James And Colette Bring Fresh Female Energy To Club Culture

The heritage of the female singer/songwriter in dance music is an artistically rich one, commercially bereft one.

From Kristine W to Tracey Thorn, women with lyrical, folksy tendencies who prefer beats over strings have made timeless music that gets played on mainstream dancefloors via the remix) throughout the decades. But they have a hard time finding a wide audience for their original work.

Two stunning new releases from San Francisco indie Om Records seek to buck the trend by appealing to audiences outside of electronic music’s borders: newcomer Samantha James’ “Rise” and “Push” from the label’s first lady, Colette.

“Both bring a breath of fresh air into the male-dominated DJ culture of the electronic/dance markets, as well as crossing borders into larger pop markets,” Om marketing VP Gunnar Hissam says.

James’ album is a long time coming. Om’s been talking her up and circulating rmxes of the title track—which went to No. 1 on the Hot Dance/Club Play chart in April—since late 2005.

“The album has been in the works for so long because we didn’t want to rush her, so that the quality level would be as high as the first two songs we’ve released,” Hissam says. “Rise” has sold 12,000 downloads on iTunes alone, and follow-up “Angel Love” has been Om’s most-downloaded song for months, selling 3,000 copies so far, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

“We felt that the momentum we were building was perfect for allowing her profile to grow organically,” Hissam says. “The biggest applause so far has been from the fans actively searching out her music and downloading it.”

Produced by Sebastian Arocha Morton, aka ROCA- sound (who worked on the Grammy Award-nominated “Little Miss Sunshine” soundtrack, and is currently in the studio with Donna Summer), “Rise” is the album’s ceaselessly smooth collection of groovy pop, as elegant as Sade, and wrapped with the unmistakably warm thump of San Francisco house. It’s undeniable as chill-out club fodder, but also as an adult contemporary “back-to-mine” soundtrack or for high-end retail outlets/poolside/lobby bars, in real life or on film.

Anyone could listen to this anywhere and be seduced.

A singer/songwriter and DJ, Colette’s dance music triple threat. Behind the decks, she tours regularly and is a member of girl-jock collective Superjane with Dayha and DJ Heather. While her sets lean toward bumping house, her productions go pop. 2005 debut “Hypnotized” (Om) featured a cover of Cherelle’s ’84 hit “I Didn’t Mean to Turn You On” and the single “What Will She Do for Love,” a co-écrité narrative that channelled young Madonna.

“Push,” set for a Sept. release, sheds the downtempo vibe of “Hypnotized” to go more boldly into pop. It recalls Norwegian chanteuse Annie’s self-aware hipster bubble gum, but with fully American references. First single “About Us” is crisp four-minute synth-pop with a welcome kick drum in the bridge. “Funny” features a rap from St. Louis’ Black Spade that feels surprisingly organic. It’s a big deal—and a definite declaration of mainstream intentions—for a dance artist to include hip-hop in any form these days.

We’re also digging Fauxliage, Leigh Nash’s dreamy team-up with Dolorium producers Bill Leeb and Rhys Fulber on Network, Fontella Bass (the voice of 1965 hit “Rescue Me”) turning in an aching, somber vocal on the Cinematic Orchestra’s “Ma Fleur” (Domino), and Cirque du Soleil vocalist Kristy Thirsk guesting on D/Fuse & Hirshtka’s deejay “Skyline Lounge” (Lost Angeles).

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All That Jazz
Hornsby Takes Left Turn With McBride, DeJohnette

Bruce Hornsby refuses to be counted among the pop stars trying on jazz for size.

“I can see why someone may want to make an album that goes down easy and why a record company would want to put it out because it’s a quick way to make a sale,” says Hornsby, who makes his all-instrumental jazz debut with “Camp Meeting,” due Aug. 7 via Legacy.

“But my record is just the opposite. I have two of the most in-demand jazz artists, Christian McBride on bass and Jack DeJohnette on drums, playing with me, and we go into plenty of diasonant, stark, angular sonic places,” he continues. “This is not casual jazz playing; it’s been something I’ve been wanting to do for years.”

The genesis of “Camp Meeting” stretches back to Hornsby’s jazz studies at the Berklee College of Music and the University of Miami. However, after graduation he gravitated to the songwriter camp as a pianist/vocalist, even though his earliest pop hits like “The Way It Is” and “The Valley Road” featured jazz-informed piano breaks. He has also worked through the years with such top-tier jazz artists as Pat Metheny, Branford Marsalis and Wayne Shorter.

After encounters in recent years with Metheny and DeJohnette, who independently encouraged him to take the jazz plunge, Hornsby embraced the harmonic jazz language that he “hadn’t spoken for years,” he says. “I was no longer fluent. I knew I had to go into the woodshed.”

The refresher shows, as Hornsby not only demonstrates his jazz prowess on “Camp Meeting,” but also conjures up that rare alchemy with his rhythm team as they contemporize tunes by Miles Davis, Keith Jarrett, Thelonious Monk (a reharmonized, rumba-flavored “Straight, No Chaser”) and Bud Powell (including a hip-hop-spiced take on “Celia”). In addition to Hornsby originals, there’s also a never-released Ornette Coleman track, “Questions and Answers,” that the iconoclastic saxophonist played for him years ago.

The CD was recorded in April 2006. Given all their hectic schedules, the keyboardist’s next meeting was May 26 at the B.B. King club in New York, to perform a benefit show for the jazz-in-schools organization Jazz Reach.

Backstage, DeJohnette said, “Bruce doesn’t lose himself. He approaches jazz with his own sensibility.” McBride was likewise impressed and joked, “But I worry about him. I hope he doesn’t get too good and make jazz his thing.”

Hornsby laughs when told this. “Rest assured, I love writing songs and it’s great fun to sing.”

As for the marketing challenges that “Camp Meeting” poses, Hornsby’s manager John Scher, co-CEO of New York-based Metropolis Talent, believes his core audience will be supportive. “Bruce has the unique ability to operate in a lot of different genres,” he says, pointing out that his intrepid musical curiosity also paved the way for the “Ricky Scaggs & Bruce Hornsby” CD (Sony BMG/Legacy) that steedted in March and sat atop Billboard’s Top Bluegrass Albums chart for nearly three months. “But we’re talking about the jazz world, we’ve had to scale back our expectations. While the CD started out as an experiment, it ended up being something special.”

Sony BMG/Legacy senior director of marketing Mandy Eidgah will key in on Hornsby’s active fanbase. She also points to some prestigious gigs coming up, including the Newport Jazz Festival (Aug. 11), the Hollywood Bowl (Aug. 22) and the Palace of Fine Arts in San Francisco (Aug. 23). “We’re having conversations with retail for in-store signings and performances,” she says. “It’s going to be a piece of cake going after all the different fan bases of the musicians on the CD as well as the artists whose tunes are covered.”

Mafia Hits
Production Duo Rebounds From Adversity With Fantasia Smash

Riding high. That’s what production duo Midi Mafia is doing these days, thanks to Fantasia’s “When I See U,” which has been No. 1 on Billboard’s Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart for six weeks (and is No. 32 on The Billboard Hot 100).

This current success mirrors the chart euphoria Midi Mafia experienced four years ago with 50 Cent’s “21 Questions.” That production reigned at No. 1 on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs and the Hot 100 for seven and four weeks, respectively. But what the duo—Dj/band engineer Dirty Swift and songwriter/artist Bruce Wayne—did not expect was that “When I See U,” is the second highest-charting single ever in the group’s history.

Lined up on the pair’s Family Ties Entertainment runways is the new Jennifer Lopez track, “Hold It, Don’t Drop It.” Coming after that is buzzed about Puerto Rican singer/songwriter Deemi (single “On The Radio”) whose Atlantic debut, “Soundtrack of My Life,” is due Oct. 30.

Next up: just-inked SRC/Universal siren Shire (pronounced Sha-Ray). The Baltimore-bred singer’s first single is “Miss My Love,” to be followed in early 2008 by debut album “Pick Up The Pieces.”

“The last two to three years, we’ve been going through a lot of adversity,” Wayne says. “But our momentum is building up.”

Midi Mafia was only 6 months old when the pair scored with “21 Questions.” That precipitated collaborations with Nelly, Talib Kweli, Young Buck, Busta Rhymes and others. Then a series of setbacks occurred. Motorcycle enthusiast Swift suffered a serious spinal injury while riding in California last year. Wayne, meanwhile, was embroiled in a lengthy lawsuit with a former business associate and was simultaneously divorcing his wife.

“We stayed alive and afloat [through other projects], but there was nothing as big as ’21,’ ” Wayne recalls. “It was a low time. Now everyone is starting to call again.”

Although Midi Mafia’s Family Ties is partnered with Dangerous LLC for the Deemi proj-
Mandisa also signed a deal to represent the Ashley Stewart clothing line and wrote a book, "IDOLeyes: My New Perspective on Faith, Fat and Fame," published in May by Tyndale House.

A native of Sacramento, Calif., Mandisa attended Nashville’s Fisk University, where she performed with the famed Fisk Jubilee Singers and earned a degree in vocal performance. She honed her skills as a background vocalist with such talents as Trisha Yearwood, Shania Twain, Take 6 and Faith Hill, and also worked in customer service at Lifeway Christian Resources in Nashville.

"People would send in Sunday school orders, and I would sit there and type them in all day long. I had my headphones on and I would just sing," Mandisa says. "I guess I was singing louder than I thought that I was and people started hearing me and noticing that I could sing. Then, they started asking me to sing in chapel services.

"On "True Beauty," Mandisa conveys the faith and values that made her a favorite with much of the "idol" audience.

"The message of true beauty was important to me, especially after having been on "Idol,"" says Mandisa, who stood up to Simon Cowell’s criticism of her weight. "I wanted to record a song about where our true beauty comes from."

The album showcases Mandisa’s powerhouse vocals and her ease with a variety of styles. "We really set out to make more of a pop-sounding record," she says. "But it runs the gamut because I run the gamut. I grew up on everything from Chaka Khan to Whitney Houston to Def Leppard."

In marketing "True Beauty," the label plans to capitalize on the exposure generated by "American Idol." "Every promo tour we’ve been on, there’s a tremendous amount of awareness of her," EMI Christian Music Group senior VP/chief marketing officer David Crace says. "But we want to move that dialogue away from just ‘I was an ‘idol’ contestant’ to ‘What do I stand for as an artist?’ The concept of true beauty is very powerful for her right now and resonates. I don’t know that we’ve had an artist that connects that way with the female audience."

"Only the World" is the lead track for AC and CHR Christian stations. Crace says the label is looking at taking another track to gospel radio, but hasn’t yet finalized plans. In addition, inserting the CD in a computer will unlock a Web site with a bonus track and video footage. Also on tap are promotions with Verizon and Sprint in the mobile space.

And while Christian retail has lent its support with a presale campaign and in-store positioning, the album will also benefit from appearances in Best Buy and Circuit City circulars during release week.

"It is unusual for a Christian artist to get that slot," Crace says. "And we’ll have feature positioning in all the major mainstream retailers. It will be positioned like a major pop record, and there aren’t that many Christian records that can garner that kind of retail support from the mainstream.

Every July in the sleepy Italian university city of Perugia in the heart of the province of Umbria, jazz lovers for 10 days in a vibrant torrent from the Etruscan-era piazzas to the soccer-stadium arena below the ancient walls. This year’s edition of the Umbria Jazz Festival, the largest jazz bash in Italy, featured a full bill of American and, significantly, Italian jazz stars, highlighted by trumpeter Enrico Rava, pianist Stefano Bollani and reeds bandleader Gianluigi Trovesi.

On July 11, Ornette Coleman presented a primo alto sax display of off-kilter, unpredictable jazz, climaxing in the encore by his unusual request for audience members to come onstage and sing. After a buoyant take on "Lonely Woman," a sulking man sang a Polish folk song, followed by an Italian-speaking Japanese woman rendering "Amazing Grace" in English, both accompanied by Coleman’s three-bassist, one-drummer band.

In perhaps the most interesting programming twist, two standards-oriented trios were featured: pianist Keith Jarrett performing his straight-ahead American Songbook improvisations at the 4,500-seat Arena Santa Giuliana July 10 with bassist Gary Peacock and drummer Jack DeJohnette, and Doctor 3, comprising pianist Danilo Rea, bassist Enzo Pietropaoli and drummer Fabrizio Serra, putting a jazz spin on pop music fare July 9 at the 1,200-seat Teatro Morlacchi.

Doctor 3 proved to be a pure delight as the trio dynamically segued from the Red Hot Chili Peppers’ "Californication" to Wayne Shorter’s "Footprints" and back, as well as reharmonized and embellished two Damien Rice tunes, "Cannonball" and "The Blower’s Daughter," all without an ounce of schmaltz.

Jarrett’s show was typically transcendent, and was marred by his profanity-laced tirade against the "asshole" audience members with their "fucking" cameras and the "goddamn city" of Perugia before he played a single note.

The next day Umbria artistic director Carlos Pagnotta said, "Jarrett, the artist, is sublime, but Jarrett, the man, is very questionable. It is regrettable to witness this sort of schizophrenia involving these two aspects, because we expect an artist we love to behave in an appropriate way."

As for Jarrett’s diatribe of the city, Pagnotta said the fest "won’t have anything more to do with him. He will always continue to be part of the history of this festival, but we will do without his music."

While three days later, Jarrett, through his manager Steve Cloud, issued an apology for his "choice of words," it seems certain that the pianist will not return to Umbria.

Founded in 1973 but on hiatus for three years during turbulent political times in Italy in the late ‘70s, Umbria primarily featured American jazz (and pop) stars in its early days, but has increasingly become a marquee showcase for Italian jazz. "I was accused of not booking Italian artists for years," Pagnotta said. "But within the past 10 years the quality of Italian jazz has become world-class. And we’ve been a part of that growth. Umbria Jazz has become the brand that represents Italian jazz."

In promoting its home-grown music, Umbria Jazz exports top acts to New York every June at Birdland (this year’s June 26-30 show featured saxophonist Francesco Caiso with strings), and inaugurated Umbria Jazz in Tokyo May 14-19 at the Blue Note club, starring Rava and Bollani.

Umbria regular Randall Kline, co-founder and executive director of the San Francisco Jazz Festival, which celebrates its 25th anniversary this fall, says, "Carlo has used the Umbria brand to expose the world to tremendous musicians. He’s showing that they deserve a stage everywhere, not just at home."
Texas-bred singer/songwriter/actor Lyle Lovett has been as busy as ever in the past year in preparation for his new album, "It's Not Big It's Large." Recorded live in the studio with his longtime collaborator the Large Band, the follow-up to 2003's "My Baby Don't Tolerate" is due Aug. 28 via Los Angeles' Lovett admits he's taking a more proactive approach to marketing this time around, offering the album in a deluxe CD/DVD edition as well as in a Starbucks-exclusive format with extra tracks.

In addition, Lovett will co-headline February's Cayamo Cruise with Emmylou Harris, and, for the new Judd Apetow/Jake Kasdan "Walk the Line" parody "Walk Hard," he recorded the title track alongside the unlikely trio of Jackson Browne, Jelani and Ghostface Killah. While in the midst of an extensive U.S. tour alongside k.d. lang, Lovett took a moment to chat with Billboard about the new album, how he's watched the music industry change and why his band is large, not big.

This is your first album since 2003. What was the game plan this time around?

We went back into the studio last October. With our touring schedule through the end of last year and the beginning of this year, it just took us this long to finish. It was trying to feature the whole band since we hadn't done that in a while. We recorded everything live. I've always felt as though recordings come out different when you record all together, like you play live, just being a little less careful in the performing in terms of recording always feels better.

Which songs are you most proud of?

I really like the Lester Young tune ["Tickle Toe"] that we got to do. That's a tune that Steve Marsh, our tenor sax player, suggested a few years back and we would play occasionally live. We hadn't recorded an instrumental since the "Large Band" record (in 1989). I thought it was a good time to do another one and feature the band a little bit.

Is the album title in reference to the band's name, or are you trying to make a statement about the music?

The name of the band was always sort of a double-meaning thing. It's my way of saying, "I'm not trying to do legit big band," but it hints at it. And there are 36 people on the road every day right now, so it's larger than ever. That was the intent of the name originally, but people still invariably will refer to it as "the big band," and people invariably are asking me, "Are you touring with your big band?" I always just say, "Yes, we are," but [the album title] is a small attempt to clarify.

How do you feel the music industry has changed since when you started recording in the '80s?

It's hard to find records anymore. It seems like it's changing every day. Certainly technology has made music so much more accessible in a lot of ways, and it's changed the way people receive music in so many ways. I just feel really fortunate at this point in my career that what's consistent, and what's been consistent in my career, is that the audience has been very supportive and our live business is as good as ever.

Do you feel like you've embraced the online audience more?

I've actually been slow coming to the technology myself. Since wrapping up this record in May, we've only just now put up an official Web site. I don't see [connecting with the online community] as much as an interactive experience as (a way to) present what we're doing—a way to get the word out to folks.

Have you been previewing a lot of new material live? If so, how has the response been?

I've been playing quite a few new songs. The response has been good, and it's fun to perform songs people haven't heard or they're not used to listening to. I always try to put a set together that features the group that we have out on the road. So some of the bigger songs like "I Will Rise Up" that we're doing, they feature the singers and the horns. We're doing "Don't Cry a Tear" because that enables us to break down and do something in a smaller setup onstage.

Not only did the cult hip-hop movie "Juice" inspire countless DJs and star Queen Latifah as a budding rapper, but it was the inspiration behind July's Pepsi DJ Competition. Hosted by national Pepsi DJ and WQHT (Hot 97) New York mixer DJ Enuff, the competition was also co-branded with the Mixshow Power Summit. More important, it was a Wednesday night that'll go down in the history books. It was almost better than Dave Chappelle's Brooklyn block party a few years ago, where I caught a cold to see Erykah Badu, the Roots and Jill Scott perform "You Got Me" in operatic stereo. But I digress.

With producers Just Blaze, Swizz Beatz and Kanye West (see story, page 22) as judges, the numerous DJ contestants went through several rounds of scratching, blending and mic-cracking to get to the final round. In between sets, A Tribe Called Quest's Q-Tip spun records while Enuff talked to the crowd. As the sweaty mob prayed for air conditioning, Mos Def ambled around the sound booth while Gil Scott-Heron chilled in the back. Joel Ortiz performed my favorite song, "Brooklyn Bullshit," and Sean Kingston performed his hit, "Beautiful Girls." Originally, just Talib and Common were slated to perform but with Mos Def, West, Consequence, Saigon, Swizz Beatz, Drag-On and Q-Tip all there, it became a back-packer's haven.

"You'll made it to this round because you're talented, but you all got to crack that mic," Q-Tip warned before the final bout. "Everybody does it. You really have to air out these joints."

After the final round of judging, which pit New Yorkers Jack the Ripper, G Brown and M.O.S. against each other, Jack the Ripper prevailed. With a good song selection, solid scratches and mic skills perfect for a party, Jack became an official Pepsi DJ and won a trip to the Mixshow Power Summit in September in the Dominican Republic. G Brown, who blended the Beatles' "Hey Jude" with

Hip-Hop Heaven

A Pepsi DJ Contest Delivers

T.I.'s "What You Know," and M.O.S., who played a New York and California party set, were wonderful, but neither had a very strong presence on their microphones. As Enuff welcomed Jack into the Pepsi fold, filling his head with promises of groupies, Jack just smiled and pointed to his wedding ring.

Then the impromptu concert began. Talib began his set, and Mos Def hopped onstage to help him perform "Get By." Then Common came on with "The People," with Mos Def filling in for Dwelle's hook. West and Consequence drifted onto the stage during Common's set, and the guys performed the underground favorite "Get 'Em High" from "The College Dropout."

Dropping a few freestyles, like the problem ain't I'm very good, I'm scary good," West launched into his own set as Swizz and Drag-On joined the stage. Ripping through the "90s hit "Down Bottom," Drag-On showed the crowd that though he's been quiet lately, he's still got lyrics to go. Then Q-Tip joined the fray and performed "Award Tour."

Meanwhile, as I prayed for a live performance of my personal favorite, "Respiration," the song's beat dropped and everyone screamed. Saigon ran through "The Letter P" and Rah Digga randomly popped up with a freestyle, just before Consequence's "Don't Forget 'Em." But what officially made the night akin to "Juice" was DJ Enuff shouting out Queen Latifah and calling her to the stage. The Queen did a bit of "U.N.I.T.Y." before thanking the crowd for their support. I may never attend another concert again.
THE BILLBOARD REVIEWS

ALBUMS

POP
KAT DeLUNA
9 Lives
Producer: Red One
Epic
Release Date: Aug. 7
On her debut album, 13-year-old newcomer Kat DeLuna offers a unique blend of pop, R&B, house, hip-hop, bachata, dancehall, merengue and opera—and surprisingly puts it off. With vocal strength reminiscent of the late, great Selena, the Dominican-bred chanteuse might just be starting a musical movement all on her own. On the Elephant Man-assisted “Whine Up,” the bilingual crooner flirtatiously sings about her desires to get close to a fellow on the dance floor. She also chants about falling in love with an island boy on the bachata-laden “Ain’t Dreaming.” But not all tales are of blissful teenage lust. On the conga-tinged “Love Con- fusion,” DeLuna sings about the perils of loving someone not worth her heart, while “Enjoy Saying Goodbye” might just empower ladies to walk away from a destructive relationship.—MC

CHRIS RICE
What a Heart
Is Beating For
Producer: Monroe Jones
E! / Fall/Winter Records
Release Dates: July 7
Chris Rice has a marvellous way with words, creating songs that are sometimes whimsical, often poignant and always entertaining. This album’s single “Lemonade” is the ultimate optimist’s anthem and a perfect addition to AC radio’s summer-time playlists. The title track is a beautifully written ballad about what matters most in life, and Rice turns in a brilliant performance filled with passion and insight. The artist broke through last year at AC radio with the hit “When You Finally Come,” and there’s plenty here to help him become a mainstay. In the tradition of great singer-songwriters like James Taylor and John Denver, Rice infuses his music with wit, intelligence and an earnest charm that is impossible to resist.—DEP

ROCK
GRACE POTTER & THE NOCTURNALS
This Is Somewhere
Producers: Mike Daly, Grace Potter & the Nocturnals
Hollywood
Release Date: Aug. 7
Grace Potter & the Nocturnals are a tough act to pin down. A roots-blues band with Muscle Shoals debts fronted by a whiskey-mouthed beauty who could sound like Janis Joplin a cappella and throw down on the Hammond B3, the act fits into jam-band shores, blues festivals and Bonnaroo. Their work ethic having resulted in a slightly more amenable recording schedule, Potter and her band of muggles have settled in a bit on “This Is Somewhere,” trading the bayou-ready grit and stomp of previous work for a slightly more accessible, pop-oriented sound. Potter can still do grand tricks with her sacker-punch voice on such rave-up bangers as “Ah Mary” and “Stop the Bus,” and ballads like “Apologies” and the faithless love story “Lose Some Time” pack the right amount of piano and pain. There’s plenty here to like for fans from all their various stops.—JW

UGK
UGK (Underground Kingz)
Producers: various
Jive
Release Date: Aug. 7
After five years and numerous street-date shifts, a proper UGK album is finally ready to hit stores. Still criminally slept-on by the masses, the duo of Bun B and Pimp C certainly makes up for lost time here with a 29-track double-album that proudly flies the flag for Southern hip-hop. The Outkast-featuring “Int’l Players Anthem” could be the best recent rap song without an obvious hook (don’t miss the hysterical video), while “Quit Hatin’ the South” contrasts its lyrical billing by avoiding that’s (a lot) left and yet sparse backing track. The production is at times old-school to a fault, but the music is always engaging, even when the same topics get repeatedly recycled (running the game, snitching, the trouble with women). That’s the real thrill of “Underground Kingz”: hip-hop unburdened by trends and concerned with nothing more than telling it like it is.—JC

OKKERVIL RIVER
The Stage Names
Producers: Brian Beattie
OKKERVIL RIVER
Jagajiguar
Release Date: Aug. 7
It used to be that Okkervil River’s Will Sheff couldn’t sing a damn, but things change. His whirry yelp, still unsteady, is here as much a fantastic destructive force as it is a story’s fragile narrators. This nine-song collection revolves around the themes of movies, fiction, fame (and naturally) death. The cerebral lyrics take center stage, as it were, while the band rocks out much harder than it did on 2005’s melancholy “Black Sheep Boy.” Opener “Our Life Is Not a Movie or Maybe” sees with poetry and an instrumental freakout. “A Girl in a Port” is a tender, though jagged, modern ballad that sets up the appropriately titled “You Can’t Hold the Hand of a Rock and Roll Man.” Loads of clever pop culture references grace “Sandwiched Smiles,” while “John Allyn Smith Sails” samples—what else?—“Sloop John B.”—KH

SIMPLE KID
2
Producer: none listed
Yap Roc
Release Date: Aug. 7
Irish singer/songwriter Ciaran MacFeely’s (aka Simple Kid) 2004 effort, “1,” was one of the under-appreciated debuts of that year, marrying his slack, stoner-y and at times fuzzed-out acoustic slide with elements of Britpop. Musically, it was all lo-fi; lyrically, the songs were clever, catchy and charming. Follow-up “2” gives you just that: It’s a headphone record full of more of the same, and some come across a bit solo acoustic, barely finished demo “Old Domesticated Cat”). With any luck, songs like “The Twentysomething” (“Always running, man, away from something?”) and “The Ballad of Eton John” (which hilariously tells “celebrity wanna-be’s” to “go home,” “we no longer want you”) could be the ones that connect with his generation.—WO

CONSTANTINE
Everybody Loves
Producers: Jim Bogia, Mark Capely
Six Place Records
Release Date: Aug. 7
A couple of rockers, some pop tunes. A few ballads, something with Latin flavor and lots of heartbreak. It sounds like... well, an average season’s repertoire for an “American Idol” finalist. And so it is with season-four candidate Constantine Mournal’s debut, a stylistic survey that slides the star of “American Idol” Randy Jackson’s “The Weddings Singer” into the multifurcted form of a Maroon 5 or Rob Thomas. The former, in fact, seems something of a model for the hooky “Several Thousand,” while Constantine (who wrote three tracks here) has a little Ricky Martin on the brain for “Girl Like You,” Bon Jovi for “Heaven Help the Lonely” and a compelling combo of the Strokes and Iggy Pop’s “Lust for Life” on “I Thought It Was Something.” This is an indie release, so don’t expect Kelly Clarkson- or Carrie Underwood-style sales, but Constantine is on the right track toward making his mark in the biz.—GG

DROWNING POOL
Full Circle
Producers: B. Schigel, N. Sis, D. Ashba
Eleven Seven Music
Release Date: Aug. 7
With its third vocalist in as many albums, Drowning Pool has the deck stacked against it. But the current singer (turnoff!) hasn’t lessened the band’s appetite for meat-and-potatoes hard rock that sometimes borders on the generic (i.e., a weak cover of Billy Idol’s “Rebel Yell”), if punk and hard rock should have shot the ceiling room floor). Still, cuts like “Soldiers” are likely to gain interest at active rock radio. With its military drums and “this is for the soldiers” chorus, the track sounds ready-made for an Army recruitment ad. Aside from that and an interesting collaboration with Nikki Sivx and DJ Ashba on “Reason I’m Alive,” the workman-like band seems content with making unspectacular music that could be mistaken for Godsmack or new frontman Ryan McCombs’ former band, SOiL.—BT

FOLK
GREG BROWN
Yellow Dog
Producer: Ian Garman
Earthwork Music
Release Date: Aug. 7
Greg Brown is a potent force in most any setting. But give him an acoustic guitar, a chair and a cause, and he’s in his natural habitat. That’s the setting for “Yellow Dog,” a live album taped at an August 2005 show in Ishpeming in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula. The occasion was a show protesting plans to build a metallic sulfide mine in the area’s Yellow Dog Watershed Preserve, which gave Brown plenty of meat to program a repertoire. The bulk of “Yellow Dog” is Brown’s “notebook songs”—literally performed from a spine-bound voice-filled notebook on the road. Three were performed publicly for the first time, including the wary but hopeful “Better Days”; and the politically charged “Olly Boys.” Brown also reaches into his familiar canon for renditions of “Dream Café” and “Canned Goods” before closing with the 1930s paean “Please Don’t Talk About Me When I’m Gone.”—GG

SOUNDTRACK
VARIOUS ARTISTS
The Hottest State
Producers: various
Hickory Records
Release Date: Aug. 7
A wide array of artists lend their talents to interpreting the music of singer/songwriter C. Thomas Howell, director of the film. Highlights include the chill bump-raising “The Car In Front Of Me,” the coming of age “First Love” and the down-home romper “Country Man” and the playful tale of getting naughty and naked in the woods, “Over The River.”—KT
writer Jesse Harris on the soundtrack to this Ethan Hawke-directed film. Harris, widely known for his Grammy Award-winning work with Norah Jones, wrote every song here including two score arrangements, and he and Hawke himself co-wrote three tracks. Harris wrote to perform their take on the tracks. Of particular note is the bare-bones, intimate performance of Will Oldham on "Always Seems To Get Things Wrong," Emmylou Harris, "The Speed of Sound" and M. Ward on "Crooked Lines." Elsewhere, Argentinian new- comer Rocinha lends her soft, sweet vocals to Spanish and English versions of the film's main track, "Never See You." Bright Eyes offers a fuzzed-out electronic take on "Big Old House," and the Black Keys add a welcome blues-rock touch to "If You Ever Sleep."—JW

WORLD

ZAP MAMA

Supermoom
Producers: various
Headline: Aug. 7
World

Moo, You Bloody Choir
Producers: Paul McKenzie, Glenn Richards, Eric Drew Feldman
Jive/Zomba
Release Date: Aug. 7

Having already enjoyed acclaim in its native Australia, Augie March's "Moo, You Bloody Choir" is finally getting a U.S. release via Jive/Zomba. "Moo," the Aussie quintet's third full-length, is another finely crafted collection of dreamy folk pop that has a distinct, timeless quality to it. Singer/songwriter/guitarist Glenn Richards' lyrics are poetic and literate, and each song is rich with imagery and subtle emotion. If love is a bolt from the blue/But what is a bolt but a gloried screw," he sings on "One Crowd Hour" as the song slowly builds into a wash of sound. "Victoria's Secrets" features a hard-edged, rootsy folk sound, and the "Cold Ace" is gentle and poppy, layered with piano and harmonies. Even if a major-label marketing push doesn't turn Augie March into a superstar, it seems apparent the group is on the cusp of gaining a lot of new fans in the United States.—JM

NEW & NOTEWORTHY

AUGIE MARCH

Moo, You Bloody Choir
Producers: Paul McKenzie, Glenn Richards, Eric Drew Feldman
Jive/Zomba
Release Date: Aug. 7

Rock

FALL OUT BOY

The Take Over, the Breaks Over (3:33)
Producer: Neal Avron
Writer: Fall Out Boy
Publisher: Not listed
Island

Super-producer Babyface oversaw just two tracks on "Infinity on High." Fall Out Boy's latest studio set, but his influence is felt on many, including "The Take Over, The Breaks Over." This groovy, R&B-infused single features crunching funk guitars, 80s-style handclaps, and robotic raps and vocals by Patrick Stump, who dazzles in a new role as a falsetto-loving crooner. "Maniacs!" seven years in the making. The band's current chart-buster, but this clever R&B/emo melange will still earn the quartet its third top-40 hit this year.—SP

LEGENDS & CREDITS

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A 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, 1330 Broadway, Suite 1720, New York, NY 10010, or to the writers in the appropriate bureaus.

HILARY DUFF

Stranger (3:24)
Producer: not listed
Writer: various
Publishers: various
Duffy

Hilary Duff's previous album "With Love" became her biggest hit to date, peaking at No. 17 on the Pop 100 and topping the Hot Dance Club Play chart. "Stranger" is another up-tempo dance-friendly entry, voted upon by Web site fans as the ideal follow-up. Already, the track has conquered top 10 at dance, with its beat bevy of Middle Eastern influences, a hook that slinks sensuously and a lyric about disillusionment over a cheating partner. Top 40 is a tough call when it comes to gambling tempos; you'd like to believe that previous success showed listeners' penchant for pop rhythms. But in any case, Duff delivers a cadence floor, calling card this nation has long neglected.—CT

VENADSS CARLTON

Nolita Fairytale (3:59)
Producer: Stephen Jenkins, Wilco
Writer: Nolita Carlton
Publisher: Rosas Shah/Songs of Universal/Three EB, BMI

"It's been five long years" since Vanessa Carlton concurred piano music with top five Billboard Hot 100 debut "A Thousand Miles." Third album "Heroes and Thieves," due in October, marks her launch with IRS/Gott's Inc. Carlton is fortunate to still have the major-label machine behind her—relevant because of the autobiographical nature of "Nolita Fairytale," in which she addresses career trials with previous home A&M ("Took away my record deal, spent the last two years getting to what's real"). Melodically, a marching band shuffle beat tempered by outfront keyboards drives the track, with vocal layers adding the real air. Produced/co-written by steadfast boyfriend Stephen Jenkins, "Fairytale" is not necessarily a one-listen front-runner, but repeated spins reveal admirable complexity and mastery of musical narrative.—CT

RISI PALMER

Country Girl (3:55)
Producer: Dan Shea, Cory Rooney
Writer: R. Palmer, S. Majors, D. Shea, S. Saners
Publisher: various

Newcomer Rissi Palmer puts her strong, distinctive voice to good use on this blues tinged anthem reminding us that being a "Country Girl" is more of a state of mind than geographical birthright. Single precedes her debut "1720," due this fall. Palmer's vocal delivery oozes personality and passion that perfectly complement the sassy lyric. She was a finalist in the "Star Search" and has been featured on "Waiting in the Wings," a CMT documentary about American in country music. With a strong, versatile vocal stamp that could find success in any musical genre, Palmer follows her childhood love by choosing to call country home. Producers would do well to break type and take notice.—DEP

MATCHBOX TWENTY

How Far We've Come (3:31)
Producer: Steve Lillywhite
Writer: Matchbox Twenty
Publisher: not listed

It's been three years since we last heard from Matchbox Twenty as lead singer Rob Thomas has indulged a can't-stop solo career. But new "How Far We've Come," which launched at No. 29 at adult top 40, makes clear that radio has love to give. The song is one of the band recorded to accompany upcoming greatest-hits package "Exile on Mainstream," due in October. From the uptempo opening drumbeat, it's evident this isn't the late-night-lamenting Matchbox Twenty往外 hearing at "3 A.M." Rather, the group proves how far it's come with stuttering high-hat rhythms and shout-along harmonies more reminiscent of Fall Out Boy than late-'90s alt-rock. After 11 years, a step forward for an act that maintains signature status at radio, while so many others have fallen into obscurity.—TG

TRIPLE-A

REGINA SPEKTOR

Better (3:12)
Producer: David Kahne
Writer: R. Spektor
Publisher: Songs of Zomba/EMI Blackwood

The musically adventurous Regina Spektor made radio headway last year with "Fidelity," a pop charmer that only hit the New York singer/pianist's grander, more eccentric tendencies. Recut for radio release, "Better" should succeed for the same reason. An appealing, hummable tune, the track has some characteristic Spektor touches—a passage employing clicking sounds she makes with her mouth—but mainly stays true to a polished singer/songwriter template centered on a soaring, seductive chorus. Spektor's elegant vocals and keyboard dexterity always set her apart from the crowd, and if her more straightforward creations draw listeners into her larger, fantastical world, all the better.—SV

For the Record

In the last issue, the producers for Pat Monahan's "Her Eyes" should have been listed as Pat Monahan and John Shanks, and the writers should have been listed as P. Monahan, J. Shanks and P. Leonard. Also, the review for Spoon's "The Underdog" should have been credited to Sarah Kingsbury.
**CHART BEAT**

**Market Watch**

**Weekly Album Sales**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year-To-Date</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALBUM SALES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital tracks</td>
<td>322,209,000</td>
<td>477,234,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Store Sales</td>
<td>2,419,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>631,591,000</td>
<td>741,492,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Albums/TA</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>06</td>
<td>307.0 million</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>263.0 million</td>
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**Current Albums**

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<th>Distributors’ Market Share:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UMG</td>
<td>Sony BMG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
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**Total Albums**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UMG</th>
<th>Sony BMG</th>
<th>WMG</th>
<th>Indies</th>
<th>EMI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23.1%</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
<td>23.4%</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data | 37

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**Over the Counter**

**GEOFF MAYFIELD gmayfield@billboard.com**

**Prince Gets Physical; Indies’ Hollywood Moment**

No folder at this time for the artform and currently known as Prince. No "buy a ticket, go a CD." No exclusive or semi-exclusive distribution channel. No newspaper distribution, as happened with this album when it hit the United Kingdom.

Prince earns the 1-ct Shut Spot on The Billboard 200—and his fourth No. 1 on Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums—the old-fashioned way, as first-week sales of 95,000 puts "Pial at Earth" at No. 3 on the big chart. In fact, his marketing is so old-school, he starts this time with nary a download sold. A source at Sony BMG Sales Enterprise says digital distributors could not commence until after July 31, yielding the usual sight of top 10 albums with zero downloads. As of Aug. 1, "Planet Earth" was not yet available on iTunes. This becomes Prince’s third straight album to begin at No. 1 or higher, a run that dates to 2004’s "Musicology," whose sales were bolstered by a controversial plan in which the purchase of every ticket included a copy of the album. That policy was soon altered, concert/ticket bundles must now include an option to buy tickets unthatched by an album purchase to count toward Billboard’s charts.

Last year, Prince bowed at No. 1 with "3121," his first No. 1 since 1989. "Musicology" tallied 191,000 in its first week, with 65% of those (12,600) coming from the concert distribution. That album has tracked 2 million copies to date, according to Nielsen SoundScan, while "3121" has sold 524,000, with 183,000 of those scored in the first week. How much? Any? Did the new Prince album lose by its absence from digital distribution? Hard to say, as "3121" has yet to sell its first download, and only 4,000 of the 2 million copies "Musicology" tallied were sold via download.

Could it be that Prince, who has confronted retailers with some of his earlier-marketing strategies (Retail Track, Billboard, Aug. 4), bypassed the digital portal to give an edge to store owners? Not that Prince has become anti-technology. Consmers got their first taste of "Planet Earth" when the track "Guitar" was featured in a promotion with Verizon Wireless. **INDEPENDENT FILM:** In the late '90s, major record companies couldn’t spend money fast enough on soundtracks, but as the category has declined, the field has begun to shift. Consequently, there are the top 12 titles on Top Independent Albums are soundtracks.

Leader of the indie albums pack is "Hairspray," which also stands tall with a 4-2 jump on The Billboard 200, garnering a 41% increase—and the greatest giveaway—its third straight chart week. The boost in album sales comes even as the movie loses ground at the box office. In a week when the soundtrack moves 26,000 downloads, its overall sales spiked by 39,000 (101,000 total). "Hairspray" easily earns the highest Billboard 200 rank in the history of the New Line label and becomes its third No. 1 on Top Independent Albums. New Line’s prior peak on the big chart was the No. 43 rank earned last year by the "Scoobies on a Plane" so inadurk.

Joining "Hairspray" near the top of the indie deck are the soundtracks to "Once" at No. 8 and "The Simpsons Movie" at No. 12. The former is an Irish musical playing the art-flick circuit, and I don’t think I need to explain "The Simpsons." Although part of the Columbia catalog, the Canvasback soundtrack to "Once" is distributed by RED and thus is tracked as an independent title. The score album from "The Simpsons Movie" is sold through Apple, the label fielded by one-time Maverick GM Fred Croshal and former Geffen sales exec Kevin Day.

"Hairspray" is the first soundtrack to lead Top Independent Albums since "Snakes on a Plane" was No. 1 in last year’s Sept. 2 issue. It’s also the first time since the May 13, 2000, issue that three soundtracks have appeared in the indie list’s top 25, a distinction held that week when "Love & Basketball," "2Gether" and "The Crow—Salvation" were Nos. 1, 5 and 10, respectively.

**FOR THE RECORD:** A supplier’s error caused Nielsen SoundScan to rerun charts it processed Aug. 1. The corrected lists were not available at press time, so this issue’s Hot Kings Masters chart reflects the sales week that ended July 22.
### Billboard 200 Chart

#### August 11, 2007

**Artist** | **Title**  | **Price**  | **Label**
--- | --- | --- | ---
**1** | VARIOUS ARTISTS - #1 SUMMER RELEASE 2007 - BATH BEAUTY MUSICAL | NOW 25 | EMI
**2** | THE LILY - AKON | Hairspary | 2
**3** | MILEY CYRUS - Hannah Montana 2 (Soundtrack)/Meet Miley Cyrus | SP OON | Disney
**4** | PRINCE | Planet Earth | 3
**5** | SUM 41 - Underclass Hero | The Dutches | 2
**6** | LINKIN PARK - Minutes To Midnight | Back To Black | 1
**7** | AMY WINEHOUSE - Back to Black | Enery Second Counts | 10
**8** | FLATLINE TS | All The Right Reasons | 1
**9** | BON JOVI - Have A Nice Day | Longest | 10
**10** | TAYLOR SWIFT - Fearless | Of Course | 15
**11** | RIAHANNA - Good Girl Gone Bad | S 5th Gear | 16
**12** | EVAN BLEU - Every Morning | My December | 17
**13** | MAROON 5 - It Won't Be Soon Before Long | Icky Thump | 18
**14** | THE WHITE STRIPES - YUM YUM | White Stripes 2 | 19
**15** | MARY J. BLIGE - The Breakthrough | Epiphany | 20
**16** | BILLIE CURY - Home At Last | Cocoy | 21
**17** | COLBY CAILLAT - Cool | Zeagreat | 22
**18** | THE SMASHING PUMPKINS - Monuments For An Eardrum Breaker | Zeitgeist | 23
**19** | AVRIL LAVIGNE - The Best Damn Thing | The Evolution Of Robin Thicke | 24
**20** | ROBIN THICKE - I Want Your Love | Daughtry | 25
**21** | SOUNTRACK GAME OF THRONES - The Complete First Season | Hannah Montana | 26
**22** | MICHAEL BUBLE - Call Me Irresponsible | Carry Me | 27
**23** | CARRIE UNDERWOOD - Some Hearts | Gasoline | 28
**24** | TIMBALAND - Timbaland Presents Shock Value | Big Dog Daddy | 29
**25** | TOBY KEITH - Pledge Of Allegiance | Because Of You | 30
**27** | MARC ANTHONY - El Cantante (Soundtrack) |between Raising Hell And Amazing Grace | 32
**28** | TEGAN AND SARA - Soheavy | The Con | 33
**29** | FABULOUS - From Nothing To Somewhere | Let It Go | 34
**30** | THE POLICE - The Police | FutureSex/LoveSounds | 35
**31** | TIM McGRaw | How Can We Be Sure | 36
**32** | JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE - FutureSex/LoveSounds | A Man And A Woman | 37
**33** | BARLOW GIRL - How Can We Be Sure | Inthehole | 38
**34** | JOSH WILSON | Inthehole | 39
**35** | ALY & AJ | Inthehole | 40
**36** | BIG & RICH - Between Raising Hell And Amazing Grace | Memory Almost Full | 41
**37** | PAUL McCARTNEY - Memory Almost Full | The Pursuit Begins When This Portrayal Of Life Ends | 42
**38** | SOUNtrack - High School Musical | Soundtrack | 43
**39** | YELLOWCARD - Piper Wals | Yellowcard | 44
**40** | VANILLA ICE - Memory Almost Full | The Pursuit Begins When This Portrayal Of Life Ends | 45
**41** | EVANS THE LIGHT - Memory Almost Full | The Pursuit Begins When This Portrayal Of Life Ends | 46
**42** | 10TH HAT - Memory Almost Full | The Pursuit Begins When This Portrayal Of Life Ends | 47
**43** | 10TH HAT - Memory Almost Full | The Pursuit Begins When This Portrayal Of Life Ends | 48
**44** | IGGY POP - Memory Almost Full | The Pursuit Begins When This Portrayal Of Life Ends | 49
**45** | MICHAEL W. SMITH - Worship (1919) | The Sweet Escape | 50

### Artist Rankings

**1.** KENNY CHESNEY - "The Road And The Radio"  
**2.** VARIOUS ARTISTS - "Now 24"  
**3.** BUCKY COVINGTON - "Bucky Covington"  
**4.** THEM VS. YOU VS. ME - "The Mix-Up"  
**5.** THE TRAVELING WILBURYS COLLECTION - "The Traveling Wilburys Collection"  
**6.** KYMIE - "The Road To Here"  
**7.** JOHNNY CASH - "A Hundred Miles Or More: A Collection"  
**8.** KELLY PICKLER - "Small Town Girl"  
**9.** THE PARAMOUR SESSIONS - "The Paramour Sessions"  

### Soundtracks

**1.** THE LILY - AKON - "Kiss Kiss"  
**2.** MILEY CYRUS - Hannah Montana 2 (Soundtrack)/Meet Miley Cyrus - "Tip Toe"  
**3.** PRINCE - "Nothing Compares 2 U"  
**4.** SUM 41 - Underclass Hero - "Underclass Hero"  
**5.** LINKIN PARK - Minutes To Midnight - "Break Me To Pieces"  
**6.** AMY WINEHOUSE - Back To Black - "Back To Black"  
**7.** FLATLINE TS - All The Right Reasons - "All The Right Reasons"  
**8.** BON JOVI - Have A Nice Day - "Have A Nice Day"  
**9.** TAYLOR SWIFT - Fearless - "Fearless"  
**10.** RIAHANNA - Good Girl Gone Bad - "Good Girl Gone Bad"  

### New Artists

**1.** THE BILLBOARD 200 ARTIST INDEX  
**2.** MILEY CYRUS - Hannah Montana 2 (Soundtrack)/Meet Miley Cyrus  
**3.** PRINCE  
**4.** SUM 41 - Underclass Hero  
**5.** LINKIN PARK - Minutes To Midnight  
**6.** AMY WINEHOUSE - Back To Black  
**7.** FLATLINE TS - All The Right Reasons  
**8.** BON JOVI - Have A Nice Day  
**9.** TAYLOR SWIFT - Fearless  
**10.** RIAHANNA - Good Girl Gone Bad  

### Career-quality" Best Hit Collection Bowls with the following box in a dock version boasting 15 vanished remnants.

**Fifth album—"The Pursuit Begins When This Portrayal Of Life Ends" the act's best sales week (39,000) and the list six on the Billboard 200.

### Smith's album rebounds with a 12.5% increase after family Christian Stores deep-discounted the set for 55.

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**THE BILLBOARD 200 ARTIST INDEX**

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data  
Data for week of AUGUST 11, 2007  
CHARTS LEGEND on Page 52
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>HOT 100 AIRPLAY</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td>BEAUTIFUL GIRLS DON'T CRY</td>
<td>NIKKI KEATLEY (GEOFF). DJ PHEONIX (104.5 KISS FM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>UMBRELLA</td>
<td>TAYLOR HAWKINS (GRAND HUSTLE /ATLANTIC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>BIG GIRLS DON'T CRY</td>
<td>NIKKI KEATLEY (GEOFF). DJ PHEONIX (104.5 KISS FM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td>ALL THE THINGS YOU ARE</td>
<td>AIMEE MANN (EMERSON HART)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td>WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW</td>
<td>GLADYS KNIGHT (EARTH, WIND &amp; FIRE)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td>LIPGLOSS</td>
<td>TAYLOR HAWKINS (GRAND HUSTLE /ATLANTIC)</td>
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<td><strong>7</strong></td>
<td>YOU CAME</td>
<td>LOOKING GLAM (EARTH, WIND &amp; FIRE)</td>
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<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td>I'M NOT THE ONE</td>
<td>HEATHER TISH (FOX)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td>CAN I EXIST</td>
<td>MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE (REPRISE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td>WHAT A MAN MUST BE</td>
<td>MATCHBOX TWENTY (NEW YORK)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ADULT TOP 40</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td>MAKES ME WONDER</td>
<td>MAROON 5 (LYRIC STREET)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>I'M NOT THE ONE</td>
<td>HEATHER TISH (FOX)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>I'M NOT THE ONE</td>
<td>HEATHER TISH (FOX)</td>
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<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td>THAT'S THE WAY IT IS</td>
<td>BILLY RAY CYRUS (WALT DISNEY)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td>BEFORE THE CHOICE</td>
<td>KURT CASSIDY (SILVER)</td>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>MODERN ROCK</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td>ICY THUMP</td>
<td>MATT MURPHY (GRAND HUSTLE /ATLANTIC)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>PARALYZER</td>
<td>GLEN BROWN (GRAND HUSTLE /ATLANTIC)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>I'M NOT THE ONE</td>
<td>HEATHER TISH (FOX)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td>EVERYTHING</td>
<td>MATCHBOX TWENTY (NEW YORK)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>HOT DIGITAL SONGS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td>I'M NOT THE ONE</td>
<td>HEATHER TISH (FOX)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW</td>
<td>GLADYS KNIGHT (EARTH, WIND &amp; FIRE)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>BIG THINGS POPPIN' (DO IT)</td>
<td>KENDRICK LAMAR (THIRD MAN /WARNER BROS.)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td>LET IT GO</td>
<td>FULL SUPPORT (GEOFF). DJ PHEONIX (104.5 KISS FM)</td>
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### Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums

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<th>Artist</th>
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<th>Price</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>PRINCE</td>
<td>Planet Earth</td>
<td>ATVP Records / Vinyl</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>BAD AZZ</td>
<td>The Real Deal</td>
<td>Greatest Hits Vol. 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>PAUL WALL</td>
<td>Get Money Stay True</td>
<td>Atlantic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>PHAROAH MONCH</td>
<td>Desire</td>
<td>Motown</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>KARLEY</td>
<td>Incredible: The Life Of Riley</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>LIL WAYNE</td>
<td>The Carter II</td>
<td>Cash Money</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>PRATTICELY</td>
<td>Late Night Special</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>YOUNG JEEZY</td>
<td>I Am The Street Dream</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>DJ KHALED</td>
<td>Soundtrack</td>
<td>Epic</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>DJ KHALED</td>
<td>Soundtrack</td>
<td>Epic</td>
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### Top Blues Albums

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<th>Title</th>
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<th>Track 1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN AND DOUBLE TROUBLE</td>
<td>The Real Deal: Greatest Hits Vol 1</td>
<td>Epic</td>
<td>The Real Deal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>TAB BENJIT WITH LOUISIANA'S LEROUX</td>
<td>Power Of The Pontchartrain</td>
<td>BMG</td>
<td>Power Of The Pontchartrain</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>KENNY WAYNE SHEPHERD</td>
<td>10 Days Out: Blues From The Backroads</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>MUDWATERS, JOHN WINTER, &amp; JAMES COTTON</td>
<td>Breakin' It Up, Breakin' It Down</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>JOAN ARMAUDRADING</td>
<td>Into The Blues</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>GEORGE THOROGOOD &amp; THE DESTROYERS</td>
<td>The Best Of George Thorogood &amp; The Destroyers</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>GARY MOORE</td>
<td>Close As You Get</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>THE DEREK TRUCKS BAND</td>
<td>The Fortune Teller</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>RUTHE FOSTER</td>
<td>The Phenomenal Ruthie Foster</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>KID ROMEO</td>
<td>The Definitive Collection</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>ETTA JAMES</td>
<td>Ain't Nothing Like It</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>JOHN LEGEND</td>
<td>The Very Best Of Johnnie Taylor &amp;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>JOAN ARMAUDRADING</td>
<td>Goin' Down</td>
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**Berg E.P. Sets Stage for Album**

As Prince earns his fourth No. 1 on Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums with "Planet Earth," Chicago upstart Yung Berg primes his October full-length release with "Almost Famous: The Sexy Lady Ep," which starts at No. 4 on this page and at No. 32 on The Billboard 200 (20,000 units). Along with the title track, which starts at No. 24, the EP includes four songs and a remix of the lead single. An iTunes version adds the video and a second remix with Jim Jones. Rich Boy and DJ Khaled. "Almost" is priced $4.99 at Best Buy, $5.99 at Apple's iTunes store.

### HOT R&B/HH PALYLIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>TAKE ME TO THE TOP</td>
<td>Mary J. Blige</td>
<td>Epic</td>
<td>Epic</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>DO YOU</td>
<td>Snoop Dogg feat. T-Pain</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>ANSWER ME</td>
<td>Plies feat. Juelz Santana</td>
<td>Bad Boy</td>
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### ADULT R&B

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>WE'LL DO IT ANYWAY</td>
<td>Bobby Brown feat. Fugees</td>
<td>Sony Music</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>DON'T STOP</td>
<td>Mary J. Blige</td>
<td>Epic</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>TIME AFTER TIME</td>
<td>Lenny Kravitz</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
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## HOT COUNTRY SONGS

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<tr>
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<th>Week</th>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Never Wanting Nothing More&quot;</td>
<td>Kenny Chesney</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;I Told You So&quot;</td>
<td>Keith Urban</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Teardrops on My Guitar&quot;</td>
<td>Taylor Swift</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Are You Ready for Another Love Story?&quot;</td>
<td>Rodney Atkins</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;I Need You&quot;</td>
<td>Tim McGraw</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Take Me There&quot;</td>
<td>Jason Aldean</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Tough&quot;</td>
<td>Craig Morgan</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Prove the House We Built&quot;</td>
<td>Brooks &amp; Dunn</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Every Day America&quot;</td>
<td>Sugarland</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Love Me If You Can&quot;</td>
<td>Toby Keith</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;You're Reading This&quot;</td>
<td>Tim McGraw</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>&quot;If You're Reading This&quot;</td>
<td>Luke Bryan</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;How I Feel&quot;</td>
<td>Brad Paisley</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>&quot;A Little More You&quot;</td>
<td>Little Big Town</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Livin' Our Love Song&quot;</td>
<td>Jason Michael Carroll</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>&quot;Fall&quot;</td>
<td>Clay Walker</td>
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<td>&quot;Measure of a Man&quot;</td>
<td>Jack Ingram</td>
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<td>&quot;Just Might Have Her Radio On&quot;</td>
<td>Trend Isom</td>
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<td>17</td>
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<td>&quot;I Wonder in a Small Town&quot;</td>
<td>Jennifer Nettles</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Another Side of You&quot;</td>
<td>Joe Nichols</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;I Wanna Feel Something&quot;</td>
<td>Trace Adkins</td>
<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Nothing Better to Do&quot;</td>
<td>Gretchen Wilson</td>
<td>22</td>
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### Chart Notes

- **HOT COUNTRY SONGS**: 130 CHARTS: It's www.radioandrecords.com on the Top Country Songs chart. For more information, visit billboard.com/country.
- **AIRPLAY**: Audience.

### Hot Country Songs

- **Top 10**
  - "I Never Wanting Nothing More" by Kenny Chesney (1)
  - "I Told You So" by Keith Urban (2)
  - "Teardrops on My Guitar" by Taylor Swift (3)
  - "Are You Ready for Another Love Story?" by Rodney Atkins (4)
  - "I Need You" by Tim McGraw (5)
  - "Take Me There" by Jason Aldean (6)
  - "Tough" by Craig Morgan (7)
  - "Prove the House We Built" by Brooks & Dunn (8)
  - "Every Day America" by Sugarland (9)
  - "Love Me If You Can" by Toby Keith (10)

### Hit Predictor

- **See chart legend for rules and explanations. Yellow indicates recently debuted title.**
- **Nashville Predicators**

## FOR CYRUS, TV THRILLS THE RADIO STAR

Billy Ray Cyrus, enjoying renewed popularity from appearing on TV’s “Hannah Montana” (starring daughter Miley Cyrus) and “Dancing With the Stars” (see story, page 10), claims his highest career start on Hot Country Songs. “Ready, Set, Don’t Go” scores Hot Shot Debut honors at No. 47, his first entry on this chart in more than three years. Cyrus prior best was No. 51 in 1993 for "Somebody New." He last charted with "Face of God" for one week in February 2004.

## Don't miss another important update

![Radio and Records logo](image)

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## Between the Bullets

"Ready" hits radio as Cyrus’ “Home at Last” charges onto Top Country Albums at No. 3 and The Billboard 200 at No. 20 with sales of 28,000. His weekly career high: 257,000 copies sold of "Some Gave All" in the Christmas week of 1992. It led The Billboard 200 for 17 straight weeks, a Nielsen SoundScan-era record.

The biggest of Cyrus’ 26 placements on Hot Country Songs remains his first. “Achy Breaky Heart,” which went No. 1. Five others have reached the top 10. — Cary Trust

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data.

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Data for week of AUGUST 11, 2007 | For chart reprints call 646.654.4633

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**R&R COUNTRY DAILY UPDATE**

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**Radio and Records.com**

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Units</th>
<th>Weeks</th>
<th>No.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prince Royce &amp; Tito</td>
<td>Romance en El Tiempo</td>
<td>Sony</td>
<td>10.98</td>
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**Additional Notes:**
- The chart includes various Latin artists and their respective songs, detailing their Billboard Latin Songs performance as of August 11, 2007.
- The table provides information on each artist's album, title, label, price, units sold, and weeks spent on the chart.
- The chart is a snapshot of the Latin music industry, reflecting the popularity and sales of Latino music.
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### EUROCHARTS - SINGLE SALES

**EURO CHARTS** are compiled by BILLBOARD FROM THE NATURAL, SINGLE AND ALBUM SALES CHARTS OF 19 EUROPEAN COUNTRIES.

**AUGUST 1, 2007**

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<th>DISTRIBUTING LABEL</th>
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<td>UMBRELLA</td>
<td>RELAX TAKE IT EASY</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>THE WAY I ARE</td>
<td>TRYING NOT TO HURT YOU (ACOUSTIC)</td>
<td>U2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>BIG GIRLS DON'T CRY</td>
<td>NURTURE (EMILY)</td>
<td>U2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>LOVE IS GONE</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>LABEL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>WHEN YOU'RE GONE</td>
<td>JAY-Z</td>
<td>JAY-Z</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>EASY WINHOUSE</td>
<td>BACK TO BLACK</td>
<td>BLACK</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>PRINCE</td>
<td>PLANT END-COLLAB</td>
<td>COLLAB</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>LINKIN PARK</td>
<td>MADE TO SUFFER</td>
<td>SUFFER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>PAUL POTT</td>
<td>DANCE</td>
<td>DANCE</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>BEFROU</td>
<td>ALL IN ONE</td>
<td>ONE</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>TRAVELING WILBURYS</td>
<td>ABBEY ROAD SESSION COLLECTION</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>BON JOVI</td>
<td>LOVE WILL SAVE THE DAY</td>
<td>LOVE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>MICHAEL BUBLÉ</td>
<td>CALL ME IRRESISTIBLE</td>
<td>IRRESISTIBLE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>LAFEETE</td>
<td>JET'S ANOTHER TAP ROOTS</td>
<td>TAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>APRIL LAVIGNE</td>
<td>THE BEST DAY FROM BACKSTAGE</td>
<td>BACK</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE</td>
<td>POVERTY ENVIRONMENT LANDSCAPE</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### ALBUMS

**TOP CHRISTIAN ALBUMS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>MARVIN SAPPE</td>
<td>MARVIN SAPPE</td>
<td>SAPP</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>MAVIS STAPLES</td>
<td>MAVIS STAPLES</td>
<td>STAPLES</td>
<td>MAVIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
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<td>JOSÉ MAURICIO</td>
<td>MAURICIO</td>
<td>JOSÉ</td>
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### RADIO AIRPLAY

**TOP GOSPEL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>DISTRIBUTING LABEL</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>DEWAYNE KEANEY</td>
<td>WHAT I'VE DONE</td>
<td>KEANEY</td>
<td>DEWAYNE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>HARRY CONNICK JR</td>
<td>WHAT DOES IT TAKE</td>
<td>CONNICK</td>
<td>HARRY</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**GOSPEL AIRPLAY INFORMATION FROM '7 EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AS MONTAGEED FROM THE BILLBOARD TOP GOSPEL AIRPLAY CHART**

**AUGUST 1, 2007**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
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<td>MARVIN SAPPE</td>
<td>MARVIN SAPPE</td>
<td>SAPP</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
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<td>STAPLES</td>
<td>MAVIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>ARTISTS</td>
<td>VARIOUS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>JOSÉ MAURICIO</td>
<td>JOSÉ MAURICIO</td>
<td>MAURICIO</td>
<td>JOSÉ</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>ARTISTS</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
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<td>JOSÉ MAURICIO</td>
<td>MAURICIO</td>
<td>JOSÉ</td>
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<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>ARTISTS</td>
<td>VARIOUS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 24  | JOSÉ MAURICIO | JOSÉ MAURICIO | MAURICIO | JOSÉ |www.americanradiohistory.com
MOR longform videos. RIAA platinum certification based on sales of 1 million units or more. Songs on Latin Adult Radio charts simultaneously if they have been on the Hot 100 for more than 20 weeks and rank below No. 30. Titles are removed from Hot Country if they have been on the chart for more than 20 weeks and rank below No. 10 in detections or audience, provided that they are not still climbing enough to warrant inclusion. Song titles are removed from Hot Latin Songs if they have been on the chart for more than 20 weeks and rank below No. 20. Songs on Latin Adult Radio charts are removed after 20 weeks if they exhaust their audience potential. Titles are removed from Hot Adult Contemporary if they have been on the chart for more than 20 weeks and rank below No. 15. If they have been on the chart for more than 26 weeks and rank below No. 20, they are removed after 20 weeks if they exhaust their audience potential. Titles are removed from Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay if they have been on the chart for more than 20 weeks and rank below No. 20. Songs on Adult Top 40, Adult Contemporary, Modern Rock and Adult R&B charts, which are ranked by audience, are removed if they are ranked by a 1% or lower. Songs showing an increase in audience (for detection) over the previous week, regardless of chart movement.

RECURRENT RULES

Singles are removed from the Billboard Hot 100 and Hot 100 Airplay charts simultaneously if they have been on The Billboard Hot 100 for more than 20 weeks and rank below No. 30. Songs are removed from Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay charts if they have been on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay charts for more than 20 weeks and rank below No. 30. Songs are removed from the Pop 100 and Pop 100 Airplay charts if they have been on the Pop 100 for more than 20 weeks and rank below No. 30. Titles are removed from Hot Country if they have been on the chart for more than 20 weeks and rank below No. 10. Titles are removed from Hot Adult Contemporary if they have been on the chart for more than 20 weeks and rank below No. 15. If they have been on the chart for more than 26 weeks and rank below No. 20, they are removed after 20 weeks if they exhaust their audience potential. Titles are removed from Hot Latin Songs if they have been on the chart for more than 20 weeks and rank below No. 20. Songs on Latin Adult Radio charts are removed after 20 weeks if they exhaust their audience potential. Titles are removed from Hot Adult Contemporary if they have been on the chart for more than 20 weeks and rank below No. 15. If they have been on the chart for more than 26 weeks and rank below No. 20, they are removed after 20 weeks if they exhaust their audience potential. Titles are removed from Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay if they have been on the chart for more than 20 weeks and rank below No. 20. Songs on Adult Top 40, Adult Contemporary, Modern Rock and Adult R&B charts, which are ranked by audience, are removed if they are ranked by a 1% or lower. Songs showing an increase in audience (for detection) over the previous week, regardless of chart movement.
### Top Music Videos

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label &amp; Artist</th>
<th>Principal Performer</th>
<th>Averaged Seventh</th>
<th>Peak Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;All Excess&quot;</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>The Aces</td>
<td>Undisclosed</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Ride&quot;</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>The Aces</td>
<td>Undisclosed</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Greatest Hits&quot;</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Eagle-Eye Cherry</td>
<td>Greg</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Farewell Tour: Live From Melbourne&quot;</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Voice开场乐队</td>
<td>Joel</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Absolute Garbage&quot;</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Elton John</td>
<td>Elton John</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;The Best of Pastel Far Beyond The Great Southern Cowboys: Vulgar Hits&quot;</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Bob Zmuda</td>
<td>Rob Zmuda</td>
<td>37</td>
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<td>&quot;Get Ready! The Definitive Performances 1965-1972&quot;</td>
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<td>The Temptations</td>
<td>The Temptations</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Linea de Oro&quot;</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Alcazares Music</td>
<td>Alcazares Music</td>
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<td>&quot;Rocket Man: Number Ones&quot;</td>
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<td>Elton John</td>
<td>Elton John</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Live in Dublin&quot;</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Bruce Springsteen &amp; The Sessions Band</td>
<td>Bruce Springsteen</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Come Whatever May&quot;</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Stone Sour</td>
<td>Stone Sour</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Elvis: Live the 25th Anniversary Concert&quot;</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Elvis Presley</td>
<td>Elvis Presley</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Mindcrime At The Moore&quot;</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Queensryche</td>
<td>Queensryche</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>&quot;Elvis: '68 Comeback Special&quot;</td>
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<td>Elvis Presley</td>
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<td>&quot;A Tribute to Howard &amp; Vestal Goodman&quot;</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Bill &amp; Gloria Gaither</td>
<td>Bill &amp; Gloria Gaither</td>
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<td>&quot;Led Zeppelin&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;Family Jewels&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Linea de Oro&quot;</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Conjunto Pioneros</td>
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<td>&quot;Under the Desert Sky&quot;</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Andrea Bocelli</td>
<td>Andrea Bocelli</td>
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<td>&quot;Cold War&quot;</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Rosters &amp; Cowards</td>
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<td>&quot;Mayday Parade&quot;</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>A Lesson in Romanticism</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Down A K.A. Kilo&quot;</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>The Definition Of An Era</td>
<td>The Definition Of An Era</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Los Humildes Vs. La Nigra&quot;</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Sonotone</td>
<td>Sonotone</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Pocket Full of Rocks&quot;</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Manifesto</td>
<td>Manifesto</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Justice&quot;</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Cross</td>
<td>Cross</td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Raul Malo&quot;</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>After Hours</td>
<td>After Hours</td>
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<td>&quot;Portugal the Man&quot;</td>
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<td>Church Mouth</td>
<td>Church Mouth</td>
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<td>&quot;Sergio Vega&quot;</td>
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<td>Duene De Ti...Lo Mejor De El Shaka</td>
<td>Duene De Ti...Lo Mejor De El Shaka</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;The Kooks&quot;</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Inside In / Inside Out</td>
<td>Inside In / Inside Out</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Mazio Musical&quot;</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Linea de Oro: Locos Por Ti Y Muchos Exitos Mas</td>
<td>Linea de Oro: Locos Por Ti Y Muchos Exitos Mas</td>
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<td>&quot;Imogen Heap&quot;</td>
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<td>Speak For Yourself</td>
<td>Speak For Yourself</td>
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<td>&quot;Say Anything&quot;</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>It's A Real Boy</td>
<td>It's A Real Boy</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Click Claus And Peter Claus&quot;</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Up Front &amp; Down Low</td>
<td>Up Front &amp; Down Low</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Mariano Barba&quot;</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>En Vivo</td>
<td>En Vivo</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Bartender&quot;</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Tierra Cal</td>
<td>Tierra Cal</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;I Am the Spirit&quot;</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Edmar Pinto</td>
<td>Edmar Pinto</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;This Is Money&quot;</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Supernature</td>
<td>Supernature</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Much Music Canada&quot;</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Ellespeth</td>
<td>Ellespeth</td>
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### Top Heatseekers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;I Love My Job&quot;</td>
<td>Peter Bjorn and John</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;The Red chord&quot;</td>
<td>Jeff Beck</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;A Fine Frenzy&quot;</td>
<td>Yo La Tengo</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Bullet For My Valentine&quot;</td>
<td>One Cell In The Sea</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;José Luis Perales&quot;</td>
<td>Y Como Es El...Los Exitos</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;The Hesston Drive&quot;</td>
<td>Northern Soundtracks</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;The Editors&quot;</td>
<td>The Editors</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;An End Has A Start&quot;</td>
<td>Chris Botti</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;The Apostasy&quot;</td>
<td>Leeland</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Sound Of Mouride&quot;</td>
<td>Gogol Bordello</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Super Tantra&quot;</td>
<td>Evergreen Terrace</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Wolfskinner&quot;</td>
<td>Hidden In Plain View</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Resurrection&quot;</td>
<td>Rodrigo Y Gabriela</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;War Stories&quot;</td>
<td>Darknest Hour</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Version&quot;</td>
<td>Patton Oswalt</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Wreathes And Lollipops&quot;</td>
<td>Nile</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Phthalie&quot;</td>
<td>Commercial Eye</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data for week of August 11, 2007 | For chart reprints call 646.654.4633 | Go to www биллбук. biz for complete chart data | 53

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**Music Video Premiere:**
- **Rihanna:** Shut Up and Drive
- **Timberlake & Keri:** Wear Ya Heart On Your Sleeve

**Much Music Canada Premiere:**
- **Rihanna:** Shut Up and Drive
- **Timberlake & Keri:** Wear Ya Heart On Your Sleeve

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**This Week On Billboard:**
- **Breaking & Entering:**
  - With a new album on the horizon this month, Virginia signs the Last Goodnight earns its first chart hit with "I've Got Your Back" at No. 40 on the Hot AC/Airplay Top 40 chart. Discovering "I've Got Your Back" made their inaugural chart run each week in Breaking & Entering on billboard.com.
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TOURING: Live Nation in New York names Bruce Moran president of its newly formed Latin division. Moran will oversee the company's business development in Latin America, with a special focus on Mexico and Brazil. "It will be my mission to create new opportunities in those markets," Moran says. "The most passionate music fans in the world reside in Mexico and South America." Previously, Moran served as president at Live Nation New York. Prior to joining Live Nation last summer, he served as CEO at OCEA Presents/CIE USA Entertainment, Mexico's largest promoter. Moran has also had stints at New York's Madison Square Garden and International Creative Management.

AEG in Los Angeles taps Andrew Messick as executive VP of marketing and international. He was senior VP of international at the National Basketball Assn.

VenuWorks (formerly Compass Facility Management) appoints Monty Jones Jr. executive director for the Emil and Patricia A. Jones Convocation Center at Chicago State University. He was director of event services at the Colonial Center at the University of South Carolina.

MANAGEMENT: IMG Artists names Elizabeth Sobol managing director for the firm's North and South American activities. She was senior VP/associate director.

RETAIL: HMV in the United Kingdom appoints Gerry Johnson executive director and Steve Napleton supply chain director. Johnson was managing director of HMV-owned bookseller Waterstone's, and Napleton was product director at Blockbuster.

—Edited by Mitchell Peters

RAISING FUNDS FOR THE HOMELESS

Appleseed Recordings' Sept. 25 release, "Give US Your Poor," will raise funds and awareness to help fight homelessness. The multi-artist benefit CD features exclusive new songs by Bruce Springsteen, Jon Bon Jovi, Pete Seeger, Madeleine Peyroux, Natalie Merchant and others. The recording shines the light on Give US Your Poor, a national platform for the homeless established by the University of Massachusetts in Boston.

BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS

On July 24, nearly 30 major radio stations in Atlanta donated their morning drive-time shows to supporting Breakfast for Babies, a fund-raiser for the March of Dimes Georgia Chapter. Listeners were encouraged to make donations to the March of Dimes. To further connect with consumers, several stations set up shop at area restaurants, some of the restaurants offering matching donations.

HARVEST FOR THE WORLD

Beyoncé held a food drive—in conjunction with Pastor Rudy Rasmus, the Atlanta Community Food Bank and the Survivor Foundation—at her July 20 Experience Tour stop at the Phillips Arena in Atlanta. Fans were encouraged to bring along nonperishable food items for Atlanta's neediest cases.

GOODWORKS

INSIDE TRACK

SAMSUNG, AT&T PARTNER FOR SUMMER CONCERTS

Queens of the Stone Age, Luuacs, Big & Rich, Plain White T's and others will perform as part of the Samsung/AT&T Summer Kruise, a free summer concert series designed to highlight a line of music-centric Samsung mobile phones. The trek launches Aug. 13 in Los Angeles with a performance from Queens of the Stone Age at the Music Box at the Fonda. From there, the trek visits 1,000- to 1,500-capacity venues in Atlanta (Luuacs), Chicago (the Bravery), Miami (Kinky), Dallas (Big & Rich), New York (the All-American Rejects) and San Francisco (Plain White T's) through September. A limited number of free tickets will be available through radio promotions, AT&T retail outlets and consumer contests.

"For AT&T and Samsung, this concert series makes sense because of the music aspect of the products and the services we're looking to promote," Samsung director of PR Kim Titus tells Track. "We've always looked at opportunities to expand our marketing 'reach' and get the word out to potential consumers."

Each concert will feature an hour-long music performance and provide product-sampling kiosks to showcase the music capabilities of the Samsung Blackjack, Samsung Sync, Samsung a717 and Samsung a727 mobile phones. Along with prize giveaways and rock-'n-roll-themed (tem song) activity areas, fans will have the opportunity to "bling" their mobile phones at customization bars.

Additionally, as part of the sampling kiosks, memory product manufacturer Kingston Technology will provide concertgoers with a 32MB SD-compatible "memory card, providing extra space for music, photos and games."

BETWEEN THE LINES

ART FOR LIFE

Bliss Philanthropy Arts Foundation co-founders Russell Simmons and Danny Simmons raised $5.6 million July 28 at their eighth annual Art for Life event at St. Mellow Willow Estate Hamilton, N.Y. Each year the gala is to benefit the organization which supports underserved New York youth through arts education. (winetasting@blissartsfoundation.org)

ABOVE: From left are Fri-Y's executive director Tangle Myers, Russo Simmons, Danny Simmons and event director Forest Whitaker.


www.americanradiohistory.com
Blues legend B.B. King, right, and soul-rock duo Al Green met with the media, July 24 at the last Rock Cafe at the same Sugar Hill Hotel & Cabins in Hollywood, Fla., to discuss their music careers and upcoming tour together.

**INSIDE TRACK**

**CARIBBEAN QUEEN**

Olivia—the lifestyle community for lesbians, which offers luxury travel and social networking—celebrates its 35th anniversary next year. To help with the festivities, singer k.d. lang will perform at the launch of Olivia’s first Caribbean cruise of 2008. The performance is exclusive to those boarding the ship that sets sail Jan. 26. For this cruise, Olivia will extend lang's brand via in-cabin music videos and complimentary lang CDs for all guests. According to Olivia GM Lisa Henderson, the company is discussing similar multiformat branding experiences with other marquee entertainers for upcoming cruises.

“This deeper, richer partnerships will result in once-in-a-lifetime experiences for our guests and extend the reach of our partners,” she says.

Staying with Olivia, for the first time it will dedicate an entire Caribbean cruise to raise awareness and funds in the fight against breast cancer. Olivia’s inaugural Cruise for a Cause (March 30-April 6) benefits the Dr. Susan Love Research Foundation. An on-ship auction, co-chaired by Chastity Bono, will feature items from Melissa Etheridge and other celebrities. Female rock duo Heart is scheduled to perform.

From left, actors Romi Dames and Manny Perez, music VP of marketing Lisa Macklow, and author Frederico Castelluccio at the New York International Latino Film Festival screening of "El Cantante," after-party presented by many July 28 in New York. Photo courtesy of Brad Barnettey Images for HMG.

Kellie Pickler, center, recently performed live on songs "Wonder" and "Red High Heels" on ABC’s Live With Regis and Kelly. After the show, Pickler posed with hosts Kelly Ripa and Regis Philbin.

**STARRY NIGHT**

The Grammy Foundation’s Starry Night benefit, honoring Quincy Jones at the UCLA Tennis Center was held July 28 in Los Angeles. This issue, Jones discussed his new video podcast series, the first installment aptly called “Episode 1.” The first season will feature at least 29 re-creations. Jones' partnership with podcast aggregators/distributor WizardMedia, the series features a behind-the-scenes look at Jones’ many projects. Photos courtesy of the recording academy and TV Radio Image.

LEFT: From left are Grammy Foundation board chairman Steve Schnur, Grammy Foundation/Recording Academy president Neil Portnow, honoree Quincy Jones, Jones’ guest Hebba Elwaalid, Grammy Foundation senior VP Kitten Maddox and Grammy Foundation VP Dana Tomoczak.

BELOW: From left are singer Bello Winans, singer Alice Smith, musician Joan Legeno, Grammy Foundation board chairman Steve Schnur, singer Nancy Wilson, Grammy Foundation/Recording Academy president Neil Portnow, honoree Quincy Jones, Jones guest Hebba Elwaalid, singer Patti Austin, singer James Ingram, musician Steve Tyrell and former Grammy Foundation board member David Foster.
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